

# Weekly Health updates

May 2018

MINISTRY of HEALTH & MEDICAL SERVICES  
Shaping Fiji's Health



## OVER 45,000 STUDENTS IMMUNISED THROUGH NATIONAL MEN C IMMUNISATION PROGRAM

In its 3rd week of the rollout of the National Meningococcal (Men C) Immunisation Program has been able to reachout to total of 45,696 children aged 1-19 years across the Central Division and Ra Sub-Division who have been immunised.

The nation-wide mass immunisation campaign led by Ministry of Health and Medical Services is supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO). This campaign aims to vaccinate up to 325,000 children and adolescents against meningococcal C disease - the age group most at risk of getting the disease.

The immunisation program began in the Central Division and Ra subdivision on the May 14th 2018 and will continue until Friday 29th June 2018. It targets all children and teenagers aged 1-19 years and is currently being delivered at all schools, health centres and nursing stations within the Central Division and Ra Subdivision. Immunisation roll out to the Western, Northern and Eastern Divisions will follow.

- For children aged 1-5 years old, who does not attend school, parents and guardians can get them immunised by taking them to the nearest health centre or nursing station.
- For children aged 5 -17 years old, and in school, immunisation teams are visiting schools and immunising children under parental consent. If any child misses out on their immunisation at school,

he or she can be immunised at the nearest health centre or nursing station.

- For children aged 18-19 years old, undertaking tertiary level studies, stays home or is working, can get immunised by going to the nearest health centre or nursing station.
- Consent forms are provided to children under the age of 18 years, and immunisation will only be given to those children with a signed parental consent form.

The Health Ministry advises that Men C immunisation is safe and effective and is used in many immunisation programs around the world.

Whilst the rollout is carried out in the Central Division and Ra Sub-Division, the Family Health team is also conducting trainings for the nurses in the Northern Division. Similar trainings are also being organised for the nurses in the Western and Eastern Divisions. The health workers will work to immunise the children and adolescents across Fiji, with the campaign initially focusing on the most at risk groups. Initial focus is for the Central Division and Ra Sub-Divisions in the west and then it will continue throughout the country until all children within the ages 1 to 19 years receive their immunisation.

For more information visit the Men C Immunisation Program and Meningococcal Disease webpage under Your Health tab on [www.health.gov.fj](http://www.health.gov.fj)

## MEDICAL FACILITIES UNDERGO REFURBISHMENT IN REMOTE ISLANDS



Health Medical team headed by Hon O Connor with Island Staff Nurse on Nairai Island Nursing Station.

Medical services in the maritime zone will be further strengthened and as such the health facilities will undergo general maintenance and specific attention in order to provide conducive facilities to serve the people.

This was highlighted during the visit by the health team headed by the Assistant Minister for health and medical services Hon. Alex O Connor to the Lomaiviti Health facilities week

Visits such as this provides an opportune time to identify the needs of the facilities and how best the Health Ministry can address them for the ease of the medical staff at these remote facilities.

Some concerns were raised by the nurses at the stations which includes communication and transportation.

Hon. O Connor has assured the staff that the Ministry

takes note of their concerns and will definitely explore ways to assist them with their requests.

"Your concerns are noted and we are already working on these and you can be rest assured that these will be attended as soon as possible. We have allocated new vehicles and Ambulances to all sub-divisional hospitals and they will also service the nearby nursing stations and will be on call any hour of the day", Hon O Connor said.

Meanwhile, the medical team also conducted minor surgeries such as dentistry and circumcision which reduced the financial burden on the people as these surgeries are often provided at the health centres and by qualified medical officers.

This reduces the risks of complicated services being dealt with at the nursing stations and patients are attended by senior officers with enhanced results.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS BOOST HEALTHCARE SERVICES



Batiki Village health worker Mrs Loata Marama ( second from right) With Assistant Health Minister Hon O'Connor and other health staff on the Island of Batiki.

Village health workers have immensely contributed to the health services on the remote islands in attending particularly maternity cases which has assisted the staff in sharing their workloads.

At times when the nurses are out of the station on community outreach programs, these health workers stood in to provide the necessary health care to the needy patients in the villages.

Batiki villager Mrs. Loata Marama has been working as community health worker for the last fifteen years said she has assisted the patients on numerous occasions and has enjoyed the work.

"I have often helped patients for child delivery and minor health issues and I was often assisted by the nurses at the health facility. I believe that services to humanity is a good way to assist needy people and I enjoy being involved in such activities" Mrs. Marama said.

The Assistant Minister for Health Hon O Connor met Mrs. Marama while on official visit to the health facilities in the Lomaiviti group last week and acknowledged her contribution towards the provision of health care services and has assured her that the Ministry will certainly consider rewarding her for the voluntarily rendering her services for the benefit of the people.

Rollout of the National Immunisation for Men.C Program being carried out at the central division and Ra Subdivision schools from May 14th to June 29th 2018

## FIJI TO COMMEMORATE WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY



Communities at the Health Ministry's Blood Drive in the western division

The Ministry of Health and Medical Services in partnership with World Health Organisation and Fiji Red Cross Society will mark the World Blood Donor Day on the Saturday 16th of June 2018. There will be a national program organised in Bua, Nabouwalu in the northern division to celebrate the event which will be centered on the theme, "Be there for someone else. Give blood. Share life."

National Manager for Ambulance and Blood Services at the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Mr Josefa Bolaqace elaborated on the objectives of the celebrations.

"It would be a great awareness platform for the blood services and also an opportunity to acknowledge the support of the blood donors in Fiji. As of last year, we have nearly 17,000 blood donors and through increased awareness we hoping to intensify our outreach and increase the number of blood donors in Fiji.

"Usually the World Blood Donor Day is marked on the 14th of June but we have kept our national event on the Saturday 16th June to enable more families to participate. During this week, mini celebrations

will also be held at the other divisions and coincide together with the oratory contests for school students.

"This nationwide awareness will help people realise on the importance of their role in terms of blood donation. It will help us achieve our targets for voluntary blood donors. Currently, the Ministry also has 3 blood bank donation bus that conducts the outreach awareness and blood drives," Mr Bolaqace said.

The World Blood Donor Day serves to thank voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood and to raise awareness of the need for regular blood donations to ensure the quality, safety and availability of blood and blood products for patients in need.

Transfusion of blood and blood products helps save millions of lives every year. It can help patients suffering from life-threatening conditions live longer and with a higher quality of life, and supports complex medical and surgical procedures. It also has an essential, life-saving role in maternal and child care and during the emergency response to man-made and natural disasters.

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