

PIHOA Secretariat Staff Briefing Notes

I. Human Resources for Health / Workforce Development

Dr. Gregory Dever, MD, Regional HRH Coordinator

RMI In-Country Nurse Practitioner Training and Clinical Internship

On March 2, 2018, twelve seasoned Marshallese nurses completed their 18-month Nurse Practitioner Training Program (NPTP) conducted by Fiji National University's (FNU) Fiji School of Nursing under contract to PIHOA. The NPTP was funded through a grant from the Office of Insular Affairs/US Department of Interior. On June 8, 2018, the FNU Chancellor Ikbal Jannif, Vice Chancellor, Professor Nigel Healey, and College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Dean Dr. William May, officiated over the first ever inaugural graduation ceremony held in the RMI.



From FNUNIKUA: Issue No.5 / 20 June 2018

In March 2018, the NP graduates began a 1-year Clinical Internship under the auspices of RMI MOHHS. The PIHOA Secretariat assisted with planning of the internship structure, including development of intern and rotation assessment mechanisms and tools. PIHOA also coordinated the development of the first ever primary care clinical guidelines for the RMI MOHHS. Guidelines development was a major undertaking, taking several months to complete, involving many on medical staff of Majuro Hospital, and extensive review of current evidence-based management for the spectrum of conditions encountered by primary care providers. The guidelines are in review for endorsement and will be used in training of NP interns. PIHOA also assisted with recruitment of a dedicated NP Internship Instructor, Viema Bale, an experienced NP program instructor and midwife from Fiji who is on contract with PIHOA until end September 2018; and, is being picked up by contract from RMI MOHHS for the remainder of the NP internship.

This is the first in-country NP Training program conducted in-the region since the early 1980s when the University of Guam and the Guam Department of Health and Social Services trained 6 RNs who then went on to pass the US Family Nurse Practitioner Boards. The RMI NPTP, like FNU's in-country

Bachelor's in Public Health Nursing Program conducted in Palau (2014-2015), have demonstrated that high-level undergraduate and postgraduate nurse training programs can be successfully delivered in- country in the USAPIs.

Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow Program at COM-FSM – Addressing the local physician and dentist shortage in the FSM



Photo courtesy of Dr. Paul Dacanay and Dr. Brian Mangum, May 2018

On May 18, 2018, twelve students graduated from the HRSA/HCOP-funded *Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow Program* at COM-FSM's National Campus on Pohnpei. The DDFT is a rigorous five-semester pre-medical and pre-dental program which was designed to ready high functioning applicants for the rigors of succeeding at regional medical and dental schools. Specifically, the curriculum was crafted to meet the English fluency, study and computer skills, problem-based learning (PBL) and massive basic science vocabulary challenges facing students in the first semester of medical and dental school at FNU. The program, which introduced problem-based learning (PBL) to COM-FSM, has been a collaborative effort by JABSOM, PIHOA, FSM National Government and COM-FSM. The program was conceived, implemented and managed by PIHOA, with funding captured by JABSOM (HRSA's Health Careers Opportunity Program grant). In an effort to provide hands-on experience in medicine and oral health, the student cohorts weekly don hospital uniforms and participate in supervised shadowing experiences at Pohnpei State Hospital and its Community Health Center clinics.

The top academic graduate of Cohort 1, Scarlett Lebehn, was bestowed the first Dr. Eleuwel K. Pretrick Award for Excellence in Health Careers. Already the graduates have filled out applications to regional medical and dental schools and to local and international funding agencies which provide scholarship support for medical and dental school training.

Behind Cohort 1 are thirteen DDFT students from Cohort 2 who are commencing their fourth COM-FSM semester and are scheduled to graduate in May 2019. As enough US federal resources have been captured by COM-FSM and JABSOM to fund DDFT Cohorts 2 through 5, the next task is to see whether adequate DDFT numbers graduate from regional medical/dental schools and return to assist in

tackling the NCD and communicable challenges in the FSM. When Dr. William May, Dean of FNU's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, site visited the DDFT Program on June 11-12, 2018. Besides being impressed with the DDFT Program, there was discussion at COM-FSM and in the FSM Vice President's office about the feasibility of establishing a satellite FNU medical program (years 1 through 3) in the FSM, in order to accommodate the potential numbers of future DDFT graduates.

PIHOA's Pacific Basin Public Health Training Center, COM-FSM

PIHOA's PBPHTC under contract to the University of Arizona (UAZ) School of Public Health, has just completed its fourth and final year in providing public health learning face-to-face and by distance short courses for the current PH workforce in the FSM (with additional USAPIs accessing the courses online). PIHOA has recently been notified that funding for another 5-year grant cycle has been secured by the UAZ School of Public Health, with PIHOA continuing to be an implementation partner.

The PIPHTC is based within the Division of Health Sciences at COM-FSM and is coordinated by Dr. Brian Mangum. Year to date, Dr. Mangum has provided 48 short courses involving 1,106 learning encounters using pre-recorded videos and/or PDF course packets sent via email, which includes reading materials, checklists, practical examples, and links to outside resources, as adapted for the practice environment of the Pacific. Other activities have included teaching 2 PH Certificate courses, teaching an undergraduate PH course at COM-FSM's Public Health Program, helping to develop an Institutional Review Board at COM-FSM and a plethora of other activities. Of note was Dr. Mangum's Zoom presentation from Fiji to the Northern Pacific Environmental Health Association Meeting on July 18, 2018 (along with Dr. Paul Dacanay, Chair, COM-FSM Division of Health Sciences from Pohnpei), regarding coordinating Environmental Health training at COM-FSM for FSM EH workers. Additionally, he recently met with the Dean of the Umanand Prasad School of Medicine at the University of Fiji (UF) to discuss entry of DDFT graduates into Fiji University's Medical School and discussed articulation possibilities for graduates from COM-FSM's Public Health Program to matriculate in Bachelor's and Master's-level Public Health courses at UF.

