



World Health  
Organization  
Western Pacific Region

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION COLLABORATING  
CENTRE FOR NURSING, MIDWIFERY & HEALTH DEVELOPMENT**  
BUILDING HEALTH LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

## SPCNMOA Pacific Leadership Program 2025

### Australia Awards Fellowships R19

**Brief: Sydney Study Block, University of Technology Sydney – 31 March – 11 April, 2025**

This brief provides an overview of the 2025 Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) held at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) between March 31 – April 11, 2025. The Program was co-hosted by the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Development at UTS (WHO CCNM UTS) and the South Pacific Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers Alliance (SPCNMOA). In attendance were 26 fellows (22 female and 4 male) from 13 Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and nation states, with mentors and facilitators from WHO CCNM UTS. Among honored guests and presenters were Pacific nursing and midwifery leaders, Australian Prof CNMO Alison McMillan (PSM), Rosemary McKay and Tarli O'Connell from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and Deki from WHO Fiji.

This year, the PLP was funded by DFAT's Australia Awards Fellowship (AAF) program, with additional support for six countries' travel from the Partnerships for a Healthy Region (PHR) initiative, WHO CCNM UTS, and with The Pacific Community (SPC) kindly supporting one country. The PLP has also incorporated objectives from the PHR Strengthening Health Workforce in the Pacific (Nursing and Midwifery) (SHWP) program currently being implemented by WHO CCNM UTS across many PICs into this year's program objectives.

### Program Objectives

PLP objectives this year were informed by PHR SHWP objectives listed in the next section, and include:

- 1.Strengthening current and emerging leaders' knowledge, skills and leadership of targeted national and regional nursing and midwifery challenges. (SHWP PO1)
- 2.Strengthening leaders to increase nursing and midwifery regional regulation and accreditation standards in order to address the quality and safety of the Pacific health workforce. (SHWP PO3&PO4)
- 3.Continue to develop and strengthen regional partnerships between Pacific Island Countries by engaging CNMOs and upcoming leaders. (SHWP PO1&PO5)
- 4.Strengthen data literacy skills needed to inform practice, management and decision making. (SHWP PO1)
- 5.Building regional health leaders to support effective governance and policy development, while incorporating GEDSI principles and climate factors. (SHWP PO2)



PLP Fellows and facilitators with WHO CCNM UTS team

## Objectives for the PHR SHWP Program

**PO1 Leadership and Governance:** Nursing and Midwifery leaders have strengthened leadership skills/capability for more effective and inclusive health governance, policy development and management.

**PO2 Gender equality and disability inclusion:** are mainstreamed into Nursing and Midwifery education, leadership, regulation, standards of practice in the region.

**PO3 Regulation:** Regional regulation is strengthened to increase the quality and effectiveness of the health workforce in the Pacific.

**PO4 Education:** Regional competency standards for foundational and advanced nursing and midwifery education and practice are strengthened.

**PO5 Sustainability:** Health partnerships are established to ensure program sustainability, relevance, value, appropriateness, efficiency and responsiveness.

These objectives also inform the 'country taskforces' that fellows from each country will respectively establish and manage upon return to their home countries.



*Fellows from Samoa and Kiribati with Prof Michele Rumsey*

## Key Program Activities

### Daily Activities

The PLP Program commenced on Monday the 31st of March with a welcome tour of UTS for the visiting fellows and a formal welcome by Prof Kathleen Baird (UTS), Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery. Prof Michele Rumsey (Director, WHO CCNM UTS) then provided an overview and background on the PLP, activities, requirements, and housekeeping. Mr Michael Larui (former CNO, Solomon Islands; Regional Coordinator for SHWP, WHO CCNM UTS) opened the afternoon session on the first day with an introduction to the PLP and SHWP, discussing shared issues amongst PICs including staff shortages and regulatory concerns, and the role PLP fellows can play in tackling these problems. Brief country presentations given by

respective teams provided background information into their respective country's nursing and midwifery workforces, including their context-specific problems, using the traffic lights model. Some common themes emerged, including workload, patient to staff ratios, staff migration, and burnout.

