

Timely medical aid

LUKE RAWALAI | 3 July, 2019, 1:40 pm



Diabetes Fiji trustee, Professor Eddie McGaig, left, chairman of EqualMed Professor Divesh Sharma, CWM Hospital physiotherapist Ashneel Chand and deputy director nursing East wing Raymond St John during the handover of equipment at the CWM Hospital auditorium in Suva on Monday, July 01, 2019. Picture: JONACANI LALAKOBAU.

A 40-FOOT container loaded with medical supplies received by the Health Ministry yesterday is expected to replenish much needed supplies in hospitals around the country.

Since beginning their work of giving medical supplies to hospitals around the country in 2013, American non-governmental organisation EqualMed has given \$1.5 million worth of supplies to the people of Fiji.

A statement from the chief executive officer of the NGO, Nivita Sharma, said EqualMed had grown over the years supplying three full size containers to Fiji with two 20-foot containers in 2017 and 2018, and a 40-foot container of medical supplies and equipment this year.

“Over the years, strong sponsors in Fiji have allowed EqualMed to travel inland and to outer island health facilities and villages to donate medical supplies and equipment, conduct eye tests and issue free reading glasses, and donate first-aid kits to schools,” a statement from EqualMed said.

“These significant sponsors included Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort and Shangri-La’s Fijian Resort and Spa in Sigatoka, Na Hina Apartments Fiji, Fiji Marriott Resort Momi Bay, Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, and Navutu Stars Resort Yasawa Island.”

So far, EqualMed has provided over \$700,000 of medical supplies and equipment to Diabetes Fiji to treat, address, and prevent one of Fiji’s most widespread and devastating NCDs.

Fiji ranks among the top nations in the world on a per capita basis for amputations because of diabetes that sits at one every eight hours.

Nausori maternity ward nurses were especially thrilled as they received an electronic birthing bed valued at more than \$25,000, which is the only one in Fiji.

Speaking during the handover yesterday, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Fiji National University's Professor of Surgery Eddie McCaig said the apparatus would be used well in our hospitals, adding they were highly sought around in Fiji as supplies were short.

Prof McCaig said in many places this medicine and equipment were nonexistent.