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Media release

Ministry of Health- First ever training on Gender Based Violence Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) conducted to Health Care Workers.

The Ministry of Health through Reproductive Maternal New born Child Adolescent Health (RAMNCAH) program conducted this week training on Sexual Gender Based violence (SGBV) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to Health care workers in Shefa Province.

This training allows them to better understand and develop basic skills to implement the GBV (Gender Based Violence standard operating Procedures) within the health facilities. The main objective for the training is to help the nurses understand the impact of gender-based violence, the referral system set in place and to know more about their roles as health care workers in terms of proper counselling, giving better treatment to help address the issues of GBV using the SOP related forms, processes & practices and to identify challenges face within the health facilities.



Health care workers from Shefa Province and Facilitators for Sexual Gender Based Violence Standard Operating Procedure training

Director of Planning, Policy and Corporate services, Dr Samuel Posikai Tapo stated that this SGBV SOP is important that all health care workers understand their responsibilities and roles to play in the care of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

“The community will benefit from the health care services available at all health facilities to manage and assess gender-based violence and sexual assaults, to ensure that survivors health needs are met in the care, treatment and referral to social support services” stated Dr Posikai.

Gender based violence (GBV), sexual violence (SV) including intimate partner violence (IPV) have devastating effects on the lives of women and girls globally as well as in Vanuatu.

According to a recent survey conducted by Vanuatu women’s centre, Vanuatu has one of the highest prevalence rates of violence against women and girls, and the highest prevalence of sexual abuse of girls under 15 years in the Pacific and globally. Sixty percent (60%) of women who have ever been in a relationship have experience either physical and/or sexual violence by a husband or intimate partner in their lifetime. More than 68% experienced emotional violence and Intimate Partner violence (IPV) occurs in all provinces and islands, and across all the age groups.

Reports shows that rates are high in rural areas with 63% than in Urban areas of 50%. For most women who experienced physical or sexual violence, it occurs frequently and often severe. Forty percent (40%) of women who experience physical violence it was followed by rape.

This GBV standard Operating Procedure presents clear procedure and responsibilities for healthcare providers in primary, secondary and tertiary level health care facilities in Vanuatu for the clinical Management of rape, sexual violence and gender-based violence (adult and Child).

The Sexual Gender Based Violence Standard Operating Procedure was launched in December 2021. Similar training will be conducted to health workers in other Provinces. The training is supported and funded by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in partnership with Vanuatu Family Health Association.

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