



Work together to improve accountability, says CEO

The Christian Health Services 46th Annual Conference in Port Moresby in April proved to be informative with much consultative discussions between CHS members and government representatives from the Departments of Finance, Health and Personnel Management.

Chief Executive Office for CHS (PNG) Joseph Sika said one of the main challenges that the Secretariat had identified in the new year was the budget cut of K50 million to health in the 2016 appropriation and how best the cut could be negotiated with the government.

Phase two (2) of the Alesco Payroll concept to be rolled out in the CHS Service Centres was also identified as another big challenge and how best the Secretariat would go about this in partnership with the government.

"The concept of a computerized payroll and church health workers getting equal pay as our government health workers has been around for some time. They were actually government decisions through Cabinet and were never fully implemented until the 2015 budget appropriation," Mr Sika said.

"While we don't have an agreement yet with the government, they have opted for us to take this route of a centralized payroll for all our staffs. I see this as a way forward for our hard working staff in the rural remote areas serving our people silently."

Speaking about the budget cut, Mr Sika said everyone was aware that the 2016 appropriation had been slashed back by thirty four percent. About thirty-two percent of that was the salary component.

The Secretariat office had provided alternatives as a result of the cuts and it was entirely up to the respective Health Managers to do further analysis to see how best they would operate within the



(left) CHS Chairman Wallace Kintak addressing conferers during the official opening.

the current cut.

"The notion that CHS Secretariat is quiet and turning a blind eye on the financial situation would be a wrong interpretation. Our arguments must be presented with facts and figures. At this point in time, I still lack that information," Mr Sika said.

"For us in Health, we are equal partners with the government in health service provision and we can show the government that we are capable of serving the people through their health needs. Let us continue to work on improving our accountability and transparency issues and then move on to talk about bigger and better things."

Challenges outlined by the CEO:

- 1. Budget Cut:** look at the cut and see if it can be maintained. There are two options left: Lobbying Team as an independent body and an NEC submission.
- 2. Alesco Payroll:** How do we go about this if we chose to or is there another option.
- 3. MOA GoPNG and CHS:** This is at its final stages of draft process. Can we make it happen?
- 4. Accreditation and line-up of health**

facilities: CHS as a unified body should begin to assess all of its facilities and restructure their staffing to go in line with NHSS for a better operational budget negotiation down the line.

5. The Catholic Health Services is working on a separate MOA that will also consider the Alesco payroll component. How best do we discuss the way forward.

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