

Implementation of National Curriculum for the Diploma of General Nursing (DGN) and Certificate for Community Health Worker (CHW) Program

Don Bosco Technological Institute, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea - 29 April to 3 May 2024

Brief 20: Final Workshop for the Health Professional Education, Fast Track Program

Background

The Strengthening Health Workforce Education (SHWE) program in Papua New Guinea (PNG) supports nurses and community health workers (CHWs) as the country's largest health workforce cadre to address both present and future health challenges. This initiative involves a comprehensive review, development, and implementation of an updated National Curriculum for the Diploma of General Nursing (DGN) and the Certificate for Community Health Worker (CHW) Program. The program is implemented by the WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Development at the University of Technology Sydney (WHO CC UTS), in partnership with the PNG National Department of Health (NDoH), University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) and the PNG Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST), and funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

- discuss implementation status of the revised curriculum and challenges encountered;
- review and complete second semester subjects: including weekly planning guide and develop lesson plans;
- facilitate further training in providing feedback to students;
- review the Fast Track Program (FTP), results and outcomes; and
- discuss and participate in evaluation of the FTP and program of curriculum development.



The Team from WHO CC UTS at Don Bosco Technical Institute

Workshop

As part of this program, a final Health Professional Education workshop for CHW and Nursing Educators was held in April - May 2024. Focusing on curriculum implementation evaluation and planning for future semesters, the objectives of this workshop were to:

Fifty one (51) participants attended the workshop from 19 provinces across PNG. Eleven (11) educators were unable to attend due to illness or transport issues.



Group activities on day one of the final FTP workshop

The SHWE Project Secretariat based at the NDoH (Mrs Mary Roroi, Ms Shirlyn Belden and Ms Marie Kavu) coordinated the workshop logistics on the ground, including travel and accommodation arrangements.

Day 1: The workshop opened with a prayer by Mrs Julie Dopsie (HRH Training) and a formal welcome to participants by Mrs Mary Kililo (Technical Adviser – Pre service and Health). Mrs Kililo gave opening remarks, followed by a review and update of Program progress.

Educational sessions then commenced with interactive presentations from the WHO CC UTS educators. Associate Professor Caroline Havery outlined the research being undertaken by the UTS team on the SHWE Program, and focus group discussions, encouraging their active participation. Ms Suzanne Rochester then presented on strategies to improve student feedback.

learning activities conducted in previous workshops and developing weekly plans. At the end of each day, a general feedback and program evaluation session was facilitated by Ms Ali Moloney with the larger group. Acting Program Lead Mr Jeremy Syme and two staff from PATH visited the workshop at the end of Day Four to hear presentations and Mr Syme addressed the group, acknowledging their hard work and commitment to health education in PNG as the “the end of the beginning”.

Day 4: Following the opening prayer and recap of the previous day, short presentations were given by participants from each school or institute that had started to implement the new curriculum. Educators gave some background about their respective institutions, achievements to date, challenges and lessons learned. Pleasingly, despite the challenges associated with implementing a revised program, the



PNG Educators and presenters from WHO CC UTS who participated in the final FTP workshop.

To conclude the day, Prof Di Brown (WHO CC UTS), Mrs Kililo and Ms Ali Moloney (WHO CC UTS) provided feedback on results from the FTP, followed by a closing prayer. As homework, participants prepared for presentations from their respective schools and institutes happening later in the week.

Day 2 and 3: Each day commenced with a morning prayer, reflection on the previous day’s learning and a plan of action. Participants worked together in small groups to develop Semester Two subjects for the DGN and CHW Certificate programs, whilst building on

presentations illustrated the benefits of implementing the revised teaching and learning strategies developed in the FTP. Teachers in both CHW and DGN programs shared that their students are engage more actively with their learning, seem to be learning better and improving class attendance. They also reported that teaching staff are enjoying the revised ways of teaching as they have time to research for lessons, resulting in improved quality of information that they are disseminating.

During the morning session, Ms Lina Wam (Human Resource Manager, NDoH) joined the workshop to hear presentations and deliver a short address to the

group. She acknowledged the importance of the work by health educators to improve the quality of care for the people of PNG and encouraged participants to continue with their journey and feel a sense of achievement about their work with the project and for health education. She also announced the date for the official launch of the new Curriculums as 6 June 2024, and thanked the NDOH and WHO CC UTS teams for their work with the project over the past 3 years.

Day 5:

The final day of the workshop opened with a morning prayer and reflection that included group activities and discussion around the participants' experience of the workshop and program, and future continuing professional development needs.

The Technical Adviser from Christian Health Services addressed and congratulated the group, followed by a presentation of certificates by Ms Kililo. The majority of participants (>60%) who had successfully completed all the self-directed learning module and assessments received a Certificate of Achievement which will enable them to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning once the proposed Health Professional Education Programs are accredited. Those who attended and participated in all the workshops, including detailed subject development, but did not complete the learning modules and assessments received a Certificate of Attendance.



WHO CC UTS academic staff cheering participants as they receive their certificates presented by Mrs Kililo and Prof Rumsey.

The workshop ended with a group lunch to celebrate the completion of the FTP and also the retirement of Dr Nina Joseph, Registrar for the PNG Nursing Council.



Mrs Mary Kililo (NDoH) with Dr Nina Joseph who was celebrating her retirement from the PNG Nursing Council.

Other Achievements

Research, monitoring and evaluation on the FTP

During the workshop, Ms Lisa Townsend (Senior Lecturer) and Ms Amanda Neill (Program Manager M&E) from the WHO CC UTS carried out focus group sessions and discussions with six small groups of consenting workshop participants, gathering their feedback on program progress and issues associated with implementation of the new curriculums to date.

The data collected will provide evidence for the evaluation of the SHWE project in line with research ethics approval. The results will be included in a SHWE project research paper, and a project monitoring & evaluation report.

Implementation of Approved Curricula:

Certificate IV for the Community Health Workers (CHW) curriculum received formal approval from the PNG Medical Board in August 2023. This approved CHW Curriculum has been disseminated to the CHW schools who will continue to implement this over the next two years.

The revised DGN was endorsed by the PNG Nursing Council in June 2023 and an approval letter was sent to DHERST in August 2023. Final approval is pending by the DHERST Board on academic curriculum content. This will be a milestone achievement for the project and for nursing education in PNG.

Next Steps:

With the successful completion of FTP training, the focus is shifting to remaining project work. Ideally, under the proposed Stage Two of the program, work will continue on the development of a Bachelor of Health Professional Education (BHPE) with UPNG in the future, and FTP participants will be given some advanced standing for this course.

Upcoming events include:

- SWHE Program Steering Committee meeting on 6 May, 2024;
- Official national launch of the new CHW and DGN curriculums on 6 June, 2024 (date to be confirmed alongside the South Pacific Nursing Forum that will be held from 4 to 7 June in PNG).
- Upcoming workshop and information sessions for principals of schools of nursing and CHW institutes to be held in June (date to be confirmed).