

Partnerships for a Healthy Region (PHR)
Strengthening Health Workforce in the Pacific (Nursing and Midwifery) (SHWP)

Brief 9: Samoa Nursing Regulation Workshop – 11th and 12th February 2026

Background

The Ministry of Health (MOH) Taskforce and Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) Fellows hosted the Samoa Country Workshop from 11th and 12th February 2026, with 68 participants (55 female, 13 male) joining from the MoH Executive Governance, Nursing Council (NC), Samoa Nurses Association, Public Service Commission, National University of Samoa, other key partners, senior nurses and midwives from the district hospitals, health centres and main hospitals, private nurses and a lawyer. This workshop forms part of the Strengthening Health Workforce in the Pacific (SHWP) Program under the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) five-year Partnerships for a Healthy Region (PHR) initiative (2024-2028). The WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing, Midwifery & Health Development at University of Technology Sydney (WHO CCNM UTS) manages the SHWP program, in partnership with South Pacific Chief Nursing & Midwifery Officers Alliance (SPCNMOA). The SHWP Program aims to strengthen Pacific health systems to improve the quality of and access to health care and population health across the Pacific.

Purpose and Approach

In 2025 and 2026, WHO CCNM UTS, MOH Taskforce and Fellows from the 2025 PLP will facilitate workshops in all 13 countries involved in SHWP. These workshops are led by the PLP Fellows following their 2025 Study Block, to engage national actors and stakeholders in identifying system-level strengths and challenges across education, regulation, service delivery, governance, to establish a common understanding and co-develop and prioritise actions for strengthening nursing and midwifery registration, regulation, and workforce planning through multi-stakeholder collaboration and regional alignment.

Workshop Objectives

1. To explore and understand the framework for professional regulation
2. To examine and discuss country traffic lights action plan and strategy (SOWN 2020 & 2025)
3. To assess regulatory status against the regulatory framework in order to determine the work priorities
4. To agree on priorities and a plan of action.
5. Collect baseline data for GEDSI and raising awareness of GEDSI principles
6. To review legislation for the regulation of nursing and midwifery



Workshop Participants with Honourable Minister for Health Va'aaaoa Salumalo Alofipo, Director General for Health June Lui Scanlan, Australian Deputy High Commissioner Simon Dawkins, WHO Representative Dr Wendy Snowden

Activity 1: Strategic Orientation and Leadership Engagement

WHO CCNM UTS Team first met with the Director General for Health, Ms. June Lui Scanlan, to discuss the SHWP Program and the forthcoming workshop. A meeting was then held with Samoa Country Taskforce leads, Acting CNOs Fauatea Henry Taylor (PLP 2024) and Taala Logomai Feterika Lualua (PLP 2025) and PLP Fellow facilitators to discuss the meeting objectives and orient the structure of activities. The WHO CCNM UTS, also met with DFAT and WHO officials.



DG for Health, Acting CNOs, WHO CCNM UTS Team

The workshop was opened by Honourable Minister for Health Va'aoao Salumalo Alofipo, highlighting the importance of support for strengthening nursing and midwifery in Samoa. Deputy High Commissioner of Australia, Mr Simon Dawkins and Dr Wendy Snowdon, WHO Representative Samoa followed with opening remarks.



Honourable Minister for Health Va'aoao Salumalo Alofipo opening the workshop

Acting CNO Fauatea Henry Taylor began the meeting by presenting SHWP's background and context, Samoa's national nursing updates and Traffic Light Action Plan. These Traffic Lights were developed from the State of the World's (SOWN) Nursing Report and amended throughout the workshop to reflect current position and priority actions.



Acting CNO Fauatea Henry Taylor opening presentation

An evening event was held for special guests and participants.

Activity 2: Review of Regulation

Ms Karen Cook (WHO CCNM UTS) presented the framework for Health Professional Regulation - the five areas of regulation (*registration, standards and codes, accreditation, complaints, and governance*), and an analysis of the current legislation which structured the day's activities.

Five World-Café rounds were facilitated by PLP Fellows and MOH Taskforce. Participants were grouped into five tables where facilitators ran through gaps, challenges and topic areas, gathering common themes on butchers' paper. Groups were able to have in depth conversations about elements of the regulation framework introduced in the morning. Each tables paper was then fixed on the wall; participants were able to explore other groups thoughts.



Participants during World Café activity

Key points and recommendations from each group were fed back by the PLP facilitators for open comments. Participants had fruitful debates about the priority areas for each section, which fed into the workshop recommendations presented.

Activity 3: Group Discussion on National Priorities

Samoa's taskforce priority area for this workshop focused on Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Acting CNO Taala Logomai Feterika Lualua presented how a CPD Framework would benefit Samoa to the group. Discussions about the purpose of CPD, current ongoing CPD practice and how it should serve the workforce going forward were key points.



Acting CNO Taala Logomai Feterika Lualua presenting CPD

Participants were then broken into groups and given a section of the draft CPD framework to edit to Samoa's context. These comments were fed back to the larger cohort for open discussion. Debates about what needed to be changed to fit Samoa's current CPD requirements and how CPD should be utilised going forward. These detailed comments will be incorporated into the second drafting of the CPD Framework following the workshop.



Participants working through draft CPD Framework

A key highlight of this workshop was an address given by former Chief Nursing Officer, Professor Pele Stowers who gave a history of nursing legislation development in Samoa, and her work in developing the legislation as it stands today.



Samoa PLP Fellows with Professor Pelenatete Stowers following badge ceremony.

A special part of this workshop was the honor of Pele presenting the Samoan PLP Fellows with their badges as a sign of leadership and achievement.