Each subsequent day of the two week Program started with opening prayers and reflections from each country's representatives. The reflections provided valuable insight into each of the participating countries' priority issues and concerns, and feedback on sessions from the previous day.



*Samoa and Solomon Islands fellows leading morning prayer and reflections*

On each day, sessions were delivered on a range of issues relating to different PLP objectives as follows:

### Objectives 1 and 2

- Understanding power and leadership (Prof Jill White, UTS)
  - Covering politics, the role of nurses and midwives in policy, the SCARF model, policy triangle, and more
- Personal leadership goals (Prof Di Brown, WHO CCNM UTS)
  - Relationship between professional education and regulation, and how they shape the healthcare system
  - Individual reflections on being nursing and midwifery leaders
- Introduction to regulation (Prof Jill White, and Prof Mary Chiarella, University of Sydney)
  - Group discussions for registration, professional standards for practice, accreditation of education programs and providers, and management of risk to public safety
- Pitching and presentation skills (Prof Mary Chiarella)
  - Building meaningful relationships, influencing decision-makers, and engaging in strategic lobbying



- WHO SDNM, SOWN & Regional HRH (Deki, WHO Fiji)
  - Updated data and context on nursing and midwifery human resources for health in PICs
- Regional Emergency and Critical Care Systems Strengthening (Sarah Bornstein, RECSI)
  - RECSI and associated workforce capacity and training, systems and processes, data and research, and leadership and governance

### Objective 3

- Culture Day (Arif Ongu, Equity and Diversity Officer, UTS)
  - Cultural awareness and differences, intercultural competence, global health leadership
- Country Presentations



*Group discussion with fellows during an interactive session*

### Objectives 4 and 5

- Data Literacy and Open Access (UTS Library)
- Preparing your SMART Action Plan (Prof Amanda Wilson, UTS)
  - Guide to creating action plans to support PHR SHWP by establishing Country Taskforces and corresponding projects
- Intro to country 'task-force' & PHR SHWP Program (Prof Michele Rumsey, Prof Di Brown, Prof Jacqui Webster, WHO CCNM UTS)
  - Formation and Terms of Reference for taskforce development to carry out projects in line with PHR SHWP objectives
- The Regional Framework for the Triple Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and Syphilis (Prof Julian Gold, The Albion Institute)
  - Critical role of frontline nurses and midwives in combating these infectious diseases

- Climate Change and health (Dr Margaret Gatling, UTS)
  - Critical role of nurses in addressing climate-related challenges through leadership, research, and education
- Disability Workshop (Dr Scott Avery, UTS)
  - Community-connected healing, truth-telling, culturally-safe spaces, and using data to shape inclusive policy and practice to tackle intersectional health inequalities
- Gender Workshop (Dr Pamela Kanya & Ali Moloney, WHO CCNM UTS)
  - GEDSI, Gender-based violence, and the relevance to healthcare workers
- Human Resources for Health (HRH) (Migration) (Prof Jim Buchan, UTS)
  - Addressing HRH issues for PICs and nation states (recruitment, retention, return, productivity, and more)

Interactive activities and group work sessions were included throughout the Program to maximize learning, participation, and collaboration. A tour of the UTS Nursing and Midwifery Simulation Labs was conducted towards the end of Week 1, providing insight into clinical and simulation-based learning and knowledge-sharing.



*Fellows on the Simulation Lab tour*

Each day of the Program ended with collaborative sessions between fellows and their assigned mentors working on their country projects, which they then presented toward the end of Week 2.

A special session was held on Thursday of Week 2, with Australian CNMO Prof Alison Macmillan (PSM). She shared practical advice and her own experiences in overcoming hardship leading the health response during the COVID-19 pandemic, with many of the fellows reporting feeling inspired and encouraged by her words.

## Reception

A formal Reception was held on the evening of April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at the UTS Aerial Conference Centre to welcome Program partners to meet with the PLP fellows, with other special guests. The event started with a Welcome to Country and saw a varied and wide-reaching speaker list. Among them were Rosemary McKay (Director of UHC Section for the Global Health Division, DFAT), Prof Alison McMillan (PSM) (Australian CNMO), Michael Larui (Regional Coordinator for SHWP, WHO CCNM UTS), Deki (WHO Technical Officer Fiji), Midori Anami Akimoto (Nursing Officer, WHO WPRO), and one of the PLP fellows Baaua Tawita (Fellow, Kiribati).



