



## 2023 Smiles For The Pacific Conference in Samoa



Smiles For The Pacific (SFTP) held a five-day conference in Samoa in July 2023. The conference was attended by more than 100 delegates from across the Pacific nations. There were delegates from Samoa, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Federal State of Micronesia and American Samoa, as well as delegates from New Zealand and Australia. The conference was offered free of charge to all delegates. This was made possible by many generous sponsors and donations. In addition to thanking ICD Section VIII, the conference organisers thank the NWADA Trust, NZDA, NSK, CHS and Ivoclar for their support and sponsorship.

The SFTP conference was the largest gathering of its kind in Samoa and the delegates enjoyed meeting their counterparts from other countries and making connections and networking. They enjoyed the lectures and workshops, as they do not have ready access to content of this calibre.

The delegates were warmly welcomed by the Samoan Dental Association, which co-hosted the conference. The Minister of Health attended and addressed the opening ceremony of the conference and attended the conference dinner which was sponsored by NSK and CHC. The conference dinner was a huge success and enjoyed by all who attended.



A representative of each country addressed the conference and spoke of the state of dentistry in their country and the many challenges they face. All the representatives requested assistance from SFTP. Their requests were many and varied. The most pressing problems common to them all were workforce shortages, lack of equipment, lack of consumables and the lack of pathways for professional development.

A wide range of lectures were offered during the conference on a variety of subjects that included nonsurgical and surgical treatment of TMJ, oral soft tissue infections, maxillofacial prosthetics, endodontics, periodontics, sterilization and equipment maintenance. Workshops covered composite veneers, stainless steel crowns, equipment maintenance and sterilization.

Contributors to the conference were Dr Brian Whitley, OMF (Waikato); Dr Rakesh Jattan, OMF (Auckland); Dr Mike Smith, Periodontist (Otago); Dr Abdul Aziz, Endodontist (Auckland); Dr Gil Watson, Prosthodontist (Auckland); Dr Liz Webb, OHT (Auckland); Mr Mike Williams, maxillofacial prosthetist and Dr Surend Chandra (Australia).

SFTP was privileged to host Samoan born NZDA President, Dr Erin Collins. The conference was well supported by Dr Jonathan Cole (Auckland), Dr Mahendra Moopnar (Waikato), Dr Yoshi Ediriweera (Auckland), Mr Phil Fitzgibbon NSK (Australia), Mr Praneesh Prasaad CHS-Complete Dental Solutions (Auckland) and Ms Bernadette Hyland Ivoclar NZ.

**Dr Yoshi Ediriweera, SFTP Committee Member**



## Change of Leadership for SFTP

Dr Jonathan Cole has been the chairperson of the Smiles for the Pacific (SFTP) program since its inception in 2013. Jonathan stepped down as chairperson following the July 2023 SFTP conference in Samoa and Dr Abdul Aziz has taken over the role. The Board and all Fellows of ICD Section VIII commend Jonathan for his inspiring leadership and invaluable contribution to SFTP over the last 10 years. The ICD Board congratulates Abdul on his appointment as the new chair of SFTP and looks forward to working with Abdul to support SFTP into the future.



*Jonathan addresses ICD Fellows at the 2017 ICD dinner in Melbourne*



*Abdul inducted as ICD Fellow in Sydney, September 2023*