Dr. Mangum's cumulative 2018 August Report for the PIHTP Grant is available on request from Dr. Mangum at epidemiology.doc@gmail.com.

EMT Training in Palau

On August 22, 2018, Palau Community College (PCC) graduated its third cohort of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). Nine firefighters completed the program of which 6 will receive their EMT Certificates and be eligible for EMT licensure in the Republic of Palau. Edward "Chico" Caballero, a Master EMT Trainer on loan from Kapiolani Community College (KCC), conducted the EMT course. As reported, 2 EMT graduates from Cohort 2 were sent to KCC for a semester to learn EMT supervisory and continuing professional education skills. Upon returning to Palau, they assisted Mr. Caballero in training the third cohort.

Mr. Caballero has become a regional resource and is helping the FSM and Guam in strengthening their emergency medical response capacity. The Palau EMT Training is a collaborative process between PCC, Palau MOH, the Palau Ministry of Justice and KCC, and can be viewed as a training model suitable for replication in other jurisdictions. For more information contact Mr. Caballero, ecaballe@hawaii.edu.

Northern Pacific Environmental Health Association Meeting, July 17-19, 2018, Guam

Funded through PIHOA's CDC Zika Response funds, Northern Pacific Environmental Health Association (NPEHA) leadership met on Guam to complete its By-Laws and continue its Strategic Planning exercise. Dr. David Dyjack, CEO of the US National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), joined the NPEHA meeting to provide guidance and to act as a resource to connect NPEHA to training resources available through his organization. The meeting was notable for introduction of the NPEHA leadership to Zoom as a distance communication and learning platform with presentations by FNU's School of Public Health, UAZ's Department of Environmental Health, and COM- FSM's Division of Health Sciences (Pohnpei National Campus).

HRH Strategic Planning Meeting in Palau

From April 24-26, 2018, the Palau health leadership were joined by representatives from the Ministries of Justice and Education, the Palau National Congress and PCC, to begin the Human Resources for Health strategic planning process for the Republic of Palau. Professor Ian Rouse, former Vice Chancellor of Fiji National University and Dean FNU's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, was contracted by PIHOA to facilitate the meeting process. A draft Strategic Plan, which is a work in progress, was developed and has been distributed to the MOH leadership and will be sent out to all participants. Five committees will be developed to address the key issues identified in the planning process and report back to the core leadership to complete the plan.

Human Resources Management Training in the FSM and American Samoa

Mr. Vimal Vikash was contracted by PIHOA to continue HR Training at the Chuuk State CHC (May 28 – June 1, 2018), Pohnpei State Health Services (June 4-8, 2018), and the Department of Health in American Samoa (June 12-22, 2018). The trainings combined HR coaching and use of the HR software Orange, installed previously (along with hands-on training) in these sites by PIHOA consultant, Marleen Ngirmateuker. PIHOA has recently been informed that CDC funding will be available in FY19 to continue HR training activities.

Acknowledgements:

- **NPTP Internship:** Dr. Mark Durand, PIHOA, and RMI MOHHS.
- **Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow:** Dr. Brian Mangum, COM-FSM Faculty and DDFT Contractor, PIHOA; Dr. Paul Dacanay, Chair, Division of Health Sciences, COM-FSM; Robert Spegal, DDFT Pohnpei Project Director, PIHOA; and Pohnpei State Health Services.
- **Pacific Island Public Health Training Center:** Dr. Brian Mangum, Coordinator. PIPHTC, and COM-FSM Division of Health Sciences.
- **EMT Training in Palau:** Edward Caballero, MBA, CCP-C, FP-C, Assistant Professor, Emergency Medical Services, KCC; and PCC, Palau MOH and Ministry of Justice.

Pacific Basin Primary Care Office

Dr. Angela Techur-Pedro, Pacific Basin Primary Care Office Coordinator

Health Professional shortage is a serious barrier to access to primary care in the USAPIs. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) designates health professional shortage areas (HPSA) as

defined by [42 CFR Part 5 - DESIGNATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONAL\(S\) SHORTAGE AREAS](#). The PIHOA Pacific Basin Primary Care Office (PBPCO), in partnership with HRSA, helps the USAPIs improve access to primary care by qualifying eligible jurisdictions as health professional shortage areas (HPSAs), or medically underserved areas/populations (MUAPs). Using the HPSA and MUAP designations, PIHOA's PBPCO assists the USAPIs qualify to recruit primary care providers committed to serving areas of need from the HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW) National Health Service Corps (NHSC). In addition, the USAPIs also qualify for resources from the Bureau of Primary Care (BPC) committed to providing resources to MUAPs to increase access to primary care. A good example of this is eligibility for Community Health Center (CHC) funding.

The purpose of this brief is to highlight key activities and accomplishments of the PBPCO between April 1 – August 31, 2018 (first half of FY 2019) in its effort to facilitate access to primary care for the USAPIs.

1. Travels

- a. Palau-Guam-Saipan: 6/19-30/2018
 - a. Primary Care Provider Data Collection – Website Development, Health Professional Membership Directory Booklet, and Update PCP list
 - b. Palau:
 - Ministry of Health Credentialing Office (NA);
 - Belau Medical Society (BMS);
 - Pacific Basin Medical Association (PBMA);
 - c. Guam:
 - GMS Health Professional Membership Directory Booklet; GMS has an existing membership website but requested host subscription fees support; GMA has a website but needed **NO** support;
 - Guam Medicaid Office – concept phase of a provider database with linkages between the Medicaid Office and the Guam Health Professional Licensing Office (Guam HPLO) that includes data to meet HPSA data requirements;
 - Guam HPLO - concept phase of developing a provider database with linkages between the Medicaid Office and the Guam Health Professional Licensing Office (Guam HPLO) that includes data to meet HPSA data requirements;
 - d. CNMI:
 - CHCC: Has no health professional associations;
 - Northern Marianas College (NMC): planning for NHSC site visit



- b. Bethesda, Maryland: July 22 -28, 2018
 - o State Primary Care Office Annual Reverse Site Visit in Bethesda, MD
 - o PIHOA-HRSA leadership Meetings in Rockville, MD

2. HPSA/MUAPs

Accomplishments: On July 4, 2018, 24 Primary, Dental, and Mental Health HPSA update designation applications submitted for all: AS, CNMI, Guam, FSM (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei), RMI, and Palau.

