

Due to Covid-19 Restrictions our monthly newsletter has a slight change so in this paper, we will provide you what we have been up to during the first half of 2020.

### Inside this Issue

- About TongaHealth, Vision and Mission
- Grants/Sponsorship Award ceremony
- Staff Retreat at Vakaloa
- Farewell Volunteers and Rosa
- Dr Tapa Scholarship Recipients
- TH Vegetable Garden
- NNCDC meeting (May 26<sup>th</sup>)
- Advisory Committee meetings
- NCD Strategy Implementers meet
- Signing of contract with EU
- Radio/Television Program
- Fruit Voucher Promotion
- Radio/TV Exercises
- Program Deliveries
- COVID-19 and NCD Prevention
- Grants Round
- FUNSHAKE zumba
- Staff Recruitment
- Photo Galleries



### About Us

The Tonga Health Promotion Foundation (TongaHealth) was established by the Health Promotion Foundation Act 2007 as an independent body to act as a link between the community, NGOs and the Government to promote health by fighting Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

**PRIORITY AREAS** – TongaHealth focuses on four priorities for program delivery: Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Tobacco Control and Reduction of alcohol related harms.

### Vision

FOR A HEALTHY TONGA WHERE EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROMOTING HEALTH AND EVERYONE SHARES IN THE BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY POPULATION

## Health Minister awarded Certificate to TongaHealth Grants & Sponsorship Recipients Totaling up to \$844,000

98 organizations and groups throughout Tonga received awards from the Minister of Health, Hon Associate Professor 'Amelia Afuha'amango Tu'ipulotu on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 totaling up to TOP\$844,000 through TongaHealth's Grants/Sponsorship program for the 2019/2020 Financial Year at the Kalofiama 'o Epworth Hall, Kolofo'ou.

As secretariat to the growing epidemic of NCDs in Tonga, TongaHealth has been able to strengthen the effectiveness of its grant making by working intensively with partners and donors to develop clear, shared and evidence-based agreements to underpin its grants process.



TongaHealth is fully funded by the Australian Government through DFAT and the Government of Tonga. From these funding streams there are two types of funding programs within TongaHealth that were awarded; the Grants Program and the Sponsorship Program.

The Grant program is an agreement between TongaHealth and a Ministry or an organization to work towards a targeted goal relating to NCDs that can exceed an amount of \$2000 or more.

The Sponsorship program was established to encourage healthy lifestyles within our communities, churches, and schools and in Tonga as a whole. Sponsorship projects promote healthier living through community programs addressing TongaHealth's four priority areas with funding of up to TOP \$2,000.

In the Keynote Address, Hon. Minister said "This is a very important time in history, it's a crossroads of COVID-19 and NCDs, so this is the rightful time for us ke tau tu'u hake 'o kalusefai, ke tau tu'u tu'u hake 'o ngaue'i, ke tu'u hake 'o motolo'i ke hasino meiate kitautolu hou'eiki mo

e kakai 'o e fonua pea ke tau haofaki'i hotau ki'i fonua tokosi'i, ke tau haofaki'i 'etau fanau, pea ke hakeaki'i 'a kinautolu te nau takiekina 'a e fonua ni 'i he kaha'u."

Also attending the award ceremony was the Australian High Commissioner to Tonga, HE Adrian Morrison, who awarded certificates to grant recipients funded by DFAT.

It is very important that we take care of our well-being and address the risks of NCDs as those who experience NCDs are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.

HE Morrison added that this year in particular, the need for significant national action on NCDs is even more urgent and important because every country in the world is suffering from the effects of COVID-19.

"But addressing NCDs is part of our protection against COVID-19 because diseases like diabetes, diseases like heart diseases make people more likely to become very sick or die if they catch COVID-19," says HE Morrison.

The TongaHealth Board of Directors attended the occasion, alongside representatives from Government Ministries, Non-profit organizations, churches, schools and other social inclusive groups throughout Tonga.



## Staff Development Program at Vakaloa

Before COVID-19 restrictions, TongaHealth held a retreat in February for its staff at Vakaloa Beach Resort for 2 days. It enabled staff to schedule their workplan for the year. Attending the retreat and facilitating the discussion on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day was our Board's Chairman, Pastor Saia Vaea Vea.



*TongaHealth Board's Chairman Pastor Saia Vaea Vea held a session with the team*



## Farewell to staff

Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, volunteers to Tonga were returned home. TongaHealth farewelled its PACTAM2

adviser and Australian volunteer who have had a great impact on the operation of the team. We held a farewell dinner at The Little Italy Restaurant for our National NCD Implementation Advisor, Sarah Jones, Monitoring & Evaluation officer, Zoe Hillig and our Project officer, Fuarosa Taue who migrated with her family to NZ.



