

Standard Form for the Proposal of Names of Persons for Nomination of the Regional Director of the Western Pacific Region of the World Health Organization (WHO)

Please provide details of the qualifications and characteristics of the person proposed by your Government with regard to the criteria contained in Resolution WPR/RC50.R8, para. 2:

a) A strong technical and public health background and extensive experience in international health

Dr Colin Tukuitonga is a medical doctor with comprehensive experience in clinical primary health care, health care policy, research, and international public health. He has held senior leadership and management roles in public sector organisations in New Zealand and internationally.

Registrations and qualifications

1. Diploma in Surgery & Medicine – Fiji School of Medicine/University of the South Pacific 1979
2. New Zealand Registration - New Zealand Medical Council 1988
3. Master of International Public Health – University of Sydney 1987
4. Member of the New Zealand College of Community Medicine 1989
5. Fellow of the Australasian College of Public Health Medicine, Royal Australasian College of Physicians 1993
6. Fellow of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners 1997
7. Postgraduate Certificate in Health Research Methodologies, University of California, San Francisco, USA 2001

Awards

1. HRH Duke of Edinburgh Leadership Award – Canada, 1997
2. Millennium Medal – Waitakere City Council, New Zealand, 2000
3. Harkness Fellow in Health Care Policy – University of California, San Francisco, USA, 2000/2001
4. Global Leadership Programme – WHO, 2006

Experience

1. Dr Tukuitonga has held multiple roles in clinical general practice and public health in New Zealand, the Pacific region, and internationally. Dr Tukuitonga is widely regarded as an authority on Pacific public health.
2. Transformed the public health and community medicine curriculum at the Fiji School of Medicine. Dr Tukuitonga played a key role in the establishment of the Department of Māori and Pacific Health and the international health discipline at the University of Auckland. He also contributed to public health teaching and research at the University of Auckland as Associate Professor in Pacific and International Public Health.
3. Committee member and examiner for the New Zealand College of Community Medicine.
4. As Director of Public Health and Medical Officer of Health for the New Zealand Ministry of Health, Dr Tukuitonga had responsibility for public health in New Zealand and engagement on international health matters. He was the New Zealand representative to the World Health Assembly (WHA) and WHO Western Pacific Regional Committee Meeting for several years.

5. Coordinator of Surveillance and Prevention of Chronic Non-communicable Diseases for WHO Headquarters. This included playing a key role in the design and adoption of the Diet and Physical Activity Strategy, endorsed by the WHA in 2004, working across all WHO regions and country offices.
6. In his role as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the New Zealand Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Dr Tukuitonga provided advice to Ministers and officials on health and other issues affecting Pacific people in New Zealand and across the Pacific.
7. Dr Tukuitonga joined the Pacific Community (SPC) in December 2012 as Director of Public Health. SPC is the largest inter-governmental organisation in the Pacific and responsible for scientific and technical advice to member states, including on public health. In this role, Dr Tukuitonga managed the Global Fund programme to fight HIV/AIDs, tuberculosis and malaria and refocused the team on building core public health functions. The role required strong working relationships with the WHO, relevant United Nations agencies, and civil society.
8. In January 2014, Dr Tukuitonga was appointed Director General of SPC. He is responsible for the leadership and management of the organisation with overview of all functions, including public health. In this role, he has contributed to the development of international policy in health care and public health, including as a Commissioner of the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity. He is a regular speaker at international conferences, including the World Congress in Public Health in 2017.

b) Competency in organisational management

Dr Tukuitonga has excellent skills in organisational leadership, management and governance. He has developed and strengthened these skills in the following roles:

1. Multiple general management roles across public health and primary care in New Zealand and the Pacific region. These roles have included professional training in various aspects of management and organisational development.
2. Completed the Company Directors course at the New Zealand Institute of Directors and appointed by the New Zealand Minister of Health to the board of Counties Manukau District Health Board from 1998 to 2000. This role included governance and oversight of health threats across the Pacific region.
3. As Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the New Zealand Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, implemented a change management programme to refocus the Ministry's role on policy, including assistance to Pacific nations. Many of the Ministry's current programmes were established during Dr Tukuitonga's term as CEO.
4. Dr Tukuitonga was appointed as the Director General of SPC at a time when the organisation was financially weak and revenues were declining. Dr Tukuitonga implemented a process of transformation to strengthen SPC's financial position and focus on meaningful results in priority areas consistent with SPC's mandate. Dr Tukuitonga was commended by the Governing Body of SPC for the changes and results achieved through this process.