HPSA/MUAP Activities:

1. Data Collection:
 - a. Provider surveys and human resources databases:
 - b. Demographic and other health indicators (i.e. Resident population, tourist, IMR, LBW, TFR, poverty, prevalence of alcohol/substance abuse, fluoridation)
2. HPSA applications in SDMS
3. Facility HPSA Application for Saipan Correctional Center—did not meet minimum population to provider ratio (Janet Guerrero and Commissioner V. Attao)

3. NHSC Scholarships and Loan Repayment Programs (SLRP)

Accomplishment: PIHOA assisted CNMI CHCC develop their SLRP application by contracted 2 UH JBASOM staff (Dr. Kelly Withy and Erica Davis). On June 7, 2018, CNMI submitted a \$1 million dollars State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) grant application. On August 10, 2018, CNMI CHCC CEO Esther Muna received the Notice of Award.

SLRP Activities:

1. Conducted 2 face-to-face and 2 teleconference meetings with Guam Memorial Hospital (GMH) representatives (CEO Peter Camacho, Asst. Administrator of Nursing Services, Zennia Pecina, Peter Sgro, GMH Hospital Director of Business Development & Strategic Planning);
2. Conducted 2 face-to-face and 4 teleconference meetings with CHCC representatives (CHCC CEO E. Muna, J. Guerrero, V. Camacho, and S. Ogumura);
3. Recruited SLRP expert grant writer, Dr. Kelley Withy, Hawaii State SLP and AHEC Director, Consultant.
4. Dr. Withy recruited Erica Davis, AHEC Associate Director, expert grant writer.
5. Coordinated meetings and assisted Dr. Withy, Erica, GMH, and CNMI CHCC work with Grants.gov to prepare SLP applications
6. Region IX Site Visit by Cmdr. Darren Orgel, DRO
 - o Meetings with CDR Darren Orgel at the PIHOA Honolulu Office
 - o Coordinated meetings with site point of contacts (POCs)
 - a. Guam Medical Society (Dr. R. Leon Guerrero)
 - b. Guam Medical Hospital (Zennia Pecina and Paula Manzon)
 - c. CNMI-Northern Mariana College (P. Coleman)
 - d. Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center (Dr. R. Vega)

4. Technical Assistance for NHSC New Site Certification

Accomplishments: N/A

Activities:

1. GMH – submitted but approval is pending revisions of required documents;
2. Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center – planning initiated only.

5. Other HRSA-Related Activities

- a. Support to Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant 2019 Application Review
 - Palau – August 20, 2018
 - Guam – August 22, 2018
- b. UNFPA – Attended UNFPA's Pacific Committee on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Workforce Technical Working Group Meeting in Fiji

II. Regional Laboratory Strengthening Initiative

1. Improving Lab Quality Management Systems (LQMS) in the USAPI

GOAL: By 2020, one or more labs in the freely-associated states of the FSM, Palau and RMI seek lab accreditation with an accrediting institution of their choice (preferably ISO 15189)

Progress:

- a. Provision of assistance with the recruitment of foreign workers in:
 - o Yap State Hospital Lab (hired and commenced work in March 2018)
 - o Kosrae State Hospital Lab (lab management support) – on-going since March 2018
 - o Ebeye Medical Health Center (microbiology) – recruitment in progress
 - o Majuro Hospital Lab (blood bank/hematology, microbiology) – just being notified

2. Enhancing Level 2 laboratory services at the Guam Public Health Laboratory (GPHL) and the USAPIs

GOAL: By 2022, re-establish confirmatory testing for Typhoid, Cholera and food and water-borne infections at GPHL and coordination of USAPI specimen testing at GPHL (flu, zika, dengue, etc.)

Progress:

- o Currently assisting GPHL with the hiring of staff for a microbiology position.
- o On-going support for communication and consultation for Level 2 reference lab testing for specified infectious diseases

3. Laboratory preparedness and infectious disease surveillance in the USAPI

GOAL: By 2022, strengthen lab surveillance through effective facilitation of testing and specimen transport for reference and confirmatory lab testing during outbreak situations

Progress:

- a. Infectious Testing at Hawaii State Laboratory (HSL) and GPHL for the USAPIs
 - o On-going zika virus, dengue and other infectious disease testing at HSL and GPHL for the USAPI
- b. Specimen Shipping in the USAPI
 - o On-going effective use of the PIHOA shipping mechanism and PIHOA Lab Revolving Fund for specimen transport to Guam Public Health Lab and Hawaii State Laboratory, Honolulu, Hawaii.
 - o Recently certified trainers (x16) of shippers in the USAPI.
- c. Laboratory preparedness and response plans
 - o Templates for laboratory preparedness and response plans have been provided to all USAPI lab managers/supervisors as of August 9 2018.
- d. Strengthening biosafety in the USAPIs
 - o Reinforcement of steps in conducting risk assessments in labs and practical application of risk assessment findings in each lab.
 - o Risk assessment templates have been provided to all USAPI labs managers/supervisors and lab biosafety officers as of August 8, 2018.
- e. Antimicrobial resistance surveillance in the USAPIs

- Draft plan for the implementation and monitoring of AMR in the USAPIs proposed to the Association of the USAPI Labs (AUL) and feedback received for on-going refinement of the plan

4. Onsite lab consultations and Technical Assistance

Palau

- Completed a 3-weeks refresher TB lab training at the Belau National Hospital Lab, Palau – April 23rd – May 11, 2018.
 - Number trained 4 (1 primary TB lab tech, 3 TB back-up techs)
- Completed the 2018 59th edition IATA dangerous goods regulations at the Belau National Hospital Lab: May 16 – 17, 2018
 - Number trained: 5
 - Number of certified shippers: 5
- Completed lab onsite visit for Belau National Hospital Lab on May 14 – 15 & 18, 2018.