*CEO, Ofeina Filimoehala with Sarah Jones, National NCD Strategy Implementation Advisor*

## TongaHealth Dr. Tapa Scholarship Recipients

TongaHealth in February awarded its Dr Tapa Scholarship to 'Riella' Tevita Faiva and Folauhola Toli who are currently in Fiji studying for their Bachelors in Public Health. Both recipients are employees of the Ministry of Health – Public Health Unit and the purpose of this scholarship is to build NCD prevention capacity in Tonga to support workforce development.

This scholarship covers the enrolment, tuition fees, textbooks, travel and accommodation depending on residential course requirements, student association fees, computer essentials and logistics.



*TongaHealth CEO presenting awards to the Dr. Tapa scholarship recipients*

## National NCD Committee (NNCDC) meets for the first time this year

The Tongan Cabinet established a National NCD Committee in 2004 to oversee the multi-sectoral action and co-operation for the prevention and control of NCDs. In 2014, His Majesty's cabinet again approved the membership and revised the TOR for the NNCCDC and recommended establishing TongaHealth in the role of secretariat to the NNCCDC, with the intention to establish:

- A national over-sighting entity outside of any Ministry that is accountable to cabinet and which has multi-sectoral engagement and inclusive representation.

- Operational capacity to coordinate the planning and distribution of funds for the implementation of activities

- Simplified reporting structures with clear roles and responsibilities

Members of the NNCCDC includes; the CEO for Health, CEO for Ministry of Education and Training, CEO of Internal Affairs, CEO of MAFFF, Police Commissioner, Representative of the National Forum Church Leaders, Representative of the Commercial Business Sector, Representative of Civil Society, Chairman of Tonga Health and the

CEO for TongaHealth as Executive Officer.

In May this year, the National NCD committee met for the first time since their last meeting last year. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the progress of the implementation of the National NCD Strategy Hala Fononga 2015-2020. In these discussions, they also approved the Statement of Corporate Intent and the Annual Budget for TongaHealth 2020/21 for onward submission to the Hon. Minister of Health to meet the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

The meeting also discussed ways to minimize the risks of NCDs within the context of COVID-19. The NNCCDC was informed to expect to meet up to 4 times this year, as their input will be required in the development of the next National NCD Strategy 2020-2025.

The next NNCCDC meeting will be held in August 2020.

## TongaHealth vegetable garden

Since September last year, the TongaHealth team has been growing a vegetable garden at the front and back yard of the office. This not only encourages healthier staff behavior but is an example of an initiative that all workplaces can adopt in Tonga to encourage healthy lunches during working hours. This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> harvest this year and it is still continuing to grow. A variety of vegetables are being planted for healthy consumption, including tomatoes,

cabbage, pok choi



## NCD Advisory Committee Meetings



each committee represent relevant stakeholders from line Ministries and NGOs.

TongaHealth continued its Advisory Committee quarterly meetings in March and June this year. There are four NCD Advisory Committees within TongaHealth and its stakeholders, including Physical Activity, Tobacco Control, Healthy Eating and Alcohol Harm Reduction committees. They exist to support the implementation of the National NCD Strategy 2015-2020 and the development of the next National NCD Strategy 2020-2025. Members in

## Development of the next National NCD Strategy 2020-2025

As we now approach the end of implementing the 'Halafononga' National NCD Strategy 2015-2020, TongaHealth has engaged a team to develop the new National NCD Strategy 2020-2025. The goals they set out based on literature review and various stakeholder consultations, will determine the direction that TongaHealth will work towards in the next 5 years. They will provide the technical assistance, authorship and leadership required to develop the new National NCD Strategy 2020-2025. This is a collaborative project led by the Ministry of Health and TongaHealth and it will require a collaborative stakeholder engagement process. There is also a National and Regional taskforce to provide technical assistance to the team.

The team to develop the next National NCD Strategy includes; Dr. Veisia Matoto, Mr. Tsutomu Nakao, Mrs Iemaima Havea and Ms. Debra Allan.

## TongaHealth receives grant support from the European Union



On May 6<sup>th</sup> 2020 at the St. George Building, Nuku'alofa, TongaHealth CEO, Ms 'Ofeina Filimoehala with the Hon. Minister of Finance (the EU National Authorizing Officer) Tevita Lavemaau signed a contract agreement for TongaHealth to receive a grant of approximately \$125,000 for NCD Intervention. The intervention will implement a Zumba program to six high schools in Tonga and support the Healthy Eating Campaign.



## Radio/Television Programs

This year, TongaHealth has continued its Television/Radio Program but due to the COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to record our usual program. Instead, we decided to run a TV/Radio zumba program promoting physical activity from home during the lockdown up until May.

### Program Deliveries

In May, we were able to record our first program that was aired on TV/Radio. It began with Introductions from the TongaHealth Board's Chairman, Pastor Saia Vaea Vea and our CEO, Ms Ofeina Filimoehala. They talked about ways to keep healthy despite the Covid-19 restrictions and the 2020 workplan for the Foundation.

