The 18th South Pacific Nurses Forum (SPNF) builds on the success of previous meetings. The forum brings together nurses from across the South Pacific including Australia and New Zealand to share and debate nursing experiences and knowledge. Nurses also used this opportunity to network and learn from each other.

The theme for this year’s meeting, “Towards nursing excellence for Universal (Pacific) Health” recognizes the significant contribution of nurses in the region to health service delivery. With the emphasis on countries of the world to prioritize actions that leads to Universal Health Coverage, the work of nurses and midwives is key to ensuring equal access and quality of health care for all.

Featured plenary speakers brought inspiration and the latest information on nursing leadership, managing and developing the nursing workforce including development of strategic nursing education, improving nursing practice, and the impact of nursing regulation on health service delivery.

Forum Objectives
1. To advance and improve the coverage and quality of health services
2. To demonstrate the nursing contribution to health service delivery
3. To provide opportunities for an in-depth exchange of experience and expertise within and beyond the regional nursing community.
The SPNF was held at Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel in Honiara, Solomon Islands and was attended by over 345 delegates from 10 countries in the South pacific, including Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The forum was organised by the Solomon Islands SPNF Local Organizing Committee chaired by the Vice president of SINA, Mr Edward Iuhanisuna and coordinated by Michael Larui, National Director of Nursing, MHMS Solomon Islands.

Technical Support was received from the SPNF regional steering committee chaired by Annie Butler, Assistant Federal Secretary, Australia Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) with members from the NNAs of New Zealand, Fiji, Cook Islands, Samoa and Solomon Islands.

SPNF would like to thank sponsors of the forum, SINA, Australia DFAT through SI MHMS, WHO SI Representative, ANMF, SI Ports Authority, Pan Oceanic Bank and other local business houses in Solomon Islands.

The forum was officially opened by the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, Honourable Manasseh Sogavare and the keynote address on the theme was delivered by the President of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), Dr Judith Shamian.

Forty seven papers were presented over three days based on the six subthemes.

The subthemes of the forum and key note speakers include:

1. Professor Pelenatete Stowers, Former Assistant CEO Nursing and Midwifery, Ministry of Health and now Consultant, Samoa: Leveraging Nursing Leadership for Health Outcomes;

2. Ms Annette Mwansa Nkowane, Technical Officer Nursing and Midwifery, Health Workforce Department, WHO Geneva: Strategic Management of Nursing Human Resources for Health;

3. Professor Jill White: Professor of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Sydney: Innovative Nursing Education for Improved Health Care;

4. Mr George Pego, Human Resource Manager, Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS), Solomon Islands: Developing the Nursing Workforce for Effective Service Delivery;

5. Dr Amelia Afuha’amango Tuipulotu, Chief Nursing Officer, Ministry of Health Tonga: Improved Health Service Delivery through Nursing Practice;

6. Ms Carolyn Reed, Chief Executive and Registrar, Nursing Council of New Zealand: Impact of Nursing Regulation on Health Service Delivery.

A workshop on Writing for Publications was facilitated by Dr Karen Yates, Senior Lecturer of James Cook University and concurrent to the workshop, a consultative meeting on the Establishment of the Pacific College of Nursing was led by Adjunct Professor Debra Thoms, Commonwealth Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Australia.

The President of ICN accompanied by the Director and Project Manager of WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Development UTS, Ms Michele Rumsey and Amanda Neill, National Head of Nursing Mr Michael Larui, President of SINA, Mr Macnald Tau and Human Resource Manager, Mr George Pego made courtesy calls on the Permanent Secretary of MHMS, Dr Tenneth Dalipanda and later with the Prime Minister, Honourable Manasseh Sogavare.
The meetings covered the Report on the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth which highlighted investing in the health workforce, recognizing the work of nurses and health challenges of the Pacific which includes Population growth, geographical issues including climate change, Dependency on Aid, security issues and Noncommunicable Diseases (NCD).