*Baaua Tawita (Kiribati) speaking at the Reception*

The Reception was also attended by distinguished guests including Tarli O'Connell from the Global Health Division at DFAT, UTS Faculty of Health staff, and guest facilitators that had been working with the fellows throughout the week.

Fellows and guests networked and shared stories, celebrating their presence and success at the Program with an overall sense of gratitude and unity.



*(Left to right) Tarli O'Connell, Prof Alison McMillan (PSM), Michael Larui, Prof Jacqui Webster, Rosemary McKay, Deki, Prof Michele Rumsey, Baaua Tawita, and Prof Jim Buchan*

## Country/Taskforce Projects and Presentations

The 13 country project presentations that took place towards the end of the Program saw a range of country and regional nursing and midwifery issues highlighted, with feedback and collaboration provided by fellows and experts. This year, special attention was given to issues aligned with the PHR SHWP program with a focus on regulation, and each team focused on the with creation of a country-level taskforce to carry out their respective projects. Where possible, fellows incorporated the learnings of the Program including pitching and presentation skills, and setting SMART goals.

*A list of country projects can be found on the final page of the brief along with country teams.*



*Cook Islands team presentation*

## Outcomes and Evaluations

The expected outcomes from the PLP included:

1. Supporting leaders in developing necessary skills to support the implementation of the Partnerships for a Healthy Region program in country. (SWHP PO1-PO5)
2. Formal and informal networks developed for peer support and information exchange. (SWHP PO1&PO5)
3. Increase personal development skills within current and future leaders. (SWHP PO1)
4. Increased knowledge and understanding of cross-cutting issues, GEDSI, and climate factors. (SWHP PO2)
5. Country Taskforce action plan developed and presented. (SWHP PO1-PO5)

The program covered all outcome areas and fellows completed project plans and presentations for taskforce development which they will implement upon return to their countries. The project plans were developed with their mentors, and actionable feedback was provided and discussed.



The Program also provided a wonderful opportunity for networking and collaboration amongst the fellows, with fruitful discussions and sharing of ideas and resources, with intent for further collaboration from partner countries across the region. Furthermore, the fellows practiced their newly acquired leadership skills with multiple activities, and through leading of reflection exercises. Through the guest speakers and the various sessions, fellows also expanded their knowledge and perspectives on issues of GEDSI and climate change that affect their region.



*Fellows with Deki (WHO Fiji) at the Welcome Reception held at the UTS Aerial Conference Centre*

At the conclusion of the PLP, fellows were asked to complete a Program evaluation, including an online survey for DFAT. This valuable feedback will be essential for future PLPs, to ensure the needs and expectations of participants and their countries are heard and met. Following their presentations, all fellows were also presented with certificates of completion for successfully fulfilling requirements for the two weeks, a PLP badge, and a group photo to commemorate their time at the Program.

The Program concluded with a wonderful celebration of over 20 years of work by the WHO CCNM UTS and Prof Michele Rumsey's contributions to nursing and

midwifery in the Pacific, with colleagues and fellows showing their sincerest gratitude and appreciation.

### Next Steps

As fellows implement their projects upon return home, ongoing increased collaboration can be expected in the region, with aims to contribute to increased quality of care, strategies for achieving universal health coverage, improved working guidelines, and potential policy outcomes. The taskforces will progress the SHWP program of work as well.

There will be continued support for the PLP fellows from the WHO CCNM UTS SHWP team, both for their leadership roles and projects, as well as continued communication and information exchange between fellows through the networks and partnerships that have been developed through the Program.

In-country visits planned for the SHWP program between July and September of 2025 will allow for further collaboration and mentoring on the projects. This will contribute to the achievement of the SHWP program goal - to strengthen health systems and improve access, quality, and safety of health services across the Pacific through leadership, education and regulation.



