



# PSRH Newsletter September 2025



## PEMNeT Training in Kiritimati – June 2025

### TWO PERSPECTIVES, ONE GOAL – STRENGTHENING CARE IN KIRITIMATI

In June 2025, PSRH's PEMNeT programme returned to Kiritimati Island for the first time since 2017. Over the course of a week, the team worked with local clinicians to sharpen emergency obstetric and neonatal skills while also making practical changes to improve the clinical environment. In this issue, we share two perspectives on the visit – one highlighting the training experience, the other focusing on the systems and leadership changes that will help sustain the impact.

*This initiative was supported by the New Zealand Medical Treatment Scheme, which is funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and coordinated by the Pasifika Medical Association Group (PMAG).*



### TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS – RETURN TO KIRITIMATI

Led by Dr. Rebecca Mitchell (Obstetrician, Australia) with midwifery and obstetric experts from Samoa and Tarawa, the team delivered hands-on, simulation-based training in managing maternal and neonatal emergencies. Over 14 clinicians participated in sessions covering postpartum haemorrhage, eclampsia, sepsis, shoulder dystocia, breech birth, and neonatal resuscitation. Ward-based drills reinforced real-time teamwork and communication using tools like ISBAR. Emergency boxes were set up, and local champions were identified to lead weekly drills and in-service education.



### BUILDING SYSTEMS – LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

The June 2025 PEMNeT visit to Kiritimati also marked a step forward in system improvement and local leadership. Working alongside clinicians, the team helped restructure the labour ward for better emergency access and co-developed a capacity-building plan with local leaders. Emergency boxes for PPH, eclampsia, and sepsis were assembled, and weekly emergency drills are now embedded into routine practice with ongoing remote support from Tarawa and abroad. Delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Health and supported by PMAG, this visit demonstrated how targeted clinical education can catalyse lasting change. A follow-up training in 2027 has been requested, with plans for a blended team of local and external faculty to meet both language and clinical needs.





# PROFILE

**Mrs. Baaua Etei Tawita Teibiraa,  
Deputy Director of Nursing,  
Kiribati Ministry of Health &  
PSRH Country Coordinator**

Mauri! I'm Baaua from Kiribati. I graduated from the Kiribati School of Nursing in 1994 and hold postgraduate certificates in reproductive health and midwifery. My work in outer island clinics like Tewai and Kabuna focused on Safe Motherhood—ensuring safe pregnancies, deliveries, and quality care for women.



Value the people around you and the cultures you work within. Building trust and working in harmony with communities strengthens our collective efforts in reproductive health. I look forward to connecting through PSRH virtual programs.

My goal is to improve access to care, promote age-appropriate sex education, and address barriers such as gender-based violence, stigma, and lack of confidentiality. I'm passionate about creating space for respectful, culturally grounded conversations that support informed choices.

Two key challenges are restrictions on family planning by some churches and cultural taboos around sex education. Working with church leaders to promote accepted methods like the Billings Ovulation Method is one approach. Sex education must also involve parents, teachers, and nurses to ensure it is relevant and culturally respectful.



We recently launched an outreach program in Tarawa to improve access to emergency contraception. A free call line and dedicated transport service help women receive timely support and reduce unwanted pregnancies.

**Please email me at:  
[kiccoordinator2@psrh.org.nz](mailto:kiccoordinator2@psrh.org.nz)**



# Count Down is on!

## PRSH Biennial conference

**Tonga, 14–18 September 2026.**

This gathering will showcase and celebrate the growth and sustainability of the Pacific SRH workforce, while embracing the diverse topics, specialties, and partnerships that strengthen our region.

***Save the date!***

# Thank you

To Professor Cindy Farquhar from Auckland University for the kind donation of the text books to the medical professionals in the Pacific.







## New AOGIN HPV Study on the Horizon

Pacific Society for Reproductive Health (PSRH), has been notified of an upcoming Asia Oceania Research Organisation on Genital Infections & Neoplasia (AOGIN) led regional study examining health care providers' attitudes toward anogenital HPV infection and related diseases. This research will look at how stigma and clinical practices influence HPV prevention and care.