Majuro, RMI

- Completed 2 weeks of TB mass screening assistance at the Majuro Hospital Lab
- Completed 2 weeks of TB lab supervision of the Kosrae TB lab tech on work-training attachment at the Majuro Hospital Lab.
- Completed lab onsite visit for Majuro Hospital Lab on August 28 – 31, 2018

American Samoa

- On request from American Samoa Department of Health's (ASDOH) new Lab Manager and CDC NCHHSTP, PIHOA supported the travel of TB Lab Technologist, Alan Mallari, to go to American Samoa to conduct GenXpert training to ASDOH's Lab Manager and staff for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea testing in June 2018. Special thank you to GPHL's Lab Manager, Anne-Marie Santos, for releasing Alan to go to American Samoa to conduct the training.



5. Training

- Successful delivery of the 2018 regional USAPI IATA shipping training of trainers (TOT): August 6 – 7, 2018.
 - All
- Successful completion of the 2018 regional USAPI biosafety enhancement training: August 8, 2018
- Successful completion of the 2018 regional USAPI laboratory preparedness and response strengthening training: August 9, 2018.

6. Communications, networking and collaborations with partner agencies/institutions

- a. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - o Completed the CDC regional lab strengthening funding proposal for FY2018-19 and submitted to Emi Chutaro (PIHOA ED)
- b. Association of the USAPI Laboratories (AUL)
 - o On-going interactive collaboration between AUL and PIHOA which helps provide support with the implementation of lab improvement activities in the USAPI.
- c. Pacific Community (SPC) collaboration
 - o Participation in conference calls for the Pacific Lab Technical Working Group (LTWG) for the finalization of an advocacy paper on strengthening medical laboratory services in Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) – a situational review of technical assistance needs and prioritisation of work plans.
 - o Attended SPC's Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network Coordinating Body, One Health and Clinical Services and Workforce Development meetings in Nadi, Fiji in April 2018
- d. World Health Organization
 - o Attended WHO's Pacific Health Security Technical Partners Meeting in Nadi, Fiji in April 2018

Greatest Challenges

1. Slow progress in the implementation of the LQMS recommended activities for improvement in USAPI labs (especially within the FAS).
2. Slow replenishment of the PIHOA lab revolving fund (LRF) (as per the PIHOA meeting resolution # 57-01).

Achievements/Outcomes

1. Effective use of the PIHOA Lab Revolving Fund and PIHOA shipping mechanism.
2. Re-certified IATA trainers of shippers in the USAPI labs.
3. Successful completion of biosafety reinforcement training for USAPI lab biosafety officers.
4. Successful initiation of lab preparedness and response planning with the USAPI lab managers/supervisors.

Primary interventions/activities for the next 12 months

1. SLMTA workshop #3 implementation in Yap, FSM (pilot lab).
2. On-going annual onsite USAPI lab visits/consultation.
3. Implementation of the antimicrobial resistance surveillance and monitoring activities in the USAPIs.

Issues for Board Consideration (in order of priority)

1. Hasten replenishment of the PIHOA Lab Revolving Fund as per the endorsed PIHOA Meeting Resolution # 57-01.
2. Support purchase of primary microbiology supplies to support antimicrobial resistance surveillance in the USAPIs.

III. Regional Epidemiology Unit and Performance Management

A. Strengthening Health Interventions in the Pacific (SHIP)/Data for Decision-Making (DDM)

The DDM program is a product of the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PPHSN) with academic accreditation from Fiji National University (FNU) College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. DDM is the first component of the SHIP Applied Epidemiology Fellowship.

The PIHOA Secretariat Regional Epidemiology Unit (REU) consisting of Dr. Thane Hancock (CDC Regional Career Epidemiology Field Officer, CDC Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR) co-located PIHOA), Dr. Haley Cash (Regional NCD Epidemiologist, CDC/PIHOA), and Dr. Mark Durand, PIHOA Regional Health Information Management Systems and Performance Management Coordinator, form the core faculty for the DDM/SHIP delivery in the USAPIs, supplemented by visiting Epidemiology consultants when they are available (or, if funding allows).

The DDM consists of five courses:

1. Introduction to Epidemiology and Field Epidemiology
2. Public Health Surveillance
3. Outbreak Investigations
4. Computing for Public Health Practice
5. Independent Field Epidemiology Project

Status of DDM delivery in the USAPIs in the last 6 months

	March 2018 to Sept 2018	Total
# of courses conducted	2 (Ebeye) + 2 Palau + 1 AS	46
# of participants	13 Ebeye + 12 Palau +12 AS	232
# participants completing (& passing) all courses	3 Catch-up RMI + 1 Catch-up FSM	77
On-site delivery completed	7 jurisdictions – Guam, American Samoa, Yap, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Majuro	
On-site delivery ongoing	3 jurisdictions – Ebeye, Palau, American Samoa (round 2)	

DDM Faculty: Dr. Thane Hancock, Dr. Haley Cash, Dr. Mark Durand, and Jill McCready (former PIHOA Zika Surge Response Epidemiologist co-located at RMI MOH)

Other DDM-SHIP Highlights:

- 1) The REU is actively working with an FNU-SPC-PIHOA task force to finalize a curriculum for the post-DDM components of the SHIP program. Based on preliminary findings from the DDM in-country impact evaluation, the REU is proposing in-country delivery of more advanced project-oriented course work toward the post-graduate diploma level as the next step in SHIP. Depending on approval of this curriculum by FNU, the REU may be able to roll out next stage before mid-2018.
- 2) DDM graduate, Delphine Abraham, published a manuscript: *"High prevalence of noncommunicable disease risk factors among adolescents in Pohnpei, Micronesia"* in the Hawai'i Journal of Medicine and Public Health (HJMMPH) most recent edition.