*Fellows from Solomon Islands and former CNO Michael Larui presenting Michele with tokens of appreciation*



Reception attendees, including fellows, partners, facilitators, and the WHO CCNM UTS team at the UTS Aerial Conference Centre

## **PACIFIC LEADERSHIP PROGRAM 2025 FELLOWS & MENTORS**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Country/Taskforce Project</b>
<b>Cook Islands</b>	Fellow	Mrs Mirella Simpson	Enhancing nursing registration and digital registration integration
<b>Cook Islands</b>	Fellow	Mrs Charlie Emmanuela	
<b>Cook Islands</b>	Mentor	Ms Ngatamariki Manea	
<b>Fiji</b>	Fellow	Mr Jone Natanu	Develop regulation for enrolled nurses in Fiji
<b>Fiji</b>	Fellow	Mr Ravel Ravikash Chand	
<b>Fiji</b>	Mentor	Mrs Colleen Wilson	
<b>Kiribati</b>	Fellow	Mrs Baaua Tawita	Enact an independent Nursing and Midwifery Act for the Republic of Kiribati
<b>Kiribati</b>	Fellow	Mrs Terry Baraniko Eromanga	
<b>Kiribati</b>	Mentor	Ms Helen Murdoch	
<b>Marshall Islands</b>	Fellow	Mr Juni Samson	Strengthening of nursing workforce through specialized training opportunities
<b>Marshall Islands</b>	Fellow	Ms Samantha Anuntak	
<b>Marshall Islands</b>	Mentor	Mrs Edlen Anzures	
<b>Nauru</b>	Fellow	Mrs Sabrina Thoma	Develop nursing taskforce to support guideline development to strengthen safety of the health workforce
<b>Nauru</b>	Fellow	Mrs Tebanimakei Capelle	
<b>Nauru</b>	Mentor	Ms Trixie Fritz	
<b>Niue</b>	Fellow	Ms Phyllis Lister Diana Soloma	Strengthening nursing in Niue by creation of a Taskforce
<b>Niue</b>	Fellow	Miss Christie Ligihega Sita Konelio	
<b>Niue</b>	Mentor	Ms Rose Jackson-Siohane	
<b>Palau</b>	Fellow	Ms Cheryl Lee Ongalibang	Nursing standards for practice
<b>Palau</b>	Fellow	Ms Carolyn Ngiraswei	
<b>Palau</b>	Mentor	Ms Lorraine Beketaut	
		Ms Kimberly T. Idip	
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	Fellow	Ms Maristella Gabriel	PNG Continuous Professional Development Framework
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	Fellow	Ms Julie Dopsie	
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	Mentor	Ms Mary Kililo Samor	
<b>Samoa</b>	Fellow	Mrs Logomai Feterika Lualua Valaau	Develop a CPD framework for nursing in Samoa
<b>Samoa</b>	Fellow	Mr Elia Amituanai	
<b>Samoa</b>	Mentor	Mr Henry Taylor	
<b>Tonga</b>	Fellow	Mrs Manafonu Siloam	Review and update Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, and Midwife registration (Re-registration process)
<b>Tonga</b>	Fellow	Mrs Hola Ki He Moui Vakasiuola	
<b>Tonga</b>	Mentor	Ms Mele Sii Inukihaangana Filise	
<b>Tuvalu</b>	Fellow	Mrs Arinte Safenga	Review and Strengthening of the Health Professional Act
<b>Tuvalu</b>	Fellow	Mrs Sulia Teaukai	
<b>Tuvalu</b>	Mentor	Ms Manipola Vaeanoa	
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Fellow	Ms Julie Hitu Hatai	Review of registration guideline for nurses in the Solomon Islands
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Fellow	Ms Nethlyn Lincey Firiabae	
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Mentor	Mr George Pego	
<b>Vanuatu</b>	Fellow	Ms Becky Iaruel	Developing accreditation standards for Vanuatu Nursing Council to accredit nursing and midwifery programs
<b>Vanuatu</b>	Fellow	Ms Adel Tamata	
<b>Vanuatu</b>	Mentor	Ms Harriet Sam	