

## MEETING ABSTRACTS

### Utilizing a Medical Ship in the COVID-19 Response in Fiji

Jese R. Vatukela MSC<sup>1,2</sup>, Ifereimi Waqasese BEH<sup>2</sup>

1. WHO, Suva, Suva, Fiji
2. MOHMS, Suva, Suva, Fiji

**Background/Introduction:** Fiji consists of 110 populated islands over an area of 2,600,000 square kilometers and is prone to disasters such as tropical cyclones.<sup>1</sup> To increase national capacity to respond to disasters and outbreak, the Fijian government, under the commissioning of Ministry of Transport and with technical guidance from the Ministry of Health, designed a medical ship called the MV Veivueti. During Fiji's COVID-19 surge, MV Veivueti was utilized to provide operative health services during the surge in COVID-19 patients at other health facilities.<sup>2</sup>

**Objectives:** To describe FEMAT's COVID-19 response utilizing the medical ship, MV Veivueti, in Fiji's Pacific island setting.

**Method/Description:** MV Veivueti has been used on multiple disaster responses, however the COVID-19 surge in mid-2021 was the first time the vessel was used during an outbreak to allow for the continuation of surgeries when other health facilities were overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients. The medical ship is staffed with a comprehensive team from Fiji's EMT - FEMAT - including surgeons, pediatricians, obstetricians, a dentist, nurses, and other medical staff.

**Results/Outcomes:** From May 5 through July 6, 2021, a 12-member medical team staffed the medical ship 24-hours a day, providing primarily operative management of cases that were referred from health facilities. COVID-19 screening and IPC measures were in place and a clear patient flow was designed for patient transferred to health care facilities.

**Conclusion:** The use of the MV Veivueti helped ensure continuity of critical health services during the peak of the Delta VOC outbreak in the Fiji Islands.

### References (optional)

1. WCS Fiji: Wild Life Conservation Society: Where We Work, Fiji Islands. WCS; 2019. [www.google.com/search?q=Number+of+inhabited+islands+in+Fiji&aq=Number+of+inhabited+islands+in+Fiji&aq=chrome.69i57j33i22i29i30.28777j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=Number+of+inhabited+islands+in+Fiji&aq=Number+of+inhabited+islands+in+Fiji&aq=chrome.69i57j33i22i29i30.28777j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8).
2. Danford Iva. Fijivillage: MLC Veivueti and its crew start to deliver medical services in Lautoka from Today. Team from Labasa Hospital in Vitilevu to help their colleagues in Suva the West. Fijivillage; May 6, 2021. [www.fijivillage.com/news/MLC-Veivueti-and-its-crew-start-to-deliver-medical-services-in-Lautoka-from-today-4x8r5f](https://www.fijivillage.com/news/MLC-Veivueti-and-its-crew-start-to-deliver-medical-services-in-Lautoka-from-today-4x8r5f).

*Prehosp Disaster Med.* 2022;37(Suppl. 2):s96.  
doi:10.1017/S1049023X22001959