

NZ to establish new communicable diseases research centre

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It is the brainchild of Dr Donald Wilson, Associate Dean of Research at FNU's College of Nursing and Health Sciences



New Zealand (NZ)- based University of Otago's Global Health Institute and Dunedin's Mercy Hospital are supporting the establishment of a new Communicable Diseases Research Centre at Fiji National University (FNU).

The University of Otago signed a Memorandum of Understanding with FNU in 2017.

The Communicable Diseases Research Centre (CDRC) is the latest research centre affiliated to Fiji National University's Fiji Institute of Public Health Research (FIPHR) – the umbrella body that coordinates all student and staff research at the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS), and external research collaborations.

Otago Global Health Institute Co-Director Associate Professor Patrick Vakaoti says supporting FNU's desire to build truly Pacific-led and internationally competitive research centres is very much in line with OGI's vision of a "world where health problems are solved by those who are most affected by them".

A major fund-raising drive is anticipated in the next two years, to build world-class laboratory facilities to support the research of the CDRC.

Mercy Hospital, which endowed the McAuley Chair of International Health, has committed \$97,500 over three years towards the employment of a coordinator for the new Centre.

"The establishment of this research centre creates a platform for proactive engagement which will hopefully strengthen collaboration capabilities around the Pacific region," Mercy Hospital Mission Coordinator Rev Alofa says.