B. USAPI NCD Monitoring and Surveillance

With CDC support, Drs. Cash and Durand have both been heavily involved in the development and refinement of jurisdiction level NCD monitoring and surveillance plans in all USAPIs, both within and outside of the context of DDM course projects. These plans call for monitoring of core NCD indicators¹ including youth risk factors from high-school surveys, adult risk factor and disease prevalence from community-based surveys, cause specific NCD death rates from vital statistics databases, and policy mapping to identify gaps in core policies.² Drs. Cash and Durand also provide technical assistance with design and implementation of school-based surveys, community-based (Hybrid) surveys, and analysis of vital statistics data for measurement of death rates (e.g. for FSM in August 2018).

Hybrid surveys have been conducted and are ongoing throughout the region. These surveys combine indicators from multiple support partners into one survey tool and utilize local resources for implementation while building local staff capacity to sustain ongoing surveillance. The data collected from these surveys provide population prevalence data on numerous health outcomes and risk and protective factors. Data collected is not just self-report, but also includes physical and biochemical measurement for accurate estimation of NCDs. In the past 6 months, hybrid survey report has been finalized and endorsed for RMI. Active planning for hybrid surveys in Kosrae and Yap are underway, and remediation of technical problems with hybrid survey in American Samoa is ongoing. Data collection is ongoing in Guam in February 2018 (for “BRFSS-plus” which will add physical & biochemical measures to existing phone survey). Assistance has been provided with analysis of Rapid High School (youth NCD risk factors) survey in Chuuk.

In August 2016, the Board requested for the secretariat to provide assistance for completion of the Pacific Health Ministers-mandated Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action (MANA) dashboards. This is a more lengthy self-assessment of NCD-related capacities, policies, and activities for Pacific islands countries. The secretariat has provided assistance with completion of dashboards in all of our member jurisdictions. The Secretariat has assisted RMI and FSM with 2018 annual updates of their MANA dashboards.

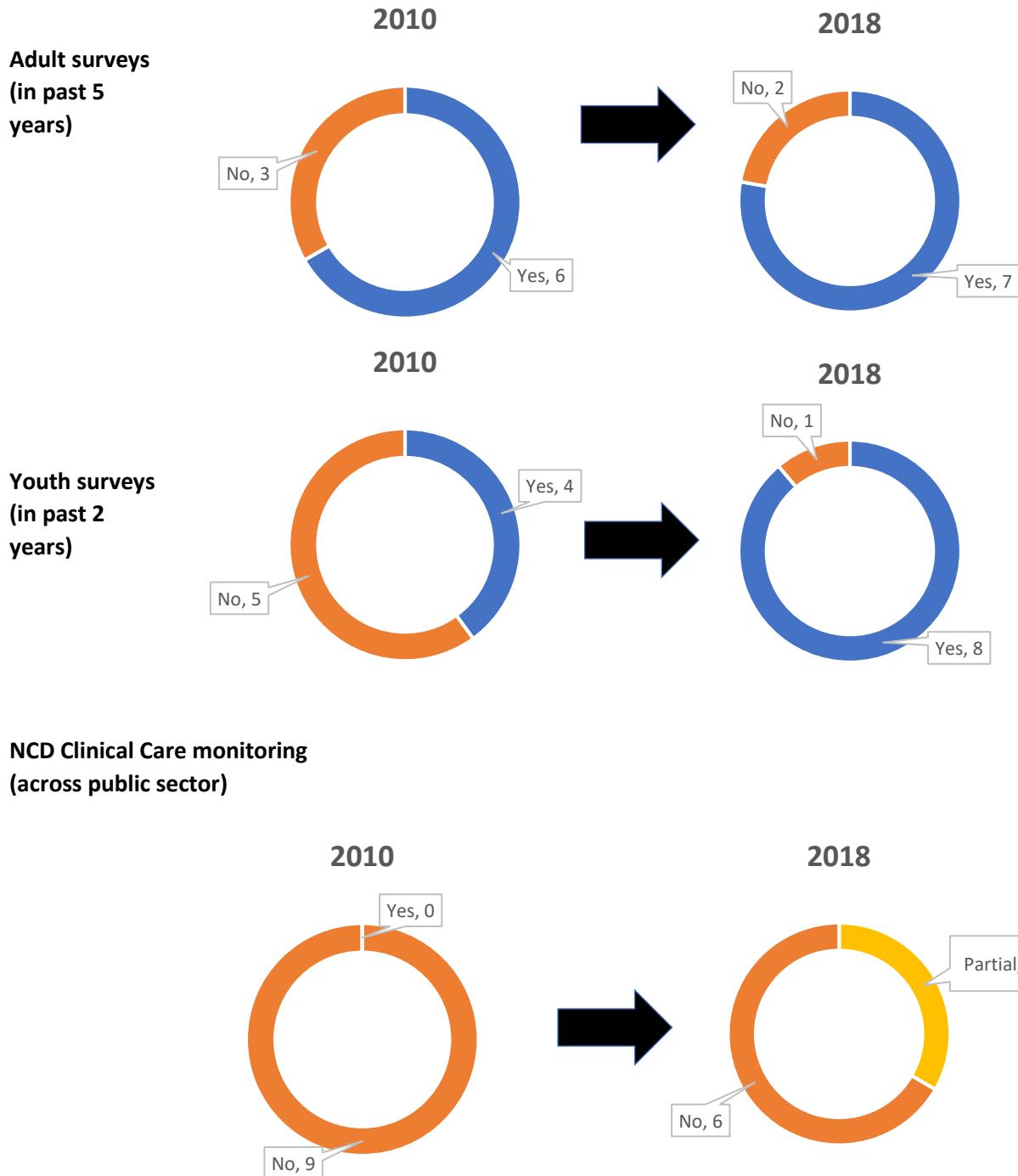
They are also maintaining the regional USAPI NCD Progress Report with newly available surveillance data (which will be shared at PIHOA Board meeting. This report provides updated comparative core surveillance data for the USAPI.