Two television programs were aired in June. The first one featured the CEO; 'Ofeina Filimoehala, Finance Manager, Losaline Fonua and Monitoring & Evaluation Manager, Temaleti Moala. They each talked about their roles and our sponsorship program. The second program featured recipients of our sponsorship program. We invited some of the Grants/Sponsorship recipients to share their experiences on our program.



*Our regulars on the fruit voucher radio program, the Lolomana'ia, the Tupoumalohi and the Taufua'ao kids with their fruit vouchers from TongaHealth*

### Fruit Voucher

#### Poem/Singing/Questionnaire on Radio

In May and June, TongaHealth held the popular fruit voucher radio program. It generated an atmosphere of fun entertaining spirit towards our program deliveries due to the number of people who called in and joined the program. Throughout the program we were able to collect fun poetries and songs (about healthy lifestyles) that varies from young children to adults. It also attracts interested applicants to

our sponsorship and grants program. Each person that joined the program received a \$20 fruit voucher from TongaHealth

promoting healthy eating to our people.



**Pr. Saia Vaea Vea**  
Pastor-in-charge Saia Vaea Vea

### TONGA MO'UILELEI TV PROGRAM TONIGHT AT 7:30PM ON TV TONGA 1

POLOKALAMA TELEVISION 'A E TONGA MO'UILELEI KI HE EFIAFI NI 'I HE TAIMI 7:30. 'E FAKAHOKO ATU IA 'E SEVAKI FE'AO PEA MO E SEA LOLOTONGA 'A E POATE PULE 'O E KAUTAHA, PALESITENI SAIA VAEA VEA PEHE KI HE PULE LAHI 'A E KAUTAHA TONGA MO'UILELEI, 'OFEINA FILIMOEHALA. KO E POLOKALAMA ENI FEKAU'AKI MO E NGAHI FATONGIA MAHU'INGA 'O E SEA MO E POATE KI HE KAUTAHA PEHE KI HE NGAHI PALANI NGAUE 'OKU FAKAHOKO 'E HE KAUTAHA TONGA MO'UILELEI KI HE TA'U NI. 'E KAU AI MO HA NGAHI FAKATALANOA KI HONO UKI 'A HONO TOKANGAEKINA 'O E MO'UILELEI KOE'UHI KO E NGAHI FOKOUTUA 'OKU 'IKAI KE PIPHI 'OKU TU'U LAVEA NGOFUA 'A KINAUTOLU 'OKU NAU MO'UA AI KI HE VAILASI COVID 19.



**Ofeina Filimoehala**  
Talekita Pale - Tonga Mo'uiilelei



**Sevaki Fe'ao**  
Senior Program Officer

**TUNE IN! TONIGHT ON TV TONGA 1 - 7:30PM**



*TongaHealth kids were also regulars in the program; we are Losa, Kristina and Marylyn with our fruit vouchers*

*A facebook ad on our TV programs*

## TongaHealth signed Contract Amendment with DFAT

TongaHealth Board's Chairman, Pastor Saia Vaea Vea with the Australian High Commissioner to Tonga, HE Adrian Morrison in June signed a contract amendment to its current 5-year agreement. This amendment extends the current agreement time by one year and DFAT is giving us an extra AUD \$16,5000 to utilize in the financial year 2020/21 with TOP \$10,0000 specifically for Competitive grants for NCDs Prevention and Controls within the context of COVID-19. Covid-19 restrictions present some unique challenges for the prevent and control of NCDs. Therefore, TongaHealth through this grant is seeking to support organisations to deliver projects to assist the Tongan community preparedness for further lockdown and the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions may have on the risk factors of NCDs.

*This Grants is available for applications until the end of July.*



## Staff Recruitment



In May 2020, TongaHealth had new twists to its M&E team. Our Monitoring & Evaluation officer, Ms Temaleti Moala was promoted as the new Monitoring & Evaluation Manager by an interview panel. Mr. Tu'ilautala Ma'u also started working for TongaHealth as a M&E officer. TongaHealth congratulates Temaleti and Tu'ilautala for their new roles and wishing them all the best.



## 2020 FUNSHAKE zumba

On Thursday June 25<sup>th</sup>, we held the first FUNSHAKE zumba for the year because COVID-19 Restrictions was in place since the beginning of the year. This event was filled with fun and excitement from different people especially from our young ones (see photo below). It was also the first time for the Breakthrough Nation team to lead the zumba since Kiko (our usual zumba instructor) left to NZ.



Next FUNSHAKE will be at Ha'asini on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July and all are invited. Take note that this event is FREE, so come and do join us and let's SHAKE away NCDs.



# Photo Galleries



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