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PRESS RELEASE

MoHW Celebrates Achievements of Delegation at 11th TEPHINET Global Scientific Conference

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Today, the Ministry of Health & Wellness joins field epidemiologists worldwide to celebrate World Field Epidemiology Day under the theme, “Empowering Field Epidemiologists for Stronger Health Systems.” A global movement celebrated yearly, the day recognizes and raises awareness of the vital role of field epidemiologists in protecting the health of populations and advancing global health security.

A delegation of seven health professionals from the ministry is currently participating in the 11th TEPHINET (Training Program in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network) Global Scientific Conference in Panama City from September 4 to 9, 2022. TEPHINET is the global network of Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) geared to empower and strengthen the technical expertise of field epidemiologists to improve disease surveillance.

Belize was invited to participate in the conference through the submission of three FETP abstracts. The ministry congratulates Mr. Jesse Chun, Senior Biostatistician and Resident FETP (advanced); Mr. Aldo Sosa, Acting Central Medical Laboratory Director and Resident FETP (advanced); and Dr. Joshua Canul, Medical Officer II and Surveillance Focal Point for San Pedro and FETP frontline graduate, on their submissions chosen from a very vast pool of abstracts submitted from across the world to TEPHINET.

Ms. Myra Fernandez, National Surveillance Officer at the ministry, shared that “We are all proud of the successes of the graduates of Belize FETP as it enhances the response capacity of the country to public health threats and also enhances the epidemiologic workforce capacity.”

The Regional Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) was introduced to Central America in 2000 with support from the United States government under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to strengthen surveillance and outbreak investigation in countries affected by hurricanes Mitch and George, which affected the region in 1998. The first basic level FETP was piloted in Belize in 2010. Belize's first acceptance to participate in a TEPHINET Global Scientific Conference was also in 2010.

Belize joins in the celebration of World Field Epidemiology Day as field epidemiologists/surveillance focal points are the 'boots on the ground' to strengthen surveillance and any possible health outbreaks of concern.
#worldfieldepidemiologyday

Ends

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