

VSA Assignment Description

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Assignment Title | Nursing Unit Management Mentor (FIJ - 42089) |
| Assignment Modality | In-Country |
| Assignment Number | 42089 |
| Country | Fiji |
| Location | Suva |
| Partner Organisation | Pacific Eye Institute - Fred Hollows |
| Duration | 12 months |

Sustainable Development Goals



1. Partner Organisation Overview

The Pacific Eye Institute (PEI), established in 2005, is a prominent healthcare institution based in Fiji that plays a pivotal role in providing high-quality eye care services to the Pacific Islands region. With a primary focus on the prevention and treatment of blindness and vision impairment, PEI offers a comprehensive range of ophthalmic services, including cataract surgeries, glaucoma management, treatment for diabetic retinopathy, and correction of refractive errors. The institute is particularly noted for its commitment to addressing cataract-related blindness, a leading cause of vision loss in the region. Each year, PEI performs hundreds of cataract surgeries, significantly improving the quality of life for many patients, especially the elderly. In addition to clinical services, PEI is deeply involved in training and capacity building, offering educational programs for ophthalmologists, optometrists, nurses, and support staff, thereby strengthening the healthcare workforce in Fiji and neighbouring Pacific nations. The institute's outreach programs extend eye care services to remote and underserved areas, including outer islands, through mobile clinics and community health initiatives. PEI also emphasizes public education, advocating for eye health awareness and the importance of early detection. Collaborating with both local and international organizations, PEI has become a cornerstone of eye health in the Pacific, making significant strides in reducing preventable blindness and improving overall vision health across the region. Through these efforts, PEI has made a profound impact on public health in Fiji and the Pacific Islands, helping thousands of individuals regain their sight and enhancing the overall well-being of local communities.

2. Assignment Overview

Fiji is currently grappling with significant challenges in retaining skilled healthcare professionals, particularly within the nursing sector, which has led to a noticeable shortage of senior nurses. Many healthcare workers, including nurses, migrate abroad in search of better career opportunities and compensation, exacerbating the difficulties faced by healthcare institutions in the country. This shortage of experienced nursing leaders creates gaps in critical leadership roles, affecting the delivery of quality care and the overall functioning of healthcare services. The Pacific Eye Institute (PEI), which functions as both a training institute and a service provider, is significantly impacted by this issue, as it requires strong nursing leadership to both manage day-to-day clinical operations and oversee the training and professional development of future healthcare professionals.

This volunteer assignment presents a unique opportunity to work alongside clinical leaders and PEI senior management to address the current leadership gaps and support the development of a sustainable and competent nursing leadership team. The focus of this role will be on skills transfer and capacity development, working to build leadership capabilities within PEI's nursing staff. By facilitating the transfer of knowledge, expertise, and best practices in leadership, management, and clinical care, the volunteer will help strengthen the local capacity to lead and manage high-quality nursing teams. This capacity-building effort will involve mentoring current senior nurses and developing training programs to enhance their leadership skills, ultimately contributing to a more robust and self-sustaining nursing leadership structure at PEI.

This collaboration will also enhance the overall effectiveness of the eye health workforce at PEI, ensuring that the institute can meet its mission to reduce preventable blindness across the Pacific Islands. Through skills transfer and capacity development, the volunteer will assist in creating tailored leadership programs that address the specific needs of PEI's nursing teams and help build a strong pipeline of future leaders. The assignment will focus on fostering local leadership talent, improving staff retention, and equipping the nursing workforce with the tools and knowledge to take on greater responsibilities within the organization. By strengthening PEI's internal training capacity and leadership structure, the volunteer will play a key role in improving service delivery, ensuring high standards of care, and supporting the long-term sustainability of eye care services in the region.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

Pacific Eye Institute has a sustainable, competent, and quality nursing leadership team that enhances the overall effectiveness of the eye health workforce.

Outcome 1

PEI has a strengthened leadership framework for nurses in place, with a capable and efficient leadership team that maintains high standards of eye care, supports professional development, and ensures the ongoing success of its training and service initiatives.

The Nursing Unit Management mentor will work alongside the PEI management team and senior clinical nursing staff to deliver on the following outputs: -

- Support a leadership needs assessment for internal nurses. She/He will be working with Team Leaders from Operation Theatre, Diabetes Eye Clinic and Mobile Eye Clinic to facilitate this assessment.
- Facilitate the establishment of a mentorship program.
- Facilitate skills transfer through targeted leadership training in management, decision-making, and conflict resolution.
- Facilitate job shadowing opportunities with senior nursing staff from regional or international institutions.
- Guide delivery of leadership skills workshops and training programs.
- Work with counterparts to organize joint meetings and workshops between PEI and the Colonial War Memorable hospital (CWMH) Eye Clinic.
- Support design of a collaborative framework to manage shared nursing roles across both institutions.
- Support design of a shared performance metrics to align training objectives of PEI with the service delivery goals of the local hospital.

Outcome 2

PEI collaboration with CWMH Eye Clinic is strengthened through aligned training and service delivery. Working alongside clinical leaders and PEI senior management, the Nursing Unit Management mentor will:

- Work with counterpart to establish a joint working group to oversee the integration of training with service delivery.