c) Evidence of public health leadership

Dr Tukuitonga is widely acknowledged as a leader in public health in New Zealand and the Pacific region. He has also contributed to international public health through his work with WHO, other UN agencies and the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE). Dr Tukuitonga's experience in public health has been enhanced through formal qualifications in public health, leadership roles, and advocacy for strengthening public health functions in countries. This is evidenced by:

1. Senior positions held in public health, including Director of Public Health for the New Zealand Ministry of Health and Director of Public Health at SPC;
2. Academic appointments, including Associate Professor in Pacific and International Public Health, University of Auckland and Senior Lecturer in Community Health, Fiji School of Medicine;
3. Publications in peer-reviewed journals and contributions to popular media on public health;
4. Commissioner appointment, WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity;
5. Multiple short-term consultancies for WHO and other public health entities;
6. Keynote speaker at multiple international public health conferences.

d) Sensitivity to cultural, social and political differences

Dr Tukuitonga was born and raised on Niue Island in the Pacific. His professional roles have all involved working with people from a broad variety of cultural and social backgrounds. In leading teams and organisations, Dr Tukuitonga has emphasised professional development for staff including awareness of cultural differences.

In the health sector, Dr Tukuitonga has contributed to training for health professionals in cultural competence and contributed academic articles on this issue. Most of his roles have required a high degree of political sensitivity and awareness. This is particularly important in his current role working for SPC member states.

e) A strong commitment to the work of WHO

Dr Tukuitonga has a strong and proven record of engagement in global health issues, including in the WHO in the Western Pacific region and around the world. Working for the WHO Headquarters in Geneva enabled him to better understand the challenges of global health and the demands placed upon the organisation. In addition, Dr Tukuitonga has participated in a range of WHO technical and governance meetings on behalf of the New Zealand Government, providing him important experience of member state engagement and perspectives on global health issues. Dr Tukuitonga has recently also served as a Commissioner for the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity.

As demands on the WHO continue to increase, Dr Tukuitonga believes it is essential for the WHO to explore mutually beneficial partnerships to address the common challenges of promoting and protecting public health around the world.

Dr Tukuitonga is excited at the prospect of working for the WHO once again, particularly in his home region of the Western Pacific.

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Curriculum Vitae

Dr Colin Tukuitonga

Candidate for Regional Director of the Western Pacific Region of the World Health Organization

I am a Niuean New Zealander, a highly qualified and experienced public health physician with excellent leadership and organisational management skills who understands the diversity of health needs across the breadth of the Western Pacific Region.

I have dedicated my 40 year career to working towards a world that is healthier and have demonstrated a strong commitment to striving for this goal for the Western Pacific Region. I have held several senior roles in the health and other sectors in New Zealand, the Pacific and globally, including working within the World Health Organization (WHO), that have equipped me for the Regional Director position. In addition to leadership positions in academic institutions, public sector and multilateral agencies, I have led the largest intergovernmental organisation in the Pacific – the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) - that is owned and governed by 26 diverse country and territory members.

My vision for the Western Pacific is a region where everyone has access to quality health care; concrete steps have been taken towards reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases; and for the region to be served by a high performing WHO Regional Office that delivers positive, impactful outcomes in line with regional priorities, the WHO Universal Health Coverage agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

If successful in my bid to become the next Regional Director of the Regional Office, I will advance this vision by focusing on five priorities:

- ensuring the region receives a fair share of the total WHO budget;
- promoting successful and contextualised responses to regional priorities;
- pursuing quality healthcare for all;
- promoting a culture of excellence, innovation and learning; and
- building effective leadership and management.

