Two (2) coordinators from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) paid a courtesy visit to the Belau National Hospital on Thursday, March 30, 2017. SAMHSA is a branch of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. They were tasked with identifying gaps in the data system of the Ministry of Health (MOH) Division of Behavioral Health, particularly in the data system’s ability to share information related to block grant reporting.

The coordinators were Dr. David Wanser and Ms. Debra Kupfer. Dr. Wanser is the Co-Director of the Center for Sustainable Health and Care of JBS International, Inc. JBS International is a consulting management business that offers a broad and diverse set of management and information technology services to public as well as private sector clients. Ms. Kupfer is a Consultant to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Mental Health Program.

During their visit, Dr. Wanser and Ms. Kupfer met with MOH Directors to discuss assessments of the current data system. They also collected feedback about possible assistance that SAMHSA may provide in order to improve the overall capability of the Belau National Hospital to share/disseminate patient-related data. Dr. Wanser and Ms. Kupfer also met with the Division of Behavioral Health Staff to identify key elements of data that will be necessary when moving information from paper-based data collection to electronic.

Diet and Nutrition. The foods you eat and drink can help or hurt your body. Make sure to eat a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, breads, meats, and dairy products. If you have kidney disease there may be some foods and drinks that you need to avoid. Your kidneys help to keep a balance of nutrients in your body such as salt and calcium. Eating too much salt can be bad for your body and your kidneys. Talk with your doctor or a dietitian about what food is right for you.

Exercise. Your body likes to run, jump, and play. Exercise helps to keep your body in good shape! Getting enough exercise is important and will help your body stay strong inside and out.

Medications. Only medicine a doctor or your parents give you is safe. Doctors know what kidney of medicine can help your body. NEVER share medicine with anyone else. No one’s body is exactly like someone else’s body. Doctors may want to give different medicines to different people. Make sure to take your medications exactly as your doctor tells you to.

Alcohol and Drugs. Drugs and alcohol can be harmful to your body. When you have kidney disease, you need to be even more careful about what you put into your body. When your kidneys are damaged, they are not able to filter your blood as well as they should. Remember it is OK to say “No” to drugs and alcohol.

Japanese Dentists Assist MOH

The Division of Oral Health at the Ministry of Health (MOH) was very fortunate to have Dr. Mikio Ozawa who was recently in Palau assisting with dental procedures. Dr. Ozawa, a Medical Dentist, used his vacation time to pay a courtesy visit to Palau. He was accompanied by Dr. Satoshi Tajima, D.D.S, Ph.D. who also volunteered to provide dental assistance. Dr. Ozawa had visited Palau in August of last year when he participated in the 2016 Pacific Partnership. He had seen a need for dental care, especially for patients who required specialized care, and chose to return to Palau as a volunteer in order to provide much needed dental assistance.

Dr. Ozawa and Dr. Tajima assisted a total of sixty (60) patients with eighty-five percent (85%) of the patients being Palauans. They offered dental care services such as diagnostic, endodontic, restorative, and oral surgeries that included alveoloplasty, splinting, and biopsy. A majority of the dental care provided was oral surgeries. The four-day mission was held from March 06, 2017 to March 09, 2017.

The MOH Oral Health Division also received generous donations from Dr. Ozawa and Dr. Tajima. The donations are valued at approximately $3,637 and included items such as toothbrushes & dental cement powder. The donations will help the Ministry of Health improve its dental capacity and its ability to provide essential services to the community of Palau. MOH thanks Dr. Ozawa and Dr. Tajima for their support!

Campari Inc. Adopts Room 112

In support of internal renovations at the Belau National Hospital, Campari Inc. “adopted” Room 112 of the Medical Ward and sponsored its full face-lift on Sunday, April 02, 2017. The Ministry of Health and the Belau National Hospital thank Campari Inc. for its generous support! The Belau National Hospital is in need of internal face-lifts in order to maintain an uplifting appearance for its patients. By sponsoring an area of the hospital, you can contribute to its overall improvement. If you would like to sponsor/adopt a ward room or space at the Belau Medical Hospital, please contact MOH Director of Health Administration & Support Services Damelle W. Decherong at (tel): 488-2552.