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

Key capacity development will be facilitated alongside the PEI Senior Management Team through informed development of training metrics and co-delivery of trainings with PEI and CWHM Eye Clinic staff. The Nursing Unit Management mentor will report directly to the PEI Country Manager and will be accountable to both the Consultant Clinical Ophthalmologist and the PEI Country Manager for guidance, feedback, and approval. To deliver the outlined outcomes for this role, the Nursing Unit Management mentor will work directly with the PEI management team and senior clinical nursing staff. As local capacity for this role is not yet established in Fiji, the volunteer will focus on building individual and sector-level capacity, ultimately benefiting the community.

The volunteer will report to the PEI Country Manager and will work closely with the clinical leaders and PEI senior management on a daily basis. They will also maintain an ongoing relationship with the VSA Programme Manager for assignment monitoring, reporting, professional guidance, and personal support.

As needs on the ground may change over time, the volunteer is encouraged to review and update the Assignment Description on arrival in consultation with the partner organisation and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically reviews and reflects on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection Criteria/Position Requirements

Professional Specifications

Essential

- Bachelor of Nursing
- Able to get license to practice with the Fiji Nursing Council.
- At least 5-years' experience as a senior nurse/leader ideally within a cross-cultural setting.
- Experience in eye care is not essential however it would be an advantage.

Desirable

- Postgraduate qualifications relevant to nursing or management are an advantage.
- Experience in ophthalmology
- Several years of clinical nursing experience specialising in ophthalmology would be an advantage
- Understanding of the Fiji nurse's scope of practice, Fiji Nursing Act, and Nurses Code of Conduct

Personal Specifications

Essential

- Strong staff leadership skills
- Ability to foster positive relationships and engage in a culturally sensitive manner with people of diverse backgrounds.
- A team player, with a collaborative approach
- A solution focused and service-oriented outlook.
- Ability to coordinate schedules, rosters, plan, and budget resources.

- A good standard of computer literacy

6. VSA Essential Attributes

- Commitment to volunteering, to VSA and to the partner organisation
- Cross cultural awareness
- Adaptability and a willingness to approach change or newness positively
- Able to form good relationships, both personally and professionally, with work colleagues and in the community
- Resilience and an ability to manage setbacks
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange

7. Country Context

For more information about Fiji, see <https://www.vsa.org.nz/our-work/countryregion/fiji/>

8. Living and Working Situation

PEI Eye centre is located at Brown Street Suva, Fiji. PEI has 38-42 staff. The office will be provided in our Resource Centre above the Operation Theatre. It is a co-shared room and has space to accommodate 4-5 staff. Air Conditioning and access to the internet is provided. The volunteer will not need to use their personal laptop for this role.

Additional Information

Standard Assignment (12 months or more)

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and currently living in NZ.

Pre-departure briefing

As part of the volunteer's contract, successful candidates will be required to take part in a pre-departure briefing course run by VSA in Wellington and complete all required pre-reading.

Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances (costs covered by VSA), partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the pre-departure briefing course.

Family status

VSA supports partners to accompany volunteers on assignments of six months or longer. However, volunteers with accompanying dependents will not be considered for this assignment.

Fundraising

VSA funding stakeholders are both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and donors. We ask volunteers and accompanying partners to fundraise to help cover the cost of sending volunteers throughout the Pacific and beyond. Fundraising can be as simple as doing something you enjoy with a group or friends, and our Fundraising team is available to help you every step of the way.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be vaccinated, prior to departure, in accordance with the instructions of VSA's medical adviser. VSA covers the cost of any required vaccinations.

Children's Act

While on assignment, VSA volunteers may be required to work with children and/or may choose to participate in informal activities in their own time that involve interactions with children (such as coaching teams or teaching English). VSA is committed to the protection of vulnerable children and adults, which also includes meeting our commitment under the Children's Act 2014.

The information requested during the application process is necessary to assist VSA to determine applicant suitability to work and/or interact regularly with children and is part of a series of pre-selection checks undertaken on all applicants for VSA assignments.

Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

Reimbursements and grants

1. The volunteer may be entitled to an establishment grant to help them set up in their country of assignment, and a rest and respite grant after a specified period of active service in-country to encourage the volunteer to take a break away from the immediate assignment location. These grants depend on the length and location of the assignment. The volunteer's contract will specify any grant entitlements.
2. A resettlement grant of NZ\$200 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on completion of the assignment.
3. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of

Accommodation

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. In some circumstances volunteers may be asked to share accommodation.

Airfares and baggage allowance

VSA will provide the volunteer with economy airfares to and from New Zealand for their assignment plus a baggage allowance.

Insurance

VSA will provide travel insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and non-routine medical expenses for the duration of the assignment. Further details of the insurance cover will be provided during the volunteer pre-departure briefing.

Utilities

VSA will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses for household utilities while on assignment.

Final terms and conditions relating to the specific volunteer assignment will be confirmed in a personalised volunteer contract.