

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Health Pioneer shares 50 year legacy with new eczema book

More than 40,000 patients have travelled from New Zealand and across the globe to receive an eczema treatment package from Pacific health pioneer Dr Joe Williams. In his first book *Eczema - The Neglected Disease of Children*, Dr Williams, who turned 80 in October last year, shares his legacy which spans more than 50 years.

Having been at the forefront of Pacific health for many years, Dr Joe Williams has published a book of his life's work, titled *Eczema - The Neglected Disease of Children*. It follows more than half a century of working in the field, which has resulted in his own Eczema-Care Therapy package, used by the multitudes that have sought his treatment.

Dr Williams states eczema is a global disease which affects one in five of the world's children and one in 10 adults and is a growing public health problem.

A paediatrician colleague once told him that eczema is one of the most poorly understood and mismanaged conditions in infants and children in both primary and secondary care.

"Eczema is not life-threatening. No one dies from it. Eczema is a silent disease. It does not attract attention in the media and politicians in the same way as the cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and obesity do. It does not even register on the National Health morbidity and mortality statistics," explains Dr Williams.

"Eczema causes unbearable misery, anguish and mental conflict for the sufferer and their family.

"Every working day, as I sit in the consulting room caring for infants, children, adolescents and adults who suffer from eczema, I am always conscious of the millions of eczema sufferers who have no access to effective eczema treatment."

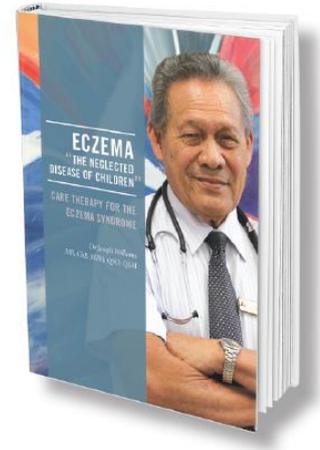
Eczema - The Neglected Disease of Children covers its history, from when it was first described in the days of Hippocrates in Greece 25 centuries ago; types of eczema and causes of eczema - from food allergies, digestive flora, epidermal barrier to early infections and so on; its impact on individual sufferers and their families; and his Eczema-Care Therapy package.

The 176-page publication contains images before and after the patients have received treatment.

Quick facts about eczema according to Dr Joe Williams

- Eczema affects one in five children and one in 10 adults globally
- It is a growing public health problem that is largely misunderstood and mistreated
- There are foods, formulas as well as soaps and moisturisers more likely to cause eczema that should be avoided (cited in *Eczema – the Neglected Disease of Children*)

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About Dr Joe Williams

Dr Joe Williams' interest in eczema began when he developed eczema in his second year at Medical School in New Zealand. There was little relief from treatment prescribed by a dermatologist and other doctors. His pain was shared by many. In 1963 he helped devise a treatment from a combined cream that relieved the itch and rash of a five-year-old child in Napier, where he was based. The cream would be the basis of an eczema care therapy treatment process which has transformed the lives of more than 40,000 sufferers across the world.

Dr Williams is the Medical Director and a GP at the Mt Wellington Integrated Family Health Centre. His career spans a period of over 50 years in medical practice, public health, health management, medical research, international health and politics. He is a Cook Islands Maori of Polynesian, Chinese and English ancestry.

Medical research played a significant role in his career. In the Cook Islands he conducted a number of research projects into communicable tropical diseases with introduction of mass treatment programmes that led to the eradication of some of these diseases. These included Lymphatic Filariasis, Intestinal Helminthiasis, Tropical Pulmonary Eosinophilia, Tuberculosis and Eosinophilic Meningo-Encephalitis.

Of particular significance was the first ever Mass Drug Administration (MDA) programme for filariasis, which was introduced in the Cook Island of Aitutaki in 1968 – where Dr Williams was born and raised – and other Pacific nations. Its success saw it eventually adopted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a pioneering project for the Global Programme for the Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis PELF.

The result of Dr Joe's years of research and treatment regime is the book, *Eczema – the Neglected Disease of Children*.