

Stevenson (Steve) Kuartei, MD is from the island of Palau, a small independent country located in the US-affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI), also known as Micronesia. Dr. Kuartei has had a strong interest in integrative approaches to care and, for more than 20 years, he has served Palau in several capacities: Medical Director for Palau Community Health Center, Director of Public Health, President of the Palau Health Foundation, Minister of Health and owner of the Pacific Family Medical Supply (medical and eye clinic). Most recently, Dr. Kuartei completed the University of Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine Fellowship.

In his previous position as the Minister of Health, Dr. Kuartei had the opportunity to clarify the role of the health sector in a developing small island country, such as Palau, through homegrown strategic planning. As a result, Palau received the only Community Transformational Funding from the US CDC for a wider approach to planning to affect the rest of the sectors, including government and the civil society. Dr. Kuartei also collaborated on NIH-funded research to author reports assessing the system of service capacity and current activities for service delivery, data collection, and reporting the burden of selected Non-communicable diseases (diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, chronic kidney disease).

Non-communicable diseases (NCD) have been identified as a health emergency in the USAPI. However, Palau is primed to look at health and illness in their traditional systems and Integrated Medicine allows them to do that. Dr. Kuartei is now a senator in Palau, along with his other responsibilities. Therefore, one of his goals during his term is to introduce a bill on Integrative Medicine approaches and TM in Palau in an effort to decrease illness and death due to chronic disease.



*Dr. Kuartei and Dr. Weil at the Fellowship in Integrative Medicine residential week.*