

**Provision of technical support to the Vanuatu College of Nursing Education for the development and accreditation of nursing curriculum**  
**In-country visit by WHO CC UTS Team – June 2019**

The Vanuatu Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Vanuatu College of Nursing Education (VCNE), with support from the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), are continuing to work with a team of education experts from the WHO Collaborating Centre (WHO CC UTS) at the University of Technology Sydney, to develop and upgrade the national nursing curriculum for accreditation and implementation.

The Vanuatu MoH aims to strengthen nursing education to improve health outcomes to promote equitable access to affordable, quality health care as part of the Government National Sustainable Development Plan.

to provide technical support and advice to facilitate the development and implementation of the both the Bachelor of Nursing (Conversion) that builds on an already completed Diploma of Nursing, and the proposed three year Bachelor of Nursing degree to be implemented from 2021. The Bachelor of Nursing (Conversion) course **aims to** build-capacity and qualifications of the participants as a form of professional development for VCNE tutors and clinicians, and to support future students in the new three year Bachelor of Nursing course, thereby building workforce capacity and nursing educational standards in Vanuatu.



WHO CC UTS team members Prof. Lin Lock and Dr Caroline Havery at VCNE

The team from the WHO CC UTS continue to work closely with staff from the VCNE as the primary provider of health care educational services in Vanuatu. The team also works alongside MoH staff and other stakeholders,



'Improving Teaching and Learning' Workshop group activities

Fourteen male and female participants who are a mixture of educators and clinicians, began the Bachelor of Nursing (Conversion) in March 2019 are now almost half way through their course subject requirements.

**In-Country Activities**

UTS WHO CC staff members Professor Lin Lock and Ms Lisa Townsend spent time in Vanuatu with Dr Caroline Havery (UTS Interactive Media and Learning – Language

and Learning Senior Lecturer) for one week, from 10-15 June 2019.



*'Improving Teaching and Learning' Workshop – group work activity*

There were many successful outcomes within the week of engagement. The final teaching block for the subject 'Improving Teaching and Learning' was completed, using active participatory strategies to engage the participants, who focused on pedagogical approaches to curriculum development.

Topics included assessment, scaffolding content and objectives within curriculum, transitional pedagogy frameworks and student centred learning as an important approach within adult learning. In addition, participants applied this new knowledge in providing critical input and appraisal of draft curriculum documents for the proposed Bachelor of Nursing program (planned to be implemented in January 2021). Evaluations of learning have indicated high satisfaction and learning within the subject, participants noting the ways in which content can be applied to their contexts, both in clinical and educational specialties.

Participants received both group and individualised feedback on assessment tasks previously submitted within two subjects, and indicated via their feedback that information was extremely helpful, engaging and well received.

A project meeting was held at the Ministry of Health on 14 June with the DFAT Vanuatu Health Resource Mechanism Office to address issues that included progress and processes involved with the contractual processes and plans for the Bachelor of Nursing (Conversion) and Bachelor of Nursing courses, flagging issues that are foreseen to impact sustainability and success of the project.

The project with VCNE and the Vanuatu MoH will encounter some challenges moving forward, including the change to the Vanuatu Health Resource Mechanism and management of the project from October 2019.



*Participants and WHO CC UTS team member Prof. Lin Lock at the June 'Improving Teaching and Learning' Workshop*

These include some uncertainty around future funding past contracted Phase 1 and 2 services. The services being provided under this contract rely on continued collaboration between stakeholders, participants and project staff to ensure project sustainability, to build staff capacity in preparation of the Bachelor of Nursing curriculum. Depending on the confirmation of the proposed Vanuatu Health Program (VHP), DFAT's new support program providing bilateral support to MoH, and available resources under the VHP to support the development of the BN in Vanuatu, this may have some unintended impact on Phase 3 to support the full implementation of the program from January 2021. It is hoped that the incoming managing provider and project funding framework will continue to support the important work being undertaken.

This visit was the fourth of a series of in-country visits planned in 2019 for provision of technical support by the WHO CC UTS Team to strengthen the quality of nursing education in Vanuatu.

It is hoped that the collaborative relationships established will continue to be strengthened and productive, to benefit the nursing profession and the people of Vanuatu.