



## Australian Doctors International Deliver WHO Program in Papua New Guinea

[AHHB](#)

on February 9, 2015 at 11:21 am

**A partnership between Australian Doctors International and a global medical technology company will see a reduction in disease in Papua New Guinea.**

The project, delivered by a team of volunteer scientists from global medical technology company BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), saw 18 laboratory technicians and assistants from Papua New Guinea's remote New Ireland graduated from the country's first-ever five-day World Health Organisation (WHO) Laboratory Standards course.

New Ireland Province has some of the highest incidences of communicable diseases in the Pacific: Tuberculosis is highly prevalent and rates of malaria, at 548 cases in every 1,000 people, are more than three times the national average. Poor lab facilities, under staffing and limited

training for lab scientists has meant these kinds of diseases are often misdiagnosed – or not diagnosed in time.

“One of the biggest errors in pathology is giving the wrong result to the wrong patient,” said David Carr, one of four BD volunteers who travelled to New Ireland to deliver the course at Kavieng General Hospital.

“This can occur at the blood collection stage, in the lab, or when results are sent back to the doctor,” he explained. “Part of our training involved working together to develop one request and result form for all the laboratories in the New Ireland group, to minimize clinical errors that see the wrong results going to the wrong patients.”

The WHO course included sessions on Standard Operating Procedures, document management, quality control, inventory management and biosafety.

A total of 26 nurses and community health workers from Kavieng and Lemakot hospital also attended sessions on safe methods of collecting venous blood samples.

“To be able to network and share ideas like that is so valuable in terms of improving capability across the region,” said BD’s Lewis Cox, who led training sessions on inventory management and biosafety.

Benny Otoa, Officer in Charge of New Ireland’s main Kavieng Hospital laboratory agrees, saying the new ‘Pathology Wantok’ or family that came out of the BD program, will ensure the Province’s smaller rural labs receive more support from each other, and from Kavieng, to process tests and order supplies more efficiently going forward.

Australian Doctors International (ADI) is an Australian DFAT accredited not-for-profit development organisation working to improve the health of people living in remote communities of Papua New Guinea. For more information, go to [www.adi.org.au](http://www.adi.org.au)