

Physiotherapist Mentor

Ministry of Health & Human Services, Republic of Palau

Assignment title	Physiotherapist Mentor		
Partner organisation	Ministry of Health & Human Services, Belau National Hospital, Rehabilitation Services Department		
Location	Palau		
Type of assignment	In-country Assignment		
Duration of assignment	12 months		
Assignment phases	Phase	Mode	Duration
	1	In-Country	6 months
Proposed start date	26 February 2027		
Website	www.palau.gov.pw/mhhs		
Australian organisation:	No AO linked		

ABOUT THE PARTNER ORGANISATION

The Rehabilitation Services Department (RSD) exists within the Division of Ancillary Services under the Bureau of Hospital and Clinical Services of the Ministry of Health and Human Services. The volunteer will be based primarily at the Belau National Hospital/RSD, as a majority of the services rendered are through inpatient/outpatient care basis. Services are also extended through school health and home health rehab as well as community-based and rural outreach programs, so the volunteer will have the opportunity to work in multiple settings and locations. The RSD has a partnership with the Palau National Olympic Committee and works closely with multiple national sports federations, so the volunteer will also have the opportunity to support teams on the field of play during major sporting events.

Their aim is to provide quality care in rehabilitation, with the goal of improving quality of life, by providing therapeutic exercises and educating patients. They work primarily with doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers through a referral-based system.

There is a team of 11 rehabilitation practitioners (9 permanent staff 2 volunteer staff) : 2- Physiotherapists, 1-Occupational Therapist + 1 AVP OT, 1- Exercise Physiologist, 4-Rehab Technicians, and 1-Rehab Aide. Their future goals include expanding knowledge and clinical skills in rehabilitation. This goal would be supported through on the job training, one-on-one learning, and lectures for continuing education.

ABOUT THE ASSIGNMENT

This assignment is important for providing in-person training necessary to share knowledge and improve clinical skills for the physical therapist and other members of the rehabilitation team for patient care and treatment techniques.

There are currently only 2 physiotherapists in Palau employed at the MHHS. Having a volunteer from Australia would help with mentoring and upskilling the physios along with the other local staff on island.

The department prioritizes patient-centered care along with involving family members and caregivers in the treatment process. They endeavor to consider social and cultural support for the patient and the family to ensure better rehabilitation potential. The volunteer may have the opportunity to observe how a small Pacific nation operates a Rehabilitation department with limited resources in which being creative and adaptive is necessary.

ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

The volunteer will work alongside members of Ministry of Health & Human Services to support the below objectives:

Assignment objectives	Proposed activities
In-Country Phase Objective: Capacity building	• Share knowledge and skills with the rehabilitation team through mentoring and continuing education training programs. • Advise on the expansion of services of the rehabilitation services department.
In-Country Phase Objective: Provide specialized support	• Support the development and implementation of treatment protocols • With the team work to update and revise departments SOP's
In-Country Phase Objective: Development and implementation of new services supported	• Work with the team to plan and execute new therapeutic programs. • Help to develop and implement sports medicine and adaptive sports rehab programs. • Research and recommend ways forward for upskilling rehab technicians.

In-Country Phase Objective: Support the provision of patient care	• Provide additional support by helping to increase operational service capacity of Inpatient/outpatient rehab services at Belau National Hospital. • Support the team with Home Health and outreach rehab services to rural and remote areas. • Work with the team on Community-based rehab programs at Community health centers.
Inclusion objective and proposed activity	
The volunteer will work alongside the partner organization to uphold values of diversity, equity and inclusion. Inclusive approaches will aim to make everyone welcome and support equal access to activities and opportunities regardless of gender, age, disability status or background (religion, language, ethnicity and marginalized or vulnerable groups). The volunteer will work alongside members of Ministry of Health & Human Services/ Rehabilitations Services Department team to: • Strengthen existing partnership with Disabled Persons Organization and assist with proper assessments, screening and procurement of appropriate assistive mobility devices. • Strengthen existing partnerships with local youth and sports organizations to elevate sports medicine and adaptive rehabilitation programs and initiatives. • Support the development of new programs such as: Aqua-Therapy and explore possibility of a prosthetics unit. • Support and assist partner organizations such as Caregiver Training through the Palau Community College and the transition unit/assisted living center at the Belau National Hospital.	

SELECTION CRITERIA

Education and qualifications

Essential	Desirable
• Bachelor's Degree in Physical Therapy (Master's Degree preferred). • Certification or background in instructor or mentoring programs	• Experience or qualification in treatment protocol development: Neuro, Ortho, Cardio, and pediatric rehab

Knowledge and experience

Essential	Desirable
• Experience in best practice in physical therapy services. (5+ years preferred) • Experience and background in capacity-building of rehab programs for inpatient/outpatient plus community-based programs. • Inclusive and ethical practice	• Experience with Public Health initiatives • Improvising and working in a low-resource setting

Following the Program's values on locally led development, this Assignment Description has been developed and negotiated in good faith with the Partner Organization. The information contained was correct at the time of acceptance of the request. However, while we take responsibility for matters under our direct control, all assignments and arrangements are subject to change. This assignment may be amended or withdrawn to reflect changes in circumstances.

Line Manager: Jason Nolan

Working relationships: Two Physiotherapists and members of the Rehabilitation Team.

Hours and days of work:

In-country phase

Full time

Leave: All volunteers are entitled to 20 days leave per 12 months, unless advised otherwise. The same conditions and terms as local colleagues apply, including national holidays.

Work from home: Working from home while on an in-country phase must be in line with usual partner organisation's practices and agreed with the in-country office.

Professional indemnity insurance (*Required for all volunteers who are acting as a medical, allied health or legal professional whilst on assignment*):

Yes, this assignment is deemed to require professional indemnity insurance

The volunteer should consult the partner organisation about the need for professional indemnity insurance for the role prior to departure. Where required and/or considered essential to hold this insurance, please discuss this with the Volunteer Services Manager in Melbourne prior to departure.

LIFE AS A VOLUNTEER

The Australian Volunteers Program supports volunteers from preparing to go on assignment through to returning home. For a full breakdown of support provided including assignment allowances, please visit: <https://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteering/lifestyle-and-support/>

Country context

Learn more about the host country's location by reading the country profile. We encourage candidates to research the specific location of this assignment as it will be discussed and addressed with a recruitment officer during the interview process.

For more information, please visit country links: <https://www.australianvolunteers.com/countries/palau> and <https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/republic-of-palau>

HOW TO APPLY

All applications must be submitted online through the Australian Volunteers Program website. If you have not already done so, you will need to register on our website prior to applying. For more information about how to apply, please visit:

<https://www.australianvolunteers.com/volunteering/how-it-works>

We actively support and encourage people of all backgrounds and abilities to volunteer internationally and aim to make the program as accessible and inclusive as possible. The program has a dedicated Indigenous Programs Coordinator to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander volunteers, who can be contacted at indigenouspathways@australianvolunteers.com. Access and inclusion plans are available for volunteers with disabilities, to ensure their assignments and living and working arrangements are made more accessible.

Personal circumstances

Due to security, cultural, legal or visa restrictions associated with this location, we ask that applicants disclose the following:

- If they want their same-sex partner to accompany them on assignment.
- If they want their partner, to whom they are not legally married, to accompany them on assignment.
- If they want their child(ren) to accompany them on assignment.
- If they have a criminal conviction where a criminal conviction may be relevant to the inherent requirements of the assignment.