Ngara Mecherocher Contribution

The Republic of Palau Ministry of Health (MOH) would like to recognize and thank the Ngara Mecherocher Men’s Group from Melekeok for their recent renovations to the Mantekang Summer House. Members of the men’s group spent weekends at the Belau National Hospital repairing the summer house and improving its condition. Minister of Health Dr. Emais Roberts and the MOH Staff would like to thank the members of the Ngara Mecherocher Men’s Group for their generous contribution. Their efforts are greatly appreciated! The Mantekang Summer House is located behind the Belau National Hospital and is open to all from the community.

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BMS & MedPharm Hold Workshop

On Saturday, March 25, 2017 a collaborative workshop between the Belau Medical Society (BMS) and the MedPharm Group of Companies was held at the Waves Restaurant of the Palau Royal Resort (PRR). The theme of the workshop was “Bridging Medical Supplies & Products to Providers & Suppliers” and it focused on providing local medical providers & suppliers with up-to-date information about medical equipment & supplies. The workshop featured continuing medical education lectures that raised awareness regarding alternative products and the latest management strategies relevant to medical topics.

Topics discussed included the following: “The Role of Laboratory in Sepsis Management” by William Michard (BIOMERIEUX Business Manager); “Hemodialysis: Vascular Access Care” by Eric Kapitbahay (Registered Nurse and Renal Nurse at the Belau National Hospital); “The Neuroprotective Benefits of Tocotrienols in Stroke Management” by Nick Pallingayan (HOVID International Business Manager); “PHILIPS Innovations” by Jose Mari De Guzman (Business Development Manager for PHILIPS); and an “Overview of MedPharm Group of Companies” by Rene Ramos (President/General Manager of MedPharm).

The workshop was made possible by the concerted efforts of the Executive Committee of the Belau Medical Society and the generous support of MedPharm President/General Manager Mr. Rene Ramos, MedPharm Sales Manager Ms. Ruth Feril, and MedPharm Procurement Manager Mr. Jose Pocholo Marimila.

MedPharm is an innovation-driven pharmaceutical development company committed to the identification, creation, and development of unique therapeutic systems for transdermal & topical use. The Belau Medical Society is a non-profit organization comprised entirely of current & retired doctors, dentists, physician assistants, and other allied medical professionals in Palau. Its mission is to improve the profession of medicine within the community. Current BMS Officers are Dr. Sylvia Wally (President), Dr. Myra Adelbai (Vice President), and Dr. Glenda Santos-Aguaras (Secretary/Treasurer). BMS is also an affiliate member of the Pacific Basin Medical Association (PBMS)—an association of medical practitioners, researchers, educators, allied medical professionals, and medical experts from all over the Pacific region.

Group Photo of the BMS & MedPharm Workshop Participants

Update: Dengue Fever Outbreak

The public is informed that Dengue Fever Cases continue to be seen at the Belau National Hospital. Since January of this year, there have been 65 Cases (January: 31, February: 32, March: 02) identified with a majority residing in the State of Koror (72%) followed by Airai (9%). There have been no additional Zika Cases since the one confirmed case in 2016.

The Bureau of Public Health urges the public to take precaution against the spread of mosquito-borne diseases. This includes using insect repellent to prevent infection as well as maintaining cleanliness around homes & yards to prevent the spawning & growth of mosquitoes. Community leaders and organizations are also encouraged to organize community-wide cleanups to eradicate potential mosquito breeding grounds.

Dengue Fever is transmitted from human-to-human through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito. This type of mosquito usually spawns and thrives in standing water. Trash and litter items such as empty bottles, cans, flower pots, and old tires that hold water should be discarded as they are potential breeding sites. Contrary to popular belief, the Aedes mosquito is not commonly found in larger bodies of water, wetlands, or ponds such as those located in Malakal.

Zika Virus is spread by the same Aedes mosquitoes that carry Dengue Fever. Because of the risks associated with Zika Infection during pregnancy, pregnant women are strongly advised not to travel to places with ongoing transmission of Zika Virus and to take extra precautions to avoid infection. Please see your doctor immediately if you think you have been infected with the Zika Virus.