Under my Directorship, work at the Western Pacific Regional Office will be underpinned by four core values:

- integrity
- excellence
- transparency
- accountability

Summary of Employment History

Director-General Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), New Caledonia 2014 - present	<p>Overall responsibility for leading and managing SPC with over 660 staff across the Pacific region.</p> <p>Successfully led a process of change and transformation of SPC strengthening the financial position of the organisation.</p> <p>Developed effective high level relationships with Heads of State, Ministers and other stakeholders from 26 member states and territories.</p> <p>Enhanced SPC reputation as the leading scientific and technical agency in the Pacific region.</p>
Director of Public Health Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), New Caledonia 2012 – 2014	<p>Responsibility for the leadership and management of the Public Health Division (PHD) with approximately 80 staff in four locations around the Pacific region.</p> <p>Strengthened PHD's purpose and role, and restored core public health functions.</p>
Chief Executive Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, New Zealand, 2007- 2012	<p>Overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (MPIA) reporting directly to the Minister of Pacific Island Affairs and the New Zealand State Services Commissioner.</p> <p>Led a successful change process and implemented several programmes still in operation.</p> <p>Established an award winning Leadership Development Programme for Pacific public servants.</p>
Associate Professor of Public Health and Head of Pacific and International Health – University of Auckland, New Zealand 2006 – 2007	<p>Established the International Health discipline at the University of Auckland through the development of teaching, research and public service activities.</p> <p>Successfully enhanced the credibility of the Pacific Health discipline in the School of Public Health.</p>
Head of Surveillance and Prevention of Chronic Diseases World Health Organization, Switzerland 2003-2006	<p>WHO global head with responsibilities for the development of international policies, plans, programmes and standards for the surveillance, prevention and control of chronic, non-communicable diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancers.</p> <p>Key role included the coordination of global WHO activities across six regions and 196 member states.</p>

	Negotiated the Global Strategy on Diet Physical Activity and Health which was endorsed by the World Health Assembly.
Director of Public Health and Medical Officer of Health Ministry of Health, New Zealand 2001 - 2003	Statutory role with leadership responsibilities for the protection, promotion and prevention of disease and injury for New Zealand. Dual accountability to the Minister of Health and Director-General of Health. Led the New Zealand response to the threat caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) – a new global public health threat.
Senior Lecturer, Department of Maori and Pacific Health and Director of the Pacific Health Research Centre University of Auckland, New Zealand 1998 - 2000	Established the Pacific Health Research Centre and assisted the establishment of the Department of Maori and Pacific Health. Developed the teaching, research and consultancy services for the Centre and Department. Secured substantial funding for research and service development for Maori and Pacific health services. Group Manager for the Departments of Maori Health, General Practice and Mental Health. Board member of Counties Manukau District Health Board. Widely published on the health of Pacific people in New Zealand.
General Practitioner & Public Health Medicine Specialist – Auckland District Health Board and Northern Regional Health Authority, New Zealand 1987-1998	Owned and operated a General Practitioner (GP) practice with four partners. Held a part-time research role at the University of Auckland. Contributed to the establishment of several community-owned primary care clinics primarily servicing Pacific and Maori communities.
Senior Lecturer in Community Health Fiji School of Medicine, University of the South Pacific 1987	Responsible for teaching, research and administration of the Department of Community Health. Developed the new curriculum for community health.
Primary Care Physician and Public Health Medicine Specialist Niue and Fiji 1982-1986	Various clinical roles in several hospitals and health centres in Niue and Fiji with some health administrative duties.

Education and Qualifications

YEAR	COURSE/QUALIFICATION AND INSITUTION
2010 onwards	Various Leadership Executive Programmes
2009	Executive Fellows Programme, Australia and New Zealand School of Government
2008	Strategic Leadership Programme, Institute of Strategic Leadership, Millbrook, New Zealand Awarded Fellowship, New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine
2006	WHO Global Leadership Programme, Tunis & Switzerland
2001	Harkness Fellow in Health Care Policy, The Commonwealth Fund, University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Awarded Postgraduate Certificate in Health Research Methods (UCSF)
1999	Company Directors Course, New Zealand Institute of Management
1998	Fellow, Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners
1990	Fellow, Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine, Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Australia
1988	Member, New Zealand College of Community Medicine
1987	New Zealand Medical Council Registration
1984	Master of Public Health, University of Sydney. Australia
1982	Certificate in Management of Primary Health Care, WHO Collaborating Centre, University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia
1974-1979	Diploma Surgery and Medicine, University of the South Pacific

Memberships

Member of International Network on Health Policy

Member of the University of Otago Global Health Institute

Member of the International Network of Government Science Advisors

Awards

1997 Commonwealth Study Conferences Award, Canada

2000 Harkness Fellow in Health Care Policy, San Francisco, USA

2000 Waitakere City Council Millennium Medal, New Zealand

2005 Pasifika Medical Association Service Award, New Zealand

2017 Pasifika Medical Association Life Member Award, New Zealand

Referees

Available on request