One area of slow progress is the adoption of systems which actively track performance of public sector health services with regards to delivery of preventive measures to NCD patients. PIHOA is continuing to provide assistance to the RMI for the integration of TB and NCD-Free Ebeye case finding data into existing chronic disease registry and processes for using this now-complete registry to guide outreach, case management, and performance improvement, and to work with Kosrae CHC to do the same for Kosrae state.

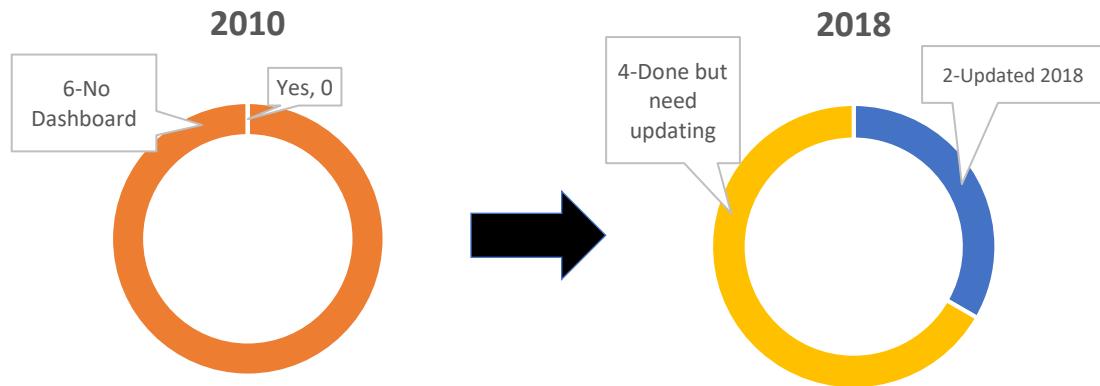
¹ As set forth in the USAPI NCD Monitoring and Surveillance Framework (see www.pihoa.org)

² With reference to the USAPI NCD Policy Commitment Package (also at www.pihoa.org)

C. Snapshot of NCD Surveillance Progress [n varies, =9 or 10]:



Policy Mapping & MANA Dashboard

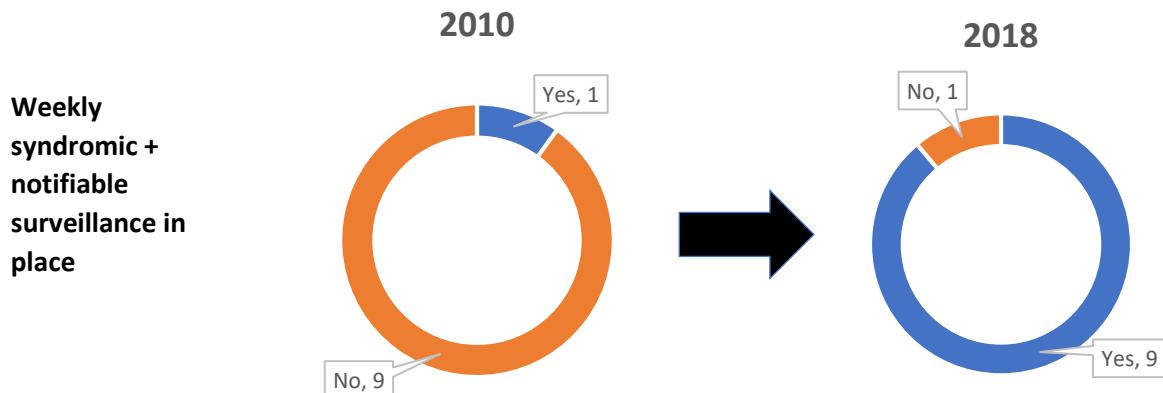


E. USAPI Communicable Disease/Outbreak Surveillance and Response

Drs. Durand and Hancock as well as Emi Chutaro (together with PIHOA contractors, Utu Gebauer and Tamara Buhagiar, as well as WHO and CDC) are assisting in operational planning and health information management component (completed in August 2018) for the first round of Lymphatic Filariasis (LF) mass drug administration (MDA), to be conducted in September 2018.

The REU has also been closely involved with the establishment of a regional reference laboratory for vector/mosquito surveillance and pathogen in Guam, with the related development of regional public health lab, also in Guam, in harmonization with the PIHOA Regional Laboratory Initiative. The REU's support for Guam's newly constructed mosquito lab at the Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) Division of Environmental Health (DEH) started with the Regional Zika Surge Response project, and is on-going through the work of a Regional Medical Entomologist, Dr Grayson Brown, consultant co-located at the DEH Mosquito Lab. Dr Brown has assisted the DEH with implementing mosquito surveillance system for Guam and has conducted mosquito surveillance capacity assessments across the USAPI in the past 6 months.