For more information on mosquito-borne diseases, please contact the Communicable Disease Unit at 488-2450 and for more tips on how to stop the breeding of mosquitoes and prevent infection, please contact the Division of Environmental Health, Vector Control and Prevention Program at 488-6073 or 488-6345.

Social Marketing Workshop

In March, a workshop about social marketing was held at the Capital Building in Ngerulmud. Instructor for the workshop was Dr. Chad T. Morris, an Associate Professor of Anthropology from the Roanoke College in Virginia. Dr. Morris has worked on numerous social marketing campaigns for Palau, such as the promotion of healthy eating habits in local schools. The workshop highlighted the four (4) core principles of social marketing: product, price, place, and promotion. Participants also learned how to conduct research in order to collect information that supported an effective campaign. Research techniques include conducting interviews, collecting data through surveys, and forming focus groups. Participants were able to apply these social marketing concepts by creating campaigns that promoted less alcohol consumption, healthier eating choices, increased exercise, and regular health screenings. Social Marketing, continued on page 4
Social Marketing, continued from page 3

Social marketing is defined as the application of marketing principles in an attempt to influence human behavior in order to improve health or benefit society. An effective social marketing campaign would promote a particular behavior by understanding its target audience. By analyzing the promotion from a consumer’s point of view, a social marketing campaign could identify key elements that would appeal to a target audience and identify its main competition.

Participants of the workshop included staff members from different sections of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. The social marketing workshop was held from Monday, March 06, 2017 to Thursday, March 09, 2017. Dr. Morris will return to Palau in April for another social marketing workshop.

Food for Healthy Kidneys


1. Choose & Prepare Foods with Less Salt & Sodium
- Buy fresh food more often. Sodium is added to many packaged foods.
- Use spices, herbs, and sodium-free seasonings in place of salt.
- Check the Nutrition Facts label on food packages for sodium. A Daily Value of 20% or more means the food is high in sodium.
- Try lower-sodium versions of frozen dinners and other convenience foods.
- Rinse canned vegetables, beans, meats, and fish with water before eating.

Look for food labels that say:
- Sodium-Free, Salt-Free, Very Low Sodium, Low Sodium, Reduced or Less Sodium, Light in Sodium, No Salt Added, Unsalted, Lightly Salted

2. Eat the Right Amount & Right Types of Protein
- Eat small portions of protein foods.
- Protein is found in foods from plants and animals. Talk to your Dietitian about how to choose the right combination for you.

Animal-Protein Foods:
- Chicken, Fish, Meat, Eggs, Dairy

Plant-Protein Foods:
- Beans, Nuts, Grains

3. Choose Foods that are Healthy for Your Heart
- Grill, broil, bake, roast, or stir-fry foods instead of deep frying.
- Cook with nonstick cooking spray or small amount of olive oil instead of butter.
- Trim fat from meat and remove skin from poultry before eating.

Heart-Healthy Foods:
- Lean Cuts of Meat like Loin or Round; Poultry Without the Skin; Fish; Beans; Vegetables; Fruits; Low-Fat Milk; Yogurt; Cheese

Fitness Feature: “Zumba Fitness at the Koror Elementary School Gym”

Dr. Ofelia Gose, a Physician from the Belau National Hospital, is an active member of a Zumba Fitness Group that was formed in October of last year. It began as a workout session with her friends then evolved into an activity opened to all interested people from the community. Currently, over thirty participants from children to adults are regular participants of the sessions. Zumba Fitness is a form of exercise that incorporates dancing with aerobic movements to a variety of energetic music. Workout choreography may involve variations of hip-hop, soca, samba, salsa, merengue, and mambo along with workout techniques such as squats or lunges. The Zumba Fitness Workout Sessions are led by Dr. Gose who is a Certified Zumba Fitness Instructor.

The workout sessions are held weekly on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 6:30pm-7:30pm. Zumba Fitness is free and open to all interested participants. Donations are welcomed though the workout sessions are completely free for all participants. The donations collected will be used to enhance the Zumba Fitness experience as well as assist the community. For example, donations collected by the group were recently used to expand the size of the basketball court. If you are interested in participating in the Zumba Fitness Workouts led by Dr. Gose, join the sessions held at the Basketball Court/Gym of the Koror Elementary School from 6:30pm-7:30pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. New participants are always welcomed!