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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Council calls for Health Care Scheme/ Insurance**

The Consumer Council of Fiji appeals Government to develop a National Health Scheme to ease the pressure on the public health systems and provide quality health care to all Fijians.

A National Health Scheme/Insurance is important to the Fijian health care system to help take the pressure off public hospitals and allow the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MoHMS) to provide specialised services.

As part of the 2018-2019 National Budget submission, the Council requests Government to develop or adapt a Health Care Scheme that will provide an affordable insurance scheme for FNPF members even after they retire.

The Council notes that public health system, especially public hospitals are currently under enormous pressure to deal not only with non-life-threatening and basic ailments but also serious health issues where treatments are not available locally.

And because many Fijians cannot travel abroad for specialist treatment, it is crucial to develop specialised treatment locally. Local specialist care will assist in early detection and treatment, and consequently better outcomes and higher life expectancy for Fijians that suffer from serious or life-threatening ailments and injuries.

Members of the public have high expectations and demand quality care from the public health system. However, many regularly express their discontent in mainstream and social media over the state of public health services.

The Council notes that the Health Care Scheme/Insurance needs to take its' cue from the Special Death Benefit (SDB) Scheme of the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) operating as a small scale insurance scheme for members when they die. Sadly, the members are contributing to an insurance cover for their death, but not for their life.

The National Health Scheme can be supported by contributions from employees, employers and the Government. The contribution can be based on the pay structure and be kept by FNPF for mandatory health care based on the Singapore model.



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