Snapshot of CD/Outbreak Surveillance [n=10 jurisdictions]



F. Wider Pacific Regional Coordination

- 1) Continued work with the Pacific Heads of Heads Sub-Committee Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action (MANA) to update Pacific jurisdiction MANA Dashboards (delivered TA for updating of RMI and FSM dashboards since March 2018)
- 2) Continuing work with FNU, SPC and DFAT to develop new curriculum and funding proposal for Diploma and Master's level field epi training program through SHIP/PPHSN.

G. EXTENSION SERVICES PROVIDED (over the past 6 months)

Dr. Durand	Outcomes
Organized FSM Standards & Monitoring Technical Working Group for outlying health centers & dispensaries, including 2 day meeting with WHO FSM DHSA, and representatives from 4 FSM states	Draft set of standards, monitoring mechanism and assessment tool, and budget for annual assessment completed and submitted to FSM DHSA Secretary and state DHS Directors for consideration.
TA for review of FSM MCH Program measurable objectives	Critique of proposed measurable objectives provided
Critique of FSM HIV Program reporting format	Critique of proposed HIV reporting format provided
TA for Annual Health Sector Key Performance Indicators Report- FSM, including visits to 3 FSM states.	Finalized 2018 KPI report
Assessment of Electronic Health Record system (OpenEMR) pilot project at Pohnpei CHC	Brief assessment report. Planning for project to upgrade functionality of PCHC EHR in process.
TA for design of TB-Free Majuro SitRep	Draft SitRep design provided
TA for 3 rd Yap CHC Community Health Assessment	Ongoing discussions regarding objectives, data collection, analysis, information products and target group (to be completed within coming 6 months)
TA for development of RMI PH Medical Director Job Description	Draft PD for medical director position completed
F/u for Majuro CHC project	Outlined of next steps for WUTMI Board; Reaffirmed support of Minister Kaneko for this project
Consultation for reactivation of Kosrae DHS QA program	Reactivation plan completed and endorsed by KDHS Director
QI Program update consultation for KCHC	New QI Dashboard design developed; Next steps for strengthening QI program and streamlining data collection system provided
Review of RMI MOHHS clinical preventive services guidelines (adults)	Critique of proposed preventive services guidelines provided
Dr. Cash	
With Dr Annette David and Dr Durand provided TA to RMI for planning based on results of RMI Hybrid Adult NCD Survey	Identified priorities to be incorporated into RMI NCD Strategic Planning workshop to be held in RMI in November, 2018
Provided TA to Kosrae and Yap States for design of NCD Hybrid Surveys and logistical support in those states	Hybrid survey data collection scheduled to take place in both sites in next 6 months
TA for regional publications in peer-reviewed journals	High prevalence of noncommunicable disease risk factors among adolescents in Pohnpei, Micronesia. Abraham D, Durand A, Denholm J, Cash H, Moadsiri A, Goplani S, Johnson E.

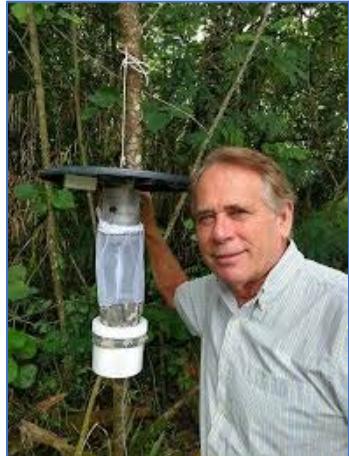
	HI J of Med & PH, 77(1):14-21.
Mentorship of summer MPH student intern from UCLA in RMI	Preparation of RMI NCD Hybrid Survey Report, 2018 completed
TA for implementation of physical measures addition to Guam Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2018 ("BRFSS+")	Data collection ongoing for completion within the next 4 months
Dr. Hancock	
TA to American Samoa for use of MedSphere EHR to automate syndromic and notifiable disease surveillance	CD surveillance in American Samoa now automated, resulting in more complete reporting and improved efficiency in assembling reports
TA to FSM for mass gathering surveillance and disease control at Micro Games in Yap, FSM	Effective surveillance and disease control. Notably, ongoing Rotavirus outbreak in Yap prevented from spreading across the region

Items for Board consideration:

- 1) Inviting requests for jurisdictions wanting to proceed to next level (Diploma) of DDM-SHIP.
- 2) Inviting requests for assistance with annual updates for MANA Dashboards
- 3) Requests for customized jurisdiction-level assistance are always welcome.

IV. Other PIHOA Activities/Projects

A. Strengthening Environmental Health and Integrated Vector Management in the USAPIs



The core objectives of this project is two-fold: 1) strengthen Guam's environment health mosquito lab capabilities to deliver a comprehensive and robust integrated vector control program for Guam; and 2) assist to build up Guam's environment health mosquito lab capabilities to deliver regionalized services to other USAPIs for mosquito identification, regional surveillance of mosquito vectors of public health significance, mosquito pathogen testing, and mosquito pesticide resistance testing.

In March 2018, through funding from CDC NCEZID/Fort Collins, PIHOA recruited a highly experienced, qualified and well-known Medical Entomologist, Dr. Grayson Brown, from the University of Kentucky (and former president of the National Association of Entomologists) to be

based at the Guam Department of Public Health's Division of Environmental Health Mosquito Lab in Dededo, Guam. Since March 2018, Dr. Brown, with the exception of American Samoa, has conducted baseline assessments of vector control systems and capabilities in the RMI, FSM, Palau, Guam, and the CNMI. The overall results of this assessments are as follows:

1. About half, 4/9, conduct no surveillance. Of those that do, only three use a method beyond Ovitraps. No uniformity in surveillance methods used region-wide;
2. Only 2/9 can identify their mosquitoes. Two more can identify a few species;

3. A third (3/9) have no control capability. Of the rest, 4/6 rely primarily on adulticides applied by backpack sprayers (spot treatments only). Only Palau has decision criteria; and
4. Only two have insecticide resistance testing, and those two are not comparable. No one has virologic testing.

