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## PRESS RELEASE

### **MOHW Congratulates Belize's Participants at 12<sup>th</sup> TEPHINET Scientific Conference of the Americas**

*Belmopan, October 3, 2023.*

The Ministry of Health & Wellness (MOHW) extends congratulations to Mr. Edgar Nah, biostatistician in the Epidemiology Unit, for his outstanding representation of Belize at the 12th Training Program in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET) Regional Scientific Conference of the Americas, in Brasilia, Brazil, from September 25 to 28.

Mr. Nah's Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) abstract presentation was centered on the *Evaluation of the Suicide Surveillance System in Belize from 2017 to 2021*. He was among the 10 Belizeans who had the honor of being selected to participate in the Regional Conference of the Americas. Although he was the only one who attended the conference, all 10 scientific abstracts submitted from Belize were accepted.

The MOHW also announces Mr. Sair Pech, animal health assistant at the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA), as the first-place winner in the photo contest held at the conference. Mr. Pech's winning photograph visually depicted the investigation of Bovine Paralytic Rabies in Neuland, Corozal District. The community's collaboration to effectively identify cases of rabies in bovine contributed significantly to prompt reporting and the collection of viable samples for accurate diagnosis and treatment. This collaboration between BAHA and the Ministry of Health & Wellness exemplifies the "One Health" approach. Furthermore, Mr. Pech's photograph was chosen as the cover image for the conference's book of abstracts, themed *Preparing for the Next Pandemic: Multidisciplinary Connections in Field Epidemiology*. <https://www.tephinet.org/events/12th-tephinet-regional-scientific-conference-of-the-americas>

TEPHINET, as the global network of FETPs, is dedicated to building a workforce that bolsters public health systems and enhances preparedness for public health threats. The first basic level FETP was piloted in Belize in 2010. Belize's first acceptance to participate in a TEPHINET Global Scientific Conference was also in 2010. Subsequently, Belize's abstracts have consistently been accepted at regional and global TEPHINET conferences.

The ministry takes immense pride in the accomplishments of the graduates from all levels of the FETP and their contributions at the conference. The ministry also acknowledges funding support from the Commission of Ministers of Central America (COMISCA).

For more information on the Field Epidemiology Training Program in Belize, please contact Myra Pinelo Fernandez, Country Program Coordinator, Surveillance Officer, at [mfernandez@health.gov.bz](mailto:mfernandez@health.gov.bz)

## **Ends**

For more information, please contact:  
Claudette Dakers-Norales  
Information Officer  
Ministry of Health & Wellness  
[cnorales@health.gov.bz](mailto:cnorales@health.gov.bz)