



Ministry of Health

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

New Decree now effective

THE new Medical and Dental Practitioner Decree 2010 came into effect yesterday (February 1, 2010).

Health Permanent Secretary Dr Sala Saketa said the new Decree will protect the health and safety of the public in relation to the practice of medicine and dentistry.

She said this would be achieved through all medical and dental practitioners and students required to register with the Fiji Medical Council and the Fiji Dental Council.

The Decree repeals and replaces the Medical and Dental Practitioners Act (Cap 213) and makes significant changes to the system of registration of medical and dental practitioners.

It retains as statutory bodies the Fiji Medical Council and the Fiji Dental Council but gives them more powers and makes them more accountable.

“They will have responsibility for the protection of the public, by ensuring the highest possible professional standards of medical and dental practice,” Dr Saketa said.

“That came into effect from yesterday, February 1, and we request all medical and dental practitioners to take note of this.”

The Decree guides the professional performance and conduct of all dental and medical practitioners in the country, with a special section dealing with the establishment of a Medical and Dental Professional Conduct Tribunal.

The Fiji Medical Council (FMC) and the Fiji Dental Council (FDC) will now have nine members each, with the Permanent Secretary for Health continuing as Chairman of both corporate bodies.

Included in the board memberships are the Dean of the School of Medicine from the Fiji National University and the Dean of Umanand School of Medicine at the University of Fiji.

At the same time the Decree outlines the establishment of the Fiji College of General Practitioners as a corporate body.

The college will help in advising the Fiji Medical Council, on or to conduct, appropriate training courses for medical students intending to enter general practice and will also help in providing scholarship for students intending to enter general practice.

The Decree also outlines the establishment of the Fiji Medical and Dental Secretariat, which would provide administrative and secretarial services to each council and also receive and process applications for registration amongst its other functions.

All medical and dental officers can register for life but all registered persons who intend to practice in Fiji will be required to have a current practice license, which will be subject to annual renewal.

Renewal will be dependent on fulfillment of continuing performance development (CPD) requirement, payment of the renewal fee and compliance with immigration laws and work permits.

The Decree also outlines fines that could be dished out on those who do not follow the law, with fines ranging from \$250.00 to \$75,000.00.

Under the new Decree members of the public can lodge complaints against medical and dental practitioners.

Those complaints will have to be lodged with the Professional Conduct Committee, who will then forward their recommendations to the Medical and Dental Professional Conduct Tribunal.

The Tribunal will consist of 3 members appointed by the Chief Justice, one of which would be a High Court judge who will be the Tribunal President.

The Tribunal will make decisions on complaints raised with them through the Secretariat and impose fines as well.

The Decree covers all medical and dental officers within the civil service and the private sector.

Ends.....

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