

News Release

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## Symposium builds on success in Pacific Health

The LotuMoui Pacific Health Symposium will hit the Telstra Clear Pacific Events Centre in Manukau this November (22/23<sup>rd</sup>), building on the success of the inaugural event held in December 2004.

The theme for this year is *Healthier Lifestyles: Planning for the next generation of Pacific peoples*. "This year, we really want to focus on Pacific people taking control of their destiny and planning for the health and wellbeing of future generations," says Fepulea'i Margie Apa, General Manager of Pacific Health.

The Symposium gives Pacific church and religious leaders an opportunity to discuss key health issues that affect their congregation. "We recognise the strong role that church plays in the spiritual and physical health of Pacific peoples," says Fepulea'i.

"The symposium is an excellent opportunity for our community to come together and agree on commitments to improving health outcomes for Pacific young people and their families."

Discussions are a key factor in deciding what programmes and strategies Counties Manukau District Health Board uses to achieve the goals set for Pacific Health in the District Strategic Plan.

Since the inaugural Symposium in 2004, many key milestones have been achieved.

CMDHB began the Lotu Moui grant scheme for Pacific churches to implement grass roots activities and community projects that aim to improve the health and wellbeing of their congregation.

A smokefree toolkit for churches was launched in 2005 and health promotion training carried out to support the toolkit.

The Kai Lelei Community Nutrition programme, implemented this year, has been a great success, with over 400 Pacific peoples undertaking nutrition workshops and learning how to make healthy food for large families.

At this year's Symposium, Mr Stephen McKernan, Director General of the Ministry of Health will be attending to launch the second round of funding for Pacific churches as part of the LotuMoui Health Grant.

There are two levels of funding available, at the amounts of \$3,000 and \$5,000. The one-off payment will go towards supporting health promotion and disease prevention programmes.

"We want to strengthen the partnership that already exists between CMDHB and Pacific churches and faith leaders in the region in order to improve the health status and wellbeing of Pacific peoples," says Fepulea'i.

"We will be informing the group about key health developments, programmes and strategic priorities which will impact on Pacific peoples in Counties Manukau and

share some of the successes of church-based healthy lifestyle programmes which have resulted as part of the LotuMoui Health Grant”.

More than 1000 delegates, from a number of Church denominations, ethnic groups, Pacific Health Providers, Government agencies and CMDHB staff, are expected to attend the Symposium. Keynote speakers include:

- Dr Reverend Feleterika Nokise, Principal, Theological College, Suva, Fiji
- Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Tupuola Tufuga Efi, Deputy Head of State, Samoa
- Dr Joan Reede, Dean for Community Partnership and Diversity, Harvard Medical School; Director of the Minority Faculty Development Program, Boston, USA
- Prof Colin Tukuitonga, School of Population Health and Pacific Health Department, University of Auckland
- Mr Stephen McKernan, Director General Ministry of Health

For more information, or to register for the Symposium, visit [www.cmdhb.govt.nz](http://www.cmdhb.govt.nz) and click on the Lotu Moui link, or call Karyn Ne'emias on, 09-573 0910.