Upon ethics approval, the PSRH network will be invited to participate via an online survey. Keep an eye out — your input will be vital in ensuring Pacific perspectives are captured.

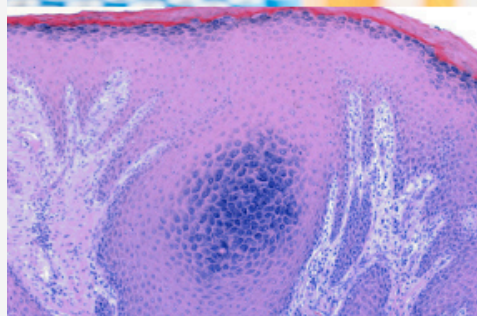
### Understanding and Addressing Attitudes Toward Anogenital HPV Infection and Its Related Diseases Among AOGIN Healthcare Providers.

**Human papillomavirus (HPV)** is a well-established etiological agent in the development of cervical cancer. Despite the availability of effective prophylactic vaccines and evidence-based screening strategies, cervical cancer continues to pose a major public health challenge globally. One of the barriers to the success of regional HPV prevention and screening programs is the social bias and discrimination associated with HPV infection.



Healthcare Providers play a vital role in counselling, promoting vaccine acceptance and implementation of screening programs. This cross-sectional study aims to assess the relationship between Healthcare Providers' perceptions of individuals with anogenital HPV infections and their clinical practices across Asia and the Pacific. The study also investigates the influence of stigma on patient care, Healthcare Providers' knowledge levels, and their likelihood of recommending primary HPV DNA testing.

Data from the study will be collected through an online cross-sectional survey distributed via the Asia-Oceania Research Organization in Genital Infections and Neoplasia. Responses will be collected using the University of Malaya, REDCap platform, with informed e-consent obtained prior to participation.



The questionnaire consists of three components:

**(1) Demographic information**, including age, gender, country of practice, specialty, and years of experience;

**(2) Attitude measures**, assessing stigma and willingness to care for HPV-positive patients through Likert-scale items addressing empathy, discrimination, and perceived moral judgments; and

**(3) Knowledge and practices related to HPV**, evaluating understanding of HPV transmission, vaccination, and screening practices, including use of HPV DNA testing.

Findings from this research are expected to inform targeted interventions to reduce stigma, improve HPV-related patient care, and enhance the role of Healthcare Providers in achieving goals in cervical cancer elimination.

For more information please email:  
[ailing.tan@sydney.edu.au](mailto:ailing.tan@sydney.edu.au)



# BREASTFEEDING MONTH WEBINAR



**THANK YOU!**

To Carole Dobrich and Dale Hansson for their wonderful Webinar: Infant Feeding, Magical Mysteries and Myths in August!





**SUPPORTING MOTHERS, SUPPORTING  
FUTURES: BREASTFEEDING, ORAL HEALTH, &  
SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN THE PACIFIC:  
NURTURING THE FIRST 1,000 DAYS & THE  
NEXT 1000 DAYS.**



**PSRH  
WEBINAR**



Join a multi-disciplinary panel of Pacific health professionals exploring how cultural and systemic factors shape breastfeeding and early childhood oral health with Dr Seema Kumar, (Cook Islands), Elina Henry, (Cook Islands), Dr Anumala Ram, (Fiji) A/Prof Sobia Zafar, (Australia)

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> Sept**

5pm AU (AEST)

5pm Port Moresby

6pm Vanuatu &

Solomon Islands

7pm Auckland & Fiji

8pm Tonga & Samoa

Webinar is FREE but registration is essential  
Click here or the link below to register

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> Sept**

9pm Cook Island

*Missed a monthly webinar or other educational opportunity? You can find all the presentations in the Members Only section of our website. If you're not yet a member, it's a great time to join!*



[www.psrh.org.nz](http://www.psrh.org.nz)



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