



The Pacific Way  
March 2024

**PACIFIC PATHOLOGY TRAINING CENTRE**

**Warm Pacific greetings to you all from the PPTC**  
A belated happy new year to you all from the PPTC. The PPTC welcomes everybody to 2024 and is thrilled to kick start the year with its programmes.

This year the PPTC aims to deliver 4 courses in the disciplines of, Quality Management, Biochemistry, Haematology and Transfusion Medicine

**UPDATE**

**Centre Based Course- Transfusion Medicine**

The PPTC continues with its work towards advancing the development of diagnostic pathology knowledge and practice throughout the Pacific. Five students from the Pacific attended our last centre-based course for 2023. The course was held for 4 weeks at our centre here in Wellington from the 6<sup>th</sup> of November to the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. The five students from the Pacific that successfully attended the course are:

1. Pisisami Kalamelu- Tuvalu, Princess Margaret Hospital Laboratory
2. Vaohingano Sika- Tonga, Vaiola Hospital Laboratory
3. Shivangini Devi- Fiji Islands, Labasa Hospital Laboratory
4. Erekana Teingoa- Kiribati, Tungaru Central Hospital Laboratory
5. Janine Kolidani- Solomon Islands, National Referral Hospital Laboratory

The students underwent a comprehensive 4-week training programme in Transfusion Medicine, and all gained a certificate of achievement. The students also had the opportunity to experience laboratories around Wellington. The PPTC would like to thank the New Zealand Blood Service for their fantastic contribution to the course, as well as The Norman Kirk Memorial Trust and Red Cross for their continuous generosity in sponsoring students from the Pacific to attend our courses.



**Figure 1.** 2023 Transfusion Medicine course students with PPTC CEO and course convener Telesia Apikotoa



**Figure 2.** Students at the New Zealand Blood Service - Palmerston North



**Figure 3.** Students receiving their Certificates at the end of the course from PPTC co-founder- Dr. Ron Mackenzie

## End of the Year Audits

Towards the end of 2023, the PPTC audited eight countries in its laboratory accreditation alignment programme against the ISO 15189 Medical laboratories standard. The eight countries included:

1. Fiji
2. Samoa
3. Tonga
4. Vanuatu
5. Solomon Islands
6. Kiribati
7. Cook Islands
8. Papua New Guinea

Whilst none of these laboratories in the Pacific are accredited, the laboratories maintain a great level of resilience to deliver quality services. Unlike New Zealand laboratories, laboratories in the Pacific face a number of factors that hinder their pathway to accreditation. Factors include, procurement, laboratory personnel, equipment breakdowns, reagent shortage, etc. This

is why the PPTC maintains a strong relationship with Pacific labs and aids them in their journey towards accreditation. Although it is not an easy one, it is the ultimate goal.

## Support to the Pacific

The PPTC provides ongoing support to the Pacific through the following ways:

- In country teaching and training
- Equipment support
- Online Zoom training

## In-Country Teaching and Training

Last year the PPTC completed a total of 43 visits to Pacific Island laboratories. Through in-country support, the PPTC consultants are able to work together with staff on the bench to aid in improving processes, procedures and the overall quality of results coming out of these laboratories. The dedicated staff at the PPTC are passionate about the Pacific and aim to develop close relationships with the laboratories so they know that they are never alone in times of need.



## Equipment Support

The PPTC provided essential laboratory equipment to Pacific labs in 2023. Laboratory equipment provided to these labs are procured by the PPTC and are delivered to the islands. Equipment purchased includes - Hematek staining machines for Samoa, Fiji and Vanuatu, a FX40 Blood Culture analyser and a chemical safety cabinet for the Cook Islands, a microscope for Fiji and a biosafety cabinet for Samoa. The PPTC also facilitated the shipment of donated Phlebotomy chairs to the Pacific. This year the PPTC anticipates providing further equipment support to Pacific labs.

## Online Zoom Training

Through online means of communication, the PPTC provides and organises support to the Pacific laboratories. This is via discipline-specific online lectures, technical support, consultation, and organising support with equipment manufacturers for any troubleshooting requirements. Laboratories continue to engage with the PPTC to maintain their service and the PPTC is always ready to offer support.