Dr Shamian also met with members of Solomon Islands Nurses Association (SINA) Executive and Solomon Islands Nursing Council (SINC) Board prior to the forum.

The biennial SPNF meeting on the last day and the joint meeting with the South Pacific Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers Alliance (SPCNOA) resulted in drafting of the SPNF communiqué and SPNF/SPCNOA Joint resolution. These will be shared with governments, Chief Nursing Officers and important stakeholders.

**South Pacific Nurses Forum Communiqué**

Nurse Leaders from National Nursing Associations (NNAs) call on governments in the Pacific, health funders, policy planners, health educators, economists and chief nursing officers to invest in nursing.

1. Nurse leaders from National Nursing Associations (NNAs) from eight countries¹ at the 18th South Pacific Nurses Forum (SPNF) held in Honiara, Solomon Islands, Monday 31 October 2016 to Friday 4 November 2016 call on governments in the Pacific, health funders, policy planners, health educators, economists and chief nursing officers to invest in nursing.

¹ Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Vanuatu.
2. The Forum highlighted initiatives relevant to improving the role of nurses and the contribution of the nursing profession toward Nursing Excellence for Universal (Pacific) Health.

The key themes emerging through the Forum included the importance of investing in:

a) Adoption of policies to achieve universal health coverage underpinned by public health approaches, with a focus on prevention, health promotion and early intervention, to ensure the well-being of populations.

b) Adoption of policies to achieve the United Nations, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3, to ensure health lives and promote health well-being for all at all ages, including addressing social determinants of health, poverty etc.

c) Sharing best practice and innovative nursing service delivery across NNAs.

d) Nursing leadership and governance to mobilise nursing resources for better health outcomes.

e) NNA capability and sustainability to influence at all levels of policy, nursing education with a primary health care focus and health strategic planning including the development of nursing.

f) Investment in nursing workforce development, including entry to practice programs for new nurses, recognising the value of nursing contributions for long term economic and health benefits.

g) Development of information technology and internet connectivity to support nurse education and delivery of culturally appropriate nursing care to individuals, families and communities.

h) Policies for tackling the causes of climate change and its effects on health and economies, in addition to emergency and disaster preparation procedures.

i) Improving regulatory and legislative frameworks to ensure public safety and enable improved access to nursing services, including exchange of nurses and students for clinical placements to gain clinical experience on a formal basis.

j) Development of policies to respond to global (and particularly regional) migration, including displaced populations.

k) Education, training and professional development for all nurses.

The Forum considered and passed the following resolutions:

1. Consistent with SPNF’s goal for NNAs to have influence at all levels of health policy, nursing education and health strategic planning, member NNAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders commit to progressing the development of nursing education in their country.
2. SPNF support and request consistency of programmes for nurses' exchange or ‘hands on’ clinical experience between different countries throughout the Pacific and require the support of regulatory bodies including other stakeholders in each country with access to indemnity insurance cover.

And that each NNA report back on progress at the next Biennial General Meeting (BGM) to be held in the Cook Islands in 2018.

3. That the SPNF Steering Committee prepares a draft five year Strategic Plan for SPNF and an action plan with implementation timelines for consideration and ratification at the next BGM

**SPNF and SPCNMOA Joint Resolution**

In addition, a joint resolution between the SPNF and the South Pacific Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers Alliance (SPCNMOA) was considered and passed:

1. That the SPCNMOA work with SPNF to explore a concept for South Pacific nursing and midwifery health systems strengthening by establishing two working groups that include NNAs, CNMOs, regulators and educators in their membership to examine:
   - Opportunities to align regional regulatory frameworks,
   - Post graduate education requirements in line with health workforce needs.

2. That SPCNMOA and SPNF nominate appropriate subject matter experts to the two working groups by 31 December 2016.

The full SPNF report of the meeting and photographs will be available on the website: [www.spnf.org.au](http://www.spnf.org.au).

The next SPNF host is Cook Islands in 2018.