

## EDITORIAL

### MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

It is my pleasure to write the inaugural Editorial column. The idea of a Samoa Medical Journal (SMJ) has been germinating for over 10 years and finally the idea has come to fruition. The Samoa Medical Association (SMA) is grateful to the Oceania University of Medicine (OUM) for making this Journal a reality. The Editorial Board is represented by members of OUM and the SMA with support and contributions from the Ministry of Health, National Health Services TTM Hospital and last but not least the Samoa GP Association. This shows major projects can be realized when different sectors work collaboratively. In time, the SMJ will become a recognized forum for learning and exchange of ideas by and for medical professionals in Samoa and the Oceania region.

An important decision made by the Editorial Board prior to launch was that the journal must be for the many and not just for a few who are engaged in clinical research. All of us, whether we are doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, dentists or in any other field of health care, must take a greater responsibility for managing and solving the many unique health issues and problems that we face in our region. We must engage in research and voice our opinions by publishing them in this, our local journal. To ensure wide readership, the journal will carry a variety of articles of general interest, as well as scientific articles, based on topics relevant to our region. Articles in the following categories are welcome: Editorials, Letter to Editor, Major and Minor Reviews, Original Research, Notable Clinical Cases, Lessons from Practice, Diagnostic Dilemma, Viewpoint, Opinion, Hypothesis, Medico-Legal issues, Topic for Debate, Clinical Ethics, Conference Report, Medical History in Samoa, From Bench to Bedside, Personal Perspective, Snapshot, Letter, Obituary, Book Review, New Drugs & Old Drugs, Clinical Update and the HINARI column (latest research news). With so many categories, I am sure that all of you will be able to make regular contributions to this journal.

The SMJ will be officially launched on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October, 2009 to coincide with the 1<sup>st</sup> OUM Medical Conference entitled "Heart Disease in Samoa." The journal and the medical conference are two major new initiatives driven by OUM and its partner Samoa Medical Association that should nurture a culture of clinical research and critical analysis of health care and patient management. The journal will encourage the publication of educational material that promotes an in-depth understanding and prevention of the emerging 'epidemic' of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disorders in Samoa. I encourage the new generation of medical doctors and allied health professionals to create and publish new research data in this journal and adopt critical thinking habits to address our health problems. This journal should also encourage international research collaborations that result in joint publications of high international standards. Finally I want to thank my Editorial Board for their tireless contributions and efforts to make SMJ a reality. Thanks also to our reviewers, both local and international, who provided invaluable peer review to ensure sub-standard articles were revised appropriately or in some cases rejected. This is a major milestone for the medical fraternity in Samoa and I encourage all my colleagues in the health care sector, both public and private, to embrace and support this journal. The continuing success of this journal should give us a sense of pride and achievement. Please contribute articles to this journal in a timely manner to ensure it becomes an important forum for the exchange of medical ideas and knowledge which will ultimately translate to better health care and management of all Samoans.

Faafetai lava  
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