



Australian High Commission
Solomon Islands

MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIA SUPPORTS SAFE WASTE MANAGEMENT AT NAHA BIRTHING AND URBAN HEALTH CENTRE

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Operational training is well underway at the new Naha Birthing and Urban Health Centre to ensure staff are ready to provide safe and environmentally responsible health services within the local community.

Australia is supporting a range of onsite induction and training activities for staff and management in preparation for centre opening. The trainings are designed to ensure staff are confident and equipped to deliver safe and professional health services within the modern new facility.

Medical waste management experts from the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) were funded by Australia to deliver a one-week practical workshop on safe and culturally respectful healthcare waste management to 22 healthcare workers from Honiara City Council (HCC) and Naha Birthing and Urban Health Centre.

Head Nurse, Ellen Jilini, said the training provided her team with valuable, practical knowledge about how to change how they deal with medical waste from the current Naha Clinic, as well as the new Centre.

“Waste management is a very important part of maintaining safe facility operations,” Ms Jilini said.

“The key takeaway from the workshop is how to identify and manage different types of waste correctly to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in the new facility.”

Staff learnt how to safely handle healthcare waste—from proper separation to best practice storage, transport and disposal.

Participants were taken through different scenarios to strengthen waste management coordination between the new centre and HCC.

The training was developed as part of Australia's holistic approach to infrastructure developments, working with government and community to build infrastructure, as well as support best practice infrastructure management post-handover.

Australian High Commissioner, Jeff Roach, highlighted the regional collaboration being drawn upon to strengthen health systems in Solomon Islands.

"We're incredibly grateful to benefits from SPREP's strong regional leadership in medical waste management," High Commissioner Roach said. "It is a testament to how Pacific regional institutions are best-placed to deliver Pacific-led solutions to Pacific challenges."

"This project continues to combine the best regional and local expertise to deliver a modern, new health service. Together, we're ensuring the right skills and systems are place before opening to deliver the very best health care, safely, with dignity and with respect."

The Naha Birthing and Urban Health Centre will more than double the number of birthing suites in Solomon Islands, and is located within the community it serves.

High Commissioner Roach said Australia continued to work hard with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Honiara City Council and the National Referral Hospital to prepare for opening.

"Together, we're identifying and responding to a range of practical training needs that come with operating a 1st class health service," High Commissioner Roach said.

"Waste management training is essential to protect frontline health workers, as well as assuring the safety of the surrounding community from infectious diseases."

The Healthcare Waste Management Training brought together operations staff, midwives, supervisors, and HCC health workers. Participants took part in practical walkthroughs tracing waste flow from wards to final disposal, hands-on demonstrations of safe handling and storage practices, and role-play exercises focused on managing placental and birthing waste in ways that respect cultural practices.

SPREP Lead Trainer, Mr Soseala Tinilau said healthcare waste mismanagement can have serious consequences.

"This training has equipped Honiara City Council and Naha Birthing and Urban Health Centre staff with the right tools to break the chain of infection, starting with correct waste segregation at the point of generation."

The workshop was supported through the Australia–Solomon Islands Partnership, reinforcing Australia’s commitment to stronger health systems, safer environments, and strong regional collaboration.

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PHOTOS:



Photo 1 – SPREP’s Soseala Tinilau helps staff identify and manage medical waste issues in the new Naha Birthing and Urban Health Centre.



Photo 2 - SPREP trainers lead discussions on healthcare waste handling procedures with Naha Birthing and Urban Health Centre staff and HCC health workers.



Photo 3 – Provincial Health Director, Dr Lawrence Diau awards Karen Vozoto her certificate in Healthcare Waste Management, with SPREP's Soseala Tinilau.



Photo 4 - 22 healthcare workers from Naha Birthing and Urban Health Centre and Honiara City Council attended the Australia-supported training in medical waste management