



RESEARCH RECOGNISES BENEFITS OF TONGA TWINNING PROGRAM

A research paper analysing the experiences of Tongan healthcare workers who have taken part in the St John of God Ballarat Hospital's Tonga Twinning Program, has outlined the importance of the program in supporting healthcare. The St John of God Ballarat Hospital Collaborative Tonga Twinning Program Research Paper, a collaboration with the hospital, the Ministry of Health in Tonga and the Federation University Australia, was recently published in the Horizon Research Journal.

The paper outlined a qualitative analysis of the experiences and perceptions of the program from key stakeholders in Tonga who engaged with the program. The two key findings suggested that the program has supported a collective sense of bringing the very best available knowledge and skills to the people of Tonga, and has fostered a genuine and open dialogue between partners.

The Tongan Twinning Program, which has been running since 1992, offers Tongan Ministry of Health employees an opportunity to complete experience placement in St John of God Health Care, across a variety of areas including nursing, infection control, and medical records.

Through the program, the hospital also donated important medical equipment and supplies to Vaiola Hospital. St John of God Ballarat Hospital Director of Mission Integration, Maureen Waddington, said having the research paper published was important to demonstrate the benefits of the program. "Knowing where and how our work lands is important, because relying purely on our experience is not enough," Maureen said. "This Tongan Twinning Research project has confirmed the mutual value of our relationship with our Tongan health community, colleagues and friends."

You can read or download the Tonga Twinning Program Research Paper:

http://www.hrpub.org/journals/article_info.php?aid=8073

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Pictured: Researchers (L-R) Michelle Franc, Maureen Waddington, Carolyn Mornane with St John of God Ballarat Hospital Chief Executive Officer Alex Demidov (behind)

