



The Pacific Islands Orthopaedic Association (PIOA) 2022 Academic Year Trainee Report.

Introduction

Warmest greetings from the trainees from across the Islands of the Pacific Ocean. The 2022 academic year presents to us not only its challenges but also victorious moments that were worthy to be celebrated. Our experiences of living through these challenges are in principle no different to our forefathers. It certainly is our greatest desire to embark on a journey to make a difference to our island folks.

The Pacific Island Orthopaedic Association (PIOA) continues to be a blessing for us in serving as an avenue for the acquisition of much needed quality knowledge, skill sets and professionalism. Since the beginning of its journey in 2013, we are super thankful on our trainee membership from across our vast oceans and islands of the Pacific. The trainees are from Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Samoa, American Samoa, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Timor Leste, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands.

COVID 19 presented its challenges across global communities. The Islands of the Pacific were no exception. Since 2019 our modules were mostly on the virtual platform. The highlight of 2022 was the reopening of the international borders post COVID 19. This gave an opportunity to both trainees and faculty members to once again engage in physical meetings.

The Academic Year 2022.

a) New Trainees

Congratulations and welcome to our 2022 new trainees:

- I. Agnes Auto – Solomon Islands
- II. Paul Lomavatu – Fiji
- III. Penijamini Naiceru – Fiji
- IV. Julio Piedade – Timor Leste
- V. Deacon Teapa – Cook Islands

b) Suva Module

The year commenced with the virtual meetings on the Zoom platform every Sundays. Despite its share of challenges, we completed the academic year on a high note. The borders reopened and for the first time in over 2 years, we once again had the opportunity to have our first and only physical meeting for 2022 in Suva, Fiji. There was the spine module from the 12th – 16th of September which was followed by the hip module from the 17th – 24th of September. These were held at the Colonial War Memorial (CWM) Hospital. The module was a success over the 2 weeks. We had physical delivery of both theories and practicals by our PIOA faculty membership.

We would like to firstly thank our God for his blessings upon us. We are forever thankful to the leadership of PIOA and the faculty members for their faithfulness in sharing their expertise and time in planning, coordinating and executing learning for us in 2022.

A special thank you to faculty members who took time out from their busy schedules and families to teach us. Thank you to you all.

- I. Spine Sessions: David Bartle, Michelle Atkinson and Ian Cheung.
- II. Hip Sessions: Vaughan Poutawera, Andy Vane, Kosh Hazratwalla, Des Soares and Shaun Mauiliu.

We would like to also extend our thank you to the leadership of CWM hospital for their acceptance and support towards our module in Suva. Likewise, we would like to thank the patients and their families for allowing us to learn from them. Without our patients there is no clinical learning. Thank you to the staff of CWM, both clinical and support, for all their support and Bula smiles. Vinaka Vakalevu!

c) PIOA Exams 2022 – finalists.

One of our highlights in 2022 was the exit exam for two of our PIOA finalist. Drs. Areta Samuelu (Apia, Samoa) and Pita Sovanivalu (Labasa, Fiji) sat their exit exams. Both passed their exit exams. Congratulations brothers! We are super proud of both of you.

The passing of Drs. Samuelu and Sovanivalu makes now a total of 7 trainees who have sat the exams and passed. It is a work in progress. It is our hope that the islands will one day be saturated with PIOA trainees that will be at reach to our island folks with their musculoskeletal needs.

To the examiners, we cannot thank you enough. Appreciate always your time and expertise in supporting to conduct examinations for us:

- I. John North,
- II. Richard Lander,
- III. Shaun Mauiliu, and,
- IV. Stephen Kodovaru.

Zoom Sessions.

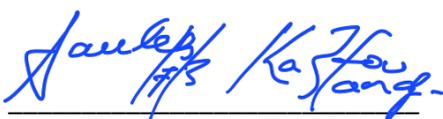
The Zoom platform has continued to provide an essential avenue for virtual meetings through which valuable learning has and will continue to take place.

Network connectivity across the islands has been an ongoing issue. A challenge we are hopeful that each island country can resolve over time thus enabling uninterrupted connectivity. Trainees are encouraged though to have connectivity to more than one network at any one time. However, the provisions of session recordings have been always been an amazing back up resource for catch up learning.

Conclusion.

It certainly has been a journey for us all. We are already experiencing changes with care we are delivering to our folks. The results bring hope and encouragement to us. Challenges are just a way of life. It is the effort in continuing to search for ways for perfection that brings joy to one. We pray and hope that all efforts will one day leave a Godly legacy for all to embrace and celebrate.

May 2023 be bigger and better. God Bless.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Saulep' followed by a flourish and 'Raymond'.

Raymond Saulep – Trainee.