

GECCoP Meeting Communique – 28 August 2025

Time & Location: Thursday, August 28, 2025 | 12:00–2:30 PM AEST | Held via Zoom

1. Welcome & Leadership Transition

Outgoing Co-Chairs: Sarah Bornstein and Donna Mills were acknowledged for their leadership over the past two years.

Incoming Co-Chairs: Dr. Dani Clark (Sydney-based Emergency Physician) and Kristalee Horoto (Emergency Nurse Consultant, Solomon Islands) were welcomed as the new GECCoP co-chairs, marking a significant milestone with Kristalee being the first Pacific-based chair.

2. Key Focus Areas

Theme: Postgraduate Emergency Education and Training Pathways in the Pacific

3. Presentations & Discussions

3.1 Emergency Nursing Specialization Research – Jasper Pole

Jasper Pole presented a comprehensive mixed-methods study conducted across eight Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste. The research explored the enablers and barriers to emergency nursing specialization, highlighting the importance of motivation, financial and family support, and workplace encouragement. Barriers included unclear pathways, lack of recognition, financial constraints, and course accessibility. The study aims to support advocacy through publication.

Study Overview: Mixed-methods research (2023–2025) across eight Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste.

Key Enablers:

- Motivation and passion for emergency care
- Financial support (scholarships, salary continuation)
- Workplace and family support

Key Barriers:

- Unclear specialization pathways
- Lack of workplace recognition and incentives
- Financial burden and course accessibility
- Perceptions of course quality and relevance

Next Steps:

- Complete formal data analysis
- Submit and publish findings to support advocacy

3.2 Emergency Nursing Programs at Fiji National University – Keshni Singh

Keshni Singh provided an overview of the postgraduate diploma and master's programs in emergency nursing at Fiji National University. She emphasized the clinical focus, regional collaboration, and success of graduates in leadership roles. Challenges include immigration and fee barriers, and the need for flexible entry requirements. Future plans include external program reviews and increased regional outreach.

Programs Offered:

- Postgraduate Diploma in Emergency Nursing (PGD)
- Master of Nursing in Emergency Nursing

Program Highlights:

- Strong clinical focus with placements in emergency departments
- Collaboration with National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre (Darwin)
- Graduates have taken leadership and specialist roles across the region

Challenges:

- Immigration and fee-related barriers for regional students
- Time constraints for research completion

Entry Requirements:

- PGD: Bachelor's degree preferred, but flexible for experienced diploma holders
- Master's: GPA ≥ 3.0 or entrance exam (65% pass)

Future Plans:

- External review of programs
- Continued marketing to regional nurses

3.3 Transitioning to Academia – Dr. Anne Creaton

Dr. Anne Creaton shared her personal journey transitioning from clinical practice to academia. She discussed the cultural shift, the importance of maintaining clinical relevance, and the need for patient-centered and context-specific teaching. Her talk emphasized leadership, advocacy, mentorship, and resilience in academic roles.

Insights Shared:

- Academia is a “foreign land” requiring adaptation
- Importance of maintaining clinical interface
- Teaching methods should be patient-centered and context-specific
- Emphasis on leadership, advocacy, and system improvement
- Encouraged mentorship, collaboration, and resilience

3.4 Emergency Nursing in Solomon Islands – Kristalee Horoto

Kristalee Horoto highlighted the early stages of emergency nursing specialization in the Solomon Islands. She discussed the lack of formal recognition, training programs, and incentives for nurses. Efforts are underway to revise the Nursing Act, collaborate with educational institutions, and advocate for curriculum development and professional recognition.

Current Status:

- Emergency nursing specialization is in its infancy and not formally recognized
- Nurses face lack of incentives, recognition, and clear career pathways

Challenges:

- No local training programs; reliance on PNG and FNU
- Cultural and institutional barriers

Way Forward:

- Review of Nursing Act to include advanced practice
- Collaboration with Ministry of Health and National University to develop curriculum
- Advocacy for formal recognition and support

4. Community Discussion Highlights**Recognition & Advocacy:**

- Shared challenges across Pacific nations regarding formal recognition of emergency nursing specialization
- Fiji’s ongoing process with its Nursing Council and Ministry of Health was discussed as a model

Support & Solidarity:

- Offers of support from Australian nursing unions and regional networks
- Emphasis on building coalitions and navigating informal cultural institutions

Networking & Collaboration:

- Encouragement to use the ACEM GEC Network and GEC Desk for ongoing communication
- Plans for future meetings and shared resources

5. Next Steps & Follow-Up

Next GECCoP Meeting: Planned for December 2025

Action Items:

- Participants to reach out to Jasper for research collaboration
- Regional nurses encouraged to apply for FNU programs
- Continued advocacy for recognition of emergency nursing specialization

6. Presenter Biographies

6.1 Jasper Pole

Jasper Pole is a Master of Nursing graduate with over 10 years of experience in critical care, ICU, and emergency nursing. She has led a multi-country research project on emergency nursing specialization across eight Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste, highlighting key enablers and barriers to advanced nursing education and practice in the region.

6.2 Keshni Singh

Keshni Singh is the Head of Department of Nursing Science and Practice at Fiji National University. She holds a Master of Advanced Practice in Acute Care Nursing, a Bachelor of Nursing, and a Diploma in General Nursing and Obstetrics. With over 15 years of academic experience, she has played a pivotal role in developing and delivering postgraduate and master's programs in emergency nursing, contributing significantly to nursing education and leadership in the Pacific.

6.3 Dr. Anne Creaton

Dr. Anne Creaton is a senior consultant in aeromedical services with the Royal Flying Doctor Service Queensland and a visiting lecturer at Fiji National University. She has held multiple academic and clinical roles, including senior lecturer at James Cook University and research associate at Monash University. Dr. Creaton was instrumental in establishing postgraduate emergency medicine training in Fiji and continues to mentor and support emergency care development across the region.

6.4 Kristalee Horoto

Kristalee Horoto is an Emergency Nurse Consultant from the Solomon Islands and the first Pacific-based co-chair of GECCoP. She has been a strong advocate for emergency nursing specialization in her country, highlighting the need for formal recognition, curriculum development, and career pathways. Kristalee has completed postgraduate training in emergency nursing and works closely with regional and international partners to advance emergency care in the Pacific.