Activity 4: Review and Key Outcomes

All workshop outcomes were successfully met through workshop activities. The legislation was reviewed against the 5 regulation framework areas and following consultation and review of the workshop recommendations with the Director General for Health, both Acting CNOs and all workshop participants, the following challenges and recommendations for action were agreed upon:

Registration

Gaps / discussion

- Funding challenges as registration fees go to Treasury
- Clear process for registration - new graduates' go through a MOH orientation through to registration Full License
- Annual License renewal everyone is aware of it
- Overseas and temporary registration process to be strengthened
- Language requirements for registration needs consideration for public safety
- Current 3 types of registration - RN, Midwife, EN - clarify advance or Specialised Nurse area – mention Nurse Practitioner (NP)
- Governance role of registration - need clear guidance on registration processes
- Specialised registered nurses is not an active register – scopes of practice needed to develop for some areas
- No digital platform for recording registration

- Communication to be improved between all partners
- During crisis highly experienced nurses arrive – how do you provide temporary registration quickly – be clever

Recommendations

- Strengthen role of Nursing Council
- More workshops for awareness of registration process
- Registration guidance
- Traffic lights (SOWN) needs to be revised to more realistic colours and action for future work

Standards

Gaps / discussion

- Awareness of standards and codes were recognized by participants
- Need Scope of Practice for all specialised practice and NP post grad
- Awareness of social media standard - confidentiality use of phone
- Management and leadership standards
- All standards in one place/book (approved by nursing council) with advice on Nursing Act

Recommendations

- Review which standards we have and what else is needed e.g NPs specialist standards
- Training - need for education on and how to use standards

Accreditation

Gaps / Discussion

- New midwifery course went to 18 months and was approved by the NC but there was no formal accreditation process
- NC role – professional practice for public safety
- NUS and SQA role – certification of academic qualification
- Confusion around accreditation and personal credentialing
- No one in NC for accreditation, lack HR and skills for accreditation
- No clear pathway from accreditation from NC

- NC Accreditation protocol /standard required
- Standard could assist with standards for entry to a nursing / midwifery program (in Act health impairment mentioned)
- Need for an accreditation committee – what is the curriculum committee's role? (Ref in Act)

Recommendations

- Review NC committee structure to look at standards and strengthening accreditation
- Set up Accreditation committee
- Accreditation standards to be developed for streamline quality of programs, bench marking, protection of public, between education and service, enrolment in other regional programs

Complaints

Gaps / Discussion

- Inconsistence of knowledge of NC complaints procedure, however, MOH quality assurance, incidents reports and framework discussed
- No written regulations or guidance on Complaints and Notifications Procedure
- Increase awareness of Act as some asked about what about the nurses? – nurses supported by Association
- Nurses and Midwives, employerS and PSC to manage minor complaints at a local level
- Improve link between employer, NC, PSC, Private Service and MOH
- Lack of awareness of complaint process by nurses and public
- NC has a lack of legal support

Recommendations

- Clear pathway for complaints/notifications - more transparency and guidance
- Training / awareness on complaints process for public, nurses, midwives, employers, MOH, PCS, private services and NC committees

Governance

Gaps/Discussion

- Nursing and Midwifery Act 2007 still relevant but may need a few amendments

- Lack of funding for NC as all registration fees go to Treasury
- Lack of support for NC as no registrar or facilities
- Need to strengthen NC membership and Committees – how to appoint members
- No current training for NC Committee members
- Conflict between roles in relation to regulation, association, CNO, regulation senior leaders as they have many roles
- Confusion of role of private practice nurses and registration
- Confusion between corporate, PSC, MOH, personal, professional (registration) and clinical governance
- Strengthen understanding of registration, CPD, performance review between PSC, MOH and other Acts
- Nurse and Midwife defined in legislation, but need for NP, and increase scope of practice for specialized practice
- Need for an independent Council
- Clearer understanding on appointment, role of Council members and role of Council – corporate governance and scrutiny of members

Recommendations

- Guide on how to appoint and role of Nursing Council members
- Plain English and/or Samoan guide for understanding the legislation
- Nursing and Midwifery Act 2007 - few amendments
- Consider a Checklist for registration
- Continue to work together with all partners with Nursing Tripartite (Education, Association and Nursing and Midwifery Service) and strengthen link with NC

Regional standards, guides, policies too:

Recommendations:

- Accreditation standards and CPD framework
- Enable reciprocity move across region and work across region

- Standardized practice – regional curriculum framework
- To enable qualifications to be recognised ...education link with other regional courses (CPD)
- Explain role of registration – protection of public
- Guide to explain role of regulation, with PSC, MCS, MOH, Association, CNO, education
- Guidelines for registration of new graduates (local and external) and overseas nurses
- Guide for role of regulation committees, members and Council

Concerns

- There is a need to understand health systems and legislation of each country
- Concern for other countries and workload policies
- Migration of nurses and midwives

Regional Standards

Benefits

- Move across region, study and work – workforce mobility and study
- Knowledge and practice networking and salary, retirement age
- Regional accreditation framework for health workforce education

Disadvantage

- Different country laws, cultures and health workforce migration challenges
- Language concerns

Next steps:

- Consider what you need to review clinical practice for CPD needs of the future
- Provide meeting Brief with recommendations
- Continue support for next 3 years under DFAT and PHR SHWP
- Work across region to prioritise which regulatory guides and standards are required
- Continue Pacific Leadership Program (PLP)
- Provide updated draft guidance following recommendations with taskforce
- Continue support for ongoing country work.
- Return for a follow up national meeting