

Pacific Partnership Hosts Nursing Conference in Marshall Islands

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MAJURO, Marshall Islands (NNS) – Nurses from the University of Hawaii and the U.S. Navy hosted a nursing conference for more than 40 nurses and midwives from Majuro Hospital during Pacific Partnership 2013, July 12.

The conference featured lectures on disaster management and preparedness, cardiac emergencies, pediatric asthma and pneumonia prevention, post-partum exams and obstetric emergencies.



Gary Glauberman, a registered nurse volunteering on the mission with the University of Hawaii, taught the lecture on disaster management and preparedness.

“Nurses are very integral to a disaster response because they are able to communicate well, counsel patients, treat patients, triage patients and coordinate care across different levels,” said Glauberman.

The Marshall Islands, an island country in the northern Pacific Ocean, is vulnerable to natural disasters such as

hurricanes, cyclones, floods, and severe droughts.

Glaubergerman said that the single most important take-away from his presentation was that everyone, especially nurses, should have a family plan and a disaster preparedness kit ready for emergencies. If nurses are busy finding and taking care of their own family they won't be able to do their job as well as they should.

Alitaake Alefaio has been a nurse midwife at Majuro Hospital for 20 years. She said she decided to attend the conference when she saw the topics to be discussed.

"I'm really interested in all of the topics from today," said Alefaio. "These are the topics that involve a lot of the activities we do every day."

Alefaio said that a large wave recently washed over the entire island, and brought an influx of patients to the hospital, making the disaster preparedness lesson one of the most relevant to her.

Salome Lanwi, a nurse and head of training and staff development at Majuro Hospital, worked with Laurie Kukkowem, a nurse from the University of Hawaii and the Pacific Partnership project lead, to choose the topics for the conference.

Lanwi said that the hospital staff was looking forward to the visitors because they understand that procedures and technologies in the medical field are constantly changing and improving.

Lanwi went on to say that the unique partnership between a nongovernmental organization and U.S. military to conduct the conference is representative of the Pacific Partnership mission as a whole.

Alefaio said that the mix of presenters brings different

experiences and knowledge that she and her colleagues can use in their daily work.

Pacific Partnership is a collaborative effort of military members and civilians from ten partner nations including Australia, Canada, Colombia, France, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, New Zealand and the United States that improves maritime security through disaster preparedness.

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