



NEW MCH CLINIC TO BOOST THE HEALTH SERVICES ON KORO ISLAND



Minister for Health and Medical Services Hon. Rosy Akbar with the Australian High Commissioner to Fiji, John Feakes during the official opening of the Koro MCH Centre

There is good news for the people of Koro Island as they now have a new Maternal Health and Child Health Centre (MCH) which has been built through a strengthened collaboration between Fiji's Ministry of Health and Medical Services and the Australia Government.

New MCH centre was officially handed over to the Minister for Health and Medical Services, Hon. Rosy Akbar by the Australian High Commissioner to Fiji, John Feakes at Koro Island this week. Following the destruction caused by tropical cyclone Winston in 2016, the Maternal Health and Child Health Centre based within the Koro Health Centre in Nasau has been renovated and upgraded through the funding of FJD634,000 by the Australian Government.

In handing over the Centre, Mr Feakes said the resilience of the people of Koro Island was an inspiration for many.

"Australia is honoured to have been part of the TC Winston response and recovery work and to support

the rebuilding effort – so important to the lives of the people of Koro," he said.

Minister Akbar thanked the Australian Government for its generosity and commitment to assist Fiji in its rebuilding efforts.

"We are proud of our strengthened collaboration with Australia and whether it is building a road, school, health facility, we know that the payoff from these investments will benefit Fijians today, tomorrow, and in future generations. We are committed to capitalize on our partnerships to take our health services to a new level.

"The new Maternal and Child Health Clinic is uniquely designed as it remarkably consolidates MCH services under one roof. It incorporates the Child Health Clinic, the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) Program along with an emergency delivery room. It is a great boost to the health services here on the Koro Island," Minister Akbar elaborated.

NEW NURSES HOME UNDER CONSTRUCTION



The new Nurses Home under construction near Rakiraki Subdivisional Hospital

The nurses working at Rakiraki Subdivisional Hospital are eagerly looking forward for the new Nurses Accommodation facility also known as "Nurses Home" which is currently under construction in Ra. The project is administered by the Construction Implementation Unit at the Ministry of Economy.

While speaking briefly about the new Nurses Home, the Principal Medical Officer Rakiraki Hospital, Dr Mere Vakawaletabua says the new facility is being rebuilt after the previous nurses accommodation facility got destroyed in a fire incident.

"The old nurse's accommodation had only 8 rooms and one self-contained room with the bathroom and washroom on its own. The new facility will be much better and bigger, it will have 12 bedrooms, one conference room, one dining room, one kitchen, one lounge area, one meeting room, laundry area, one storage room, 3 washrooms, 2 showers and one spare room.

"We are really pleased that the new accommodation

facility is much more spacious and convenient for our nurses. We are grateful to the Government for building this new facility and for recognising the work that our nurses do," Dr Vakawaletabua said.

Meanwhile, the Rakiraki subdivisional hospital and health centre has also received minor renovations and upgrading works done. The Namarai Health Centre in Ra which was also damaged during tropical cyclone Winston has also been repaired and a medical officer has resumed duties at the centre with the assistance of 2 nurses to manage the renovated facility.

Dr Vakawaletabua said that they are also grateful for the improved staffing at the Rakiraki subdivisional hospital which enables them to now attend to around 800 to 900 patients a day. Currently, the hospital has 9 doctors, 19 nurses at the hospital and there are 17 public health nurses within the Ra subdivision.

The hospital covers a population of approximately around 30,000 and there are 11 other health facilities within the Ra subdivision.

PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTION LEADS TO DECREASE IN TYPHOID CASES



The Ministry of Health and Medical Services conducts Handwashing programs at one of the primary schools in Rakiraki

Rakiraki that once used to be known as the hotspot for the typhoid cases have seen drastic drop in the cases in recent years. This has been made possible through the intensified community awareness and public health intervention programs undertaken by the Health Ministry's Environment Health Team and health inspectors in Rakiraki.

A key to achieving this positive result has been through the awareness of Handwashing programs in schools and communities. The health inspectors have reached out to many students in primary and secondary schools providing them with information on the importance of handwashing.

Since the establishment of the hand washing

programs in schools and communities, the team noticed drastic drop in the cases. In 2014 there were a total of 46 typhoid cases in Rakiraki, then 2015 it further dropped to 18 cases and then in 2016 it dropped to 14 cases and last year a slight increase to 16 cases and this year, the team have seen only 5 typhoid recorded so far.

The public health team has been motivated by the incredible results and they continue to reachout to schools and communities through outreach awareness programs emphasising on the importance of good hygiene practise. They continue to work with stakeholders and corporate organisations like Punjas, to install handwashing stations in schools and intensify awareness at education level.

CUBAN DEPUTY FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER MEETS FIJI'S HEALTH MINISTER



(Pictured on the right) Minister for Health and Medical Services Hon. Rosy Akbar with Cuban Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr Rogetto Sierra Diaz

"Minister Akbar highlighted to His Excellency that there is a need to develop the area of specialised medical expertise in Fiji."

The Cuban Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr Rogetto Sierra Diaz made a courtesy call to the Minister for Health and Medical Services Hon. Rosy Akbar this week at the Health Ministry's headquarters in Suva.

During the meeting, the two counterparts pledged to strengthened collaboration in the development of the health sector. It also provided opportunities to look at ways for expanding links between the two countries and identify specific needs to boost the health services in Fiji.

As part of the ongoing ties, there are 32 students who are currently studying medicines in Cuba. The first batch of students returned last year and currently doing their internship at in Fiji.

Minister Akbar highlighted to His Excellency that there is a need to develop the area of specialised medical expertise in Fiji.

"There is a great potential to train our people so if we were to further progress with this cooperation I would really like our clinicians to be trained to the specific areas", she said. His Excellency Mr Diaz welcomed the sentiments expressed by Madam Minister and assured that Cuba will progressively work with Fiji to give support in the development of health services.

Minister Akbar also thanked the Cuban Government for its support in sending two doctors from Cuba to serve in Fiji aftermath of tropical cyclone Winston.

The meeting ended on a high note, with both counterparts exchanging information in key areas of collaboration and development interest.