

Part One - Preamble

Author : Dr Ram Raju

GP or what was commonly known as Private Doctors or Private Practitioners (PP) dates back to the early Colonial History, soon after deed of cession in 1874.

Doctors recruited by the Colonial Administration were allowed to make extra money privately FSM graduates were once considered in the 1920's and 30's to likewise earn an extra shillings or pounds but this was declined or deemed unwise.

It was not until the 1970's when submissions were made to the Ministry of Health by Fiji Medical Association (FMA) to allow FSM graduates into private practice (PP). Under the leadership or presidency of Dr Kanhaiya Lal Simdari (better ka Ken Lal), a bill was passed in Parliament clearing a pathway for FSM graduates to become a GP if they wished, after serving 5 yrs in govt.

Prior to this only non FSM graduates were allowed PP and they were all obviously graduated overseas namely India, Australia or New Zealand. After completing their internships majority set up private clinics in almost all the urban centres in Fiji .

Two interesting articles have been published in the College Journal by two early pioneers of GP – Dr Cecily Hands of Sigatoka and Dr Paul Hemming of Bayly Clinic Suva.