Island	Surveillance Method ¹	Vector Identification Capability	Control Options Used ²	Insecticide Resistance Testing ³	Virologic Vector Tests	Community Outreach Program
Saipan (CNMI)	Ov	Partial	PCC	No	No	
FSM -- Chuuk	No	No	MB, LC	No	No	Yes
FSM -- Kosrae^a	Ov, GAT	No	MB, LC	No	No	
FSM -- Pohnpei^b	GAT	No	No	No	No	
FSM -- Yap	No	No	No	No	No	
Guam -- Civilian	Ov, GAT, uLT	Yes	MB, LC, SR	CDCBT	No	Yes
Guam -- Military	Ov, iLT	Partial	SR, PCC	No	No	Yes
Palau	Ov	Yes	MB, SR, LC, ULV	WHOPES	No	Yes
RMI -- Majuro	No	No	MB, LC	No	No	

¹GAT – Gravid Aedes Trap, iLT – incandescent Light Trap, No – No surveillance, Ov – Ovitrap, uLT – ultraviolet Light Trap

²LC – Larvicide, MB – Mistblower (adulticide), No – No established vector suppression capability, PCC – Pest Control Contractor, SR – Source Reduction (larval breeding sites), ULV – Ultra Low Volume spraying (adulticide)

³CDCBT – CC Bottle Test, WHOPES – WHO Pesticide Evaluation Scheme, No – no resistance testing

^aVMS recently changed.

^bSurveillance is at only 1 site and only quarterly.



In addition, Dr. Brown conducted on-going vector management trainings in all four states of the FSM, Majuro (RMI), Guam, Palau, and Saipan (CNMI), that also included baseline trapping of adult mosquitos to verify existing mosquito vectors in each site. USAPI mosquito vector information is in the process of being entered into CalServ. Dr.

Brown also assisted to procure training supplies and insecticides to assist the Yap Department of Health Services to do mosquito abatement spraying in the sports areas in Yap, FSM in preparation for the 2018 Micro Games. In Guam in August 2018, Dr. Brown also facilitated sessions at the PIHOA-sponsored

regional meeting of the Northern Pacific Environmental Health Association (NPEHA) members to discuss and refine the Regional USAPI Integrated Vector Management Plan in preparation for PIHOA Board review in September 2018 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

B. Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination Through Mass Drug Administration of Anti-Filarial Drugs in American Samoa



Following from a recent sero-prevalence survey conducted in 2016, it was found that despite multiple rounds of mass administration of anti-filarial medicines in the last decade, American Samoa and its neighbor, Samoa, had not yet fully eliminated Lymphatic Filariasis (LF), in accordance with WHO thresholds for elimination. As a result, and as a global partner to WHO to implement the Global Strategy for the Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis, CDC's Center for Global Health (CGH) approached both ASDOH and PIHOA to gage interest in implementing a new cycle of mass drug administration (MDA) of a new regimen of anti-filarial medicines to American Samoa. In FY18, in agreement with ASDOH, CDC CGH provided funding to PIHOA to recruit 2 LF specialist consultants to be embedded at ASDOH who will assist with LF MDA planning, coordination, implementation and post-evaluation for the next 2 years, procure a good portion of the needed supplies and medicines to support the mass drug distribution, support/coordinate associated ASDOH staff trainings in partnership with CDC CGH and WHO, and provide support to ASDOH to plan and conduct public relations and other media campaigns.

In March 2018, PIHOA recruited, Dr. Tamara Buhagiar, Medical Entomologist/LF Program Management Specialist, and Robert "Uti" Gebauer, LF Community Liaison and Outreach Coordinator, to assist ASDOH in the planning and implementation of the first round of LF MDA, now scheduled for kick-off on September 24, 2018. Since March, the ASDPH LF MDA Core Group has been established and a LF MDA Plan completed, along with schedule of tasks and timelines. A face-to-face meeting was convened in Apia in April 2018 for PIHOA and ASDOH staff to meet with WHO and Samoa MOH officials to coordinate LF MDA work between the 2 sites.

To date, all medicines have been procured from WHO and received in American Samoa, and approximately 95% of all supplies have been procured. LF Patient Intake and Consent Forms have been completed and printed (50K copies), including programming of tablets for web-based form entry. Media

campaign supplies, brochures, and banners have mostly been printed/produced, with a small handful remaining to be printed in Honolulu and sent to American Samoa. ASDOH staff have undergone 2 trainings by CDC, including at least 2 LF MDA simulation trainings.

C. Logistical Support to Mass TB and Hansen's Disease Screening Project in Majuro, RMI



RMI has one of the highest prevalence and incidence of TB in the Pacific and globally. For the last 2 years, CDC has been planning, coordinating and working with the RMI to implement 2 mass TB screening projects in Ebeye and Majuro. Last year, RMI and CDC requested assistance from PIHOA to administer all the travel logistics of all the external volunteers coming to assist with the mass TB screening efforts. This was successfully completed in June 2017.

Following the mass TB and diabetes screening project in Ebeye, the RMI Ministry of Health and Human Services (MOHHS) once again contracted PIHOA in June 2018 to assist with the travel

logistics of volunteers who will be assisting the RMI MOHHS and CDC to conduct mass TB and Hansen's Disease (HD). The mass screening project commenced in June 2018, and is scheduled for completion at the end of September 2018. To date, PIHOA has assisted 59 volunteers (TB physicians, nurses and other health professionals) from the US mainland and other locations in the world to travel to Majuro to support the RMI MOHHS in this effort. To date, 16,789 persons, representing 62% of the eligible population, have been interviewed and screened.

Source: RMI MOHHS and CDC NCHSSTP, August 2018

Figure 3. Percent of Total Population Screened, Listed by Age Group Majuro, RMI
June 12-August 14, 2018**