## Can you help?

If any New Zealand medical laboratories have items of diagnostic instrumentation that have been recently upgraded or continue to be stored in the laboratory but are actually surplus to requirements, the PPTC would be most grateful if such items could be donated through its Centre to Pacific Island laboratories where there is an exceptional need. Pacific laboratories have very restricted budgets and often cannot afford to replace troublesome instrumentation that continues to breakdown, and which is often discontinued because it is so outdated.

The PPTC would also welcome teaching resources in terms of wall charts, Haematology case studies (stained blood films), projector slides, textbooks and journals (within 10 yrs. of publication) etc., for teaching purposes in the Pacific, if you no longer have a use for them. Any contribution is so valuable to us.

Please contact:

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## RECENT REVIEWS

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The NZIMLS cannot provide direct access to the reviews below due to copyright restrictions, but open access reviews will be indicated. Abstracts are always available on-line and journals may be available via hospital libraries. If there is access to University libraries, then the journals should be available on-line.

Any comments on this addition to the Journal can be sent to: [editor@nzimls.org.nz](mailto:editor@nzimls.org.nz).

1. Reid M, Agbassi YJP, Arinaminpary N et al. Scientific advances and the end of tuberculosis: a report from the *Lancet* Commission on Tuberculosis. *Lancet* 2023; 402(10411): 1473-1489. [/doi/10.1016/S0140-6736\(23\)01379-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)01379-X).
  2. Sacks DB, Arnold MA, Bakris GL et al. Guidelines and recommendations for the laboratory analysis in the diagnosis and management of diabetes mellitus. *Clin Chem* 2023; 69: 808-868.
  3. Vynck M, Chen Y, Gleerup D et al. Digital PCR partition classification. *Clin Chem* 2023; 69: 976-990.
  4. Skinner MK. Epigenetic biomarkers for disease susceptibility and preventative medicine. *Cell Metab* 2023; S1550-4131(23)00447-3. [doi/10.1016/j.cmet.2023.11.105](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cmet.2023.11.105).
  5. Shepherd NA. Macroscopic pathology and all that: a personal view. *J Clin Pathol* 2023; [doi.org/10.1136/jcp-2023-209106](https://doi.org/10.1136/jcp-2023-209106).
  6. Najafi S, Asemani Y, Majidpoor J et al. Tumour educated platelets. *Clin Chim Acta* 2023; [doi.org/10.1016/j.cca.2023.117690](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cca.2023.117690).
  7. Wang Y, Duval AJ, Adli M, Matei D. Biology-driven therapy advances in high-grade serous ovarian cancer. *J Clin Invest* 2024; 134(1):e174013. [doi/10.1172/JCI117403](https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI117403). [OPEN ACCESS]
  8. Boddupally K, Thuraka ER. Artificial intelligence for prenatal chromosome analysis 2023. *Clin Chim Acta* 2024; 552: 117669. [doi.org/10.1016.j.cca.2023.117669](https://doi.org/10.1016.j.cca.2023.117669).
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## Rob Siebers Journal Prize

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The NZIMLS Council has approved an annual Journal prize to the value of NZ\$1,500 for the best peer-reviewed article published by NZIMLS members in the Journal during the calendar year. The article can be a review article, original article, case study, research letter or technical communication. Excluded are Fellowship dissertations.

Many studies are presented at the Annual Scientific Meeting, SIG meetings, and the North and South Island Seminars, yet are rarely submitted to the Journal for wider dissemination to the profession. Consider submitting your presentation to the Journal. If accepted, you are in consideration for the Rob Siebers Journal Prize and will also earn you valuable CPD points.

Please contact the Editor or any Editorial Board Member for advice and help. Contact details are on the NZIMLS web site ([www.nzimls.org.nz](http://www.nzimls.org.nz)) as are instructions to authors.

All articles published during the calendar year (March, June and November issues) will be considered. The Editor, Deputy Editors and the President of the NZIMLS, who themselves are ineligible, will judge all eligible articles in December. Their decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.

**The winners of the Rob Siebers Journal prize for 2023 are Julie Creighton and Bethany Mills, for their article Comparison of the BD Max™ vaginal panel, against standard methods, for the detection of common vaginitis conditions. Published in *NZ J Med Lab Sci* 2023; 77(3): 124-127**

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