

Finau

PHD EDITOR

PHD Matters!

It has been a hectic year for Pacific Health Dialog (PHD). This year will be remembered as the year we desperately tried to catch up by trying to print four issues of PHD. We almost succeeded but we will definitely manage by 2002. This major delay is due to the need for more "labourers of love" for producing quality articles, peer reviewers of the papers, book readers and reviewers, and general hands and heads to help with the production of PHD.

The year 2001 will also be remembered for PHD being accepted onto MedLine. The editorial staff and Arlene Cohen must be gratefully acknowledged for this effort. It is especially pleasing because one of the PHD competitors told us that we would never be listed on MedLine. But as you all know, in health you never say never!

This issue on "Health of Samoans and other Pacificans" have brought some new authors to PHD. The old faithfuls still feature with new articles. Thanks go to the Fiji School of Medicine for funding this issue. I also thank Peggy Fairburn-Dunlop for bringing the new Samoan authors with their new papers. One of the reviewers commented that she "did not know that these Samoans can write so well!" She probably expected papers in Samoan!

This issue have covered a variety of Samoan issues like suicide, parenting, hospital use and mental health. Other Pacific issues (like kava, asthma, HIV, traditional medicine, etc.) were covered. Of special interest is the Eurocentric review of diseases in the Pacific with view into genetic research in the future. It almost concluded that we need to europeanise the gene pools in the Pacific. It did not emphasise enough some of the potentially protective genes from the Pacificans e.g. the genes for rheumatoid arthritis, melanoma, cancer of the large bowel, etc.

Although this issue had many Samoan papers, these were regional papers and many countries from Micronesia, Polynesia and Melanesia were covered. However, the papers were still in English, thus continuing the monolingual dominance. Only the New Zealand Maori have produced a paper in an indigenous language of the Pacific. This of course assumes that the Maori consider themselves Pacificans.

PHD continues to matter! From an exclusively paper based journal to MedLine and a PHD website. There is one issue available from the SPC website in both English and French. PHD will matter even more if: all issues were available on-line, many more indigenous languages were used, and you start dialoguing through the letters to the Editor. Do these and the editors will be happy this Christmas!

The PHD editors will be tickled pink if more countries and ethnic groups come forward to produce an issue of PHD focussing on their health. We are looking forward to the issues on Guam and Palau, respectively. Have courage, even if you do not have the money but only the time!

Help the editors to help you and make PHD matter!

FROM THE EDITOR

A website on *Distance Education in Health for Pacific Islands* is being jointly developed by the SPC / PPHSN and the University of Guam / Pacific Basin Telehealth Consortium. It can be found at www.spc.int/Health/DistanceEducation/Index.html. It is a database of links to programs and courses in health-related topics available around the world, and also links to many sites with library and other information resources.

We still need your input, especially regarding Distance Education in Health programmes/courses in the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand! Contact Christelle Lepers at SPC at ChristelleL@spc.int

AIDS forum for Micronesia

My name is Michael Savane, and I am the developer of a web site at www.myMicronesia.com. We provide news, weather, links and information for the islands of Micronesia, including Palau, Yap, Guam, Saipan, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae, the Marshall Islands and Kiribati. We have recently implemented an AIDS Forum on our web site, which is receiving a lot of positive feedback and generating a lot of interest in AIDS awareness in the region.