

Editorial

Friends

First issue of the FMJ of the year 2006 is in your hands. This has come out at the time when a number of health issues are surrounding Fiji and the region. Typhoid outbreak is continuing to cause new cases, threat of bird flu is ever present at our doorstep, and emerging and re-emerging diseases are posing newer challenges to our already stretched health care resources & quality of life. On the non-communicable diseases front, is a case of 'the more we know, the more frightening it gets' scenario. Obesity and diseases due to it, such as diabetes, cardiovascular, and cerebrovascular accidents are appearing to be far more prevalent, and affecting the lives of our population at much younger stage, leaving devastating effects.

HIV AIDS pandemic in different parts of the world is moving at varied pace. While in neighboring Australia and New Zealand it has shown signs of plateau & even reduction, in certain groups, in incidence, closer to home, Papua New Guinea and other pacific island nations, including Fiji are feeling the heat of its unabated onslaught. This is equitably reflected in the joint press release by the WHO and Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

Fiji has visited mandatory population screening for HIV few times in the past, now CDC is embarking on ambitious plan to screen US general population on voluntary basis. Perhaps this is the way forward on this issue of sensitive nature, which must be given some thought, considering the fact that up to 90% of the people who are HIV positive are unaware of their status.

WMA is the umbrella body of Medical associations around the world. After their last council meeting, it issued a clarification of statement to physicians on ethical issues of torture. This statement with website details is included in this issue.

Seasonal fish poisoning is an important health issue in the regions, Naiker et al has produced an interesting case study on the subject with a brilliant review of the available literature. Electronic gadgets including computers have forever changed the way we live. Despite limitation of internet and electricity access, these things are gradually taking their places in life even in remotest parts, commentary by Morse & Baxendale aptly describes their usefulness in health care delivery.

Erratum

In the last issue of FMJ had an article submitted by Dr. Temo Waqanivalu, which had some errors, including wrong spelling of his name. Table 1.1 got the heading 'Diarrhea cases in the Ba sub-divisional area' omitted, and Fig. 4.0 'DPSEEA Framework applied to diarrheal diseases'. Editors regret these errors, and apologize for any distress caused to Dr. Waqanivalu.

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