

PHA, ACC partner for ACCESS

Strengthening its dynamic alliance to work abreast towards the shared goal of excellence in healthcare, the Philippine Heart Association (PHA), together with the American College of Cardiology (ACC), has led a new thrust in cardiovascular education and embarked on a crisp and seamless CME activity for its fellows and other specialists—the ACC Extended Scientific Summit (ACCESS).

BY LYKA MAE P. CHIANG



The Philippine Heart Association and American College of Cardiology officers with distinguished cardiology experts during the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the ACC Extended Scientific Summit (ACCESS)

For over 50 years now, the PHA and the ACC have upheld a solid connection which allows establishing avenues that continue shaping the future in the field of the subspecialty. The enduring partnership has abundantly benefited the quality of cardiovascular care not only in the United States but also in the Philippines, producing competent and altruistic physicians that bring the utmost service to patients in both countries.

Thus, in 2012, as a brainchild of then PHA president Dr. Saturnino Javier and ACC president Dr. William Zoghbi, the ACC Chapter Philippines was formed.

A new milestone for the ACC Chapter Philippines, ACCESS is the pioneering CME activity which serves an arena for extensive discussion in cardiology and a foundation for continuous collaborations between local and international diplomats, fellows, and



Dr. Carl Michael Valentine, president-elect of the ACC



Dr. Ma. Belen O. Carisma talks about cardiac resynchronization therapy



Dr. Timothy C. Dy talks about endovascular stenting for complex aortic aneurysms



Dr. Jorge Sison, current president of the PHA



Dr. Raul Lapitan, ACC Governor and immediate past president of the PHA



Dr. Saturnino Javier, AIG Steering Committee

cardiologists alike. On February 17, 2018—graced by the ASEAN ACC governors, ACC fellows, PCC, and other counterparts—the first-ever ACCESS in the history was held at the Fairmont Makati Hotel.

Dr. Raul Lapitan, current governor of the ACC Chapter Philippines, says the arena, such as its namesake, provides the gates of opportunity for knowledge and key advancements in treatment and practice.

“It provides avenues to confront issues, controversies, and challenges inflicting various communities and an international venue of discussion towards encompassing resolutions with all-inclusive application and results,” adds Dr. Lapitan.

Furthermore, Dr. Jorge Sison, current president of the PHA, says the activity is an open door for the global recognition of the association. With the ACC’s support, PHA and its members will be entitled to the remarkable advancements the college has to offer, such as an opportunity to get invited to their annual conventions in the US as well as to regional meetings conducted in various countries.

Leadership training

It is the PHA and the ACC’s unified mission to involve the fellows-in-training in the dynamic development of cardiovascular care. Through its partnership, the ACC provides PHA and its members, primarily

the FITS, access to its expansive stock of educational resources.

“All the young people who are training get free membership to the ACC,” says Dr. Carl Michael Valentine, incoming president of the ACC. “And so anybody who’s a member can go to our website and download all the educational programs, which is very important when people are trying to learn and gain new skills,” he adds.

Both the PHA and the ACC believe that by involving the FITS and giving them the chance to a journey of learning, their handful of skills and knowledge will become more extensive which can be used for the greater good in the future.

The organizations also recognize the importance of leadership training and have embarked on an activity that shapes young physicians to be excellent leaders in the making. Prior to the day when the ACCESS was conducted, together with Dr. Valentine, the PHA launched the PHA Leadership Academy.

“Leadership is something that is inherent. Many people are born very talented leaders but it’s also something that can be trained,” notes Dr. Valentine.

It is therefore the Academy’s duty to be a venue that trains and transforms physicians into better leaders in healthcare. In order to attain this vision, the Academy delivers lectures and workshops that teach young physicians salient leadership

etiquettes—such as proper and seamless communication, conflict management, team building, finance, strategy planning, among others.

“It’s all about how to become a leader—practical things that you cannot find in the book,” explains Dr. Lapitan. “Because we’re cardiologists, we’re trained to evaluate a disease, to diagnose a condition, and to treat, but something that we haven’t been taught is leadership,” he adds.

Dr. Valentine notes that seven of the top 10 hospitals in the US are run by physicians, and the ACC envisions the same future here in the Philippines. That’s why they are contributing their fair share in shaping young Filipino physicians to become great leaders.

Women’s role in Cardiology

While the PHA stands as a beneficiary of the ACC, Dr. Valentine notes that the college benefits from the PHA as much as it does from the ACC.

“Learning is a two-way street and so when I’m here, I learn just as much from my Filipino colleagues as they learn from me,” explains Dr. Valentine.

If there is one thing Dr. Valentine has learned from the Philippines, it is the potent ability of women cardiologists. According to him, the leadership roles of women in the Philippines are very diverse, in contrast to that of in the US.

Chronic Hepatitis B: Current and Future Roadmap

Getz Pharma organized a luncheon symposium on viral hepatitis

Text by **Lyka Mae P. Chiang** Photos by **Ramir G. Cambiado**

Getz Pharma Philippines organized a luncheon symposium on the science of viral hepatology, focusing on the treatment of Chronic Hepatitis B (CHB) infection, during this year's Hepatology Society of the Philippines (HSP) biennial convention held on January 25-26 at the Seda Vertis North, Quezon City.

The scientific meeting featured state-of-the-art lectures addressing major issues and prevalent problems relevant to liver specialists and gastroenterologists.

The luncheon symposium was formally opened by Dr. Stephen Wong, current president of the Hepatology Society of the Philippines. Likewise, the keynote speaker for the luncheon symposium, Dr. Saeed Sidiq Hamid, was introduced by Dr. Marilyn Arguillas, past president of the Hepatology Society of the Philippines.

Dr. Saeed Sidiq Hamid is the Ibn-e-Sina Chair and Professor of the Department of Medicine of the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan. He is an internationally-renowned hepatologist, who is a fellow of the Royal College of Physician of London and Ireland, of the American College of Physician, of the American College of Gastroenterology, and of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases.

During his talk about "Breakthroughs in Hepatitis B Therapy: Current and Future Roadmap," he discussed the dynamic developments in chronic hepatitis B therapy, focusing on currently available agents and the likely future roadmap that could lead to the functional cure of CHB.

As explained by Professor Hamid, Hepatitis B is a potentially life-threatening liver infection caused by the Hepatitis B virus. Around 257 million people worldwide are living with hepatitis B that remains to have no cure as of to date. Once infected by the virus, all patients will have a remnant of the HBV DNA in their liver in the form of covalently closed circular DNA (cccDNA).

The duration of the natural history of chronic HBV infection is around 30 to 50 years, starting from the acute infection which may either resolve or make the individual a chronic carrier; to the chronic hepatitis stage, which may stabilize or progress; to cirrhosis, which may be compensated for some time until it leads to a decompensated state and death; or to hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) and subsequently death.

Therefore, the goal of treatment for chronic



Representatives from Getz Pharma Philippines during the Hepatology Society of the Philippines Liver Meeting



Dr. Jade Jamias, overall chair of the 2018 HSP Liver Meeting.



Dr. Judy Lao, moderator of the open forum during the luncheon symposium



Dr. Marilyn Arguillas, past president of the HSP, introducing Dr. Saeed Hamid for his plenary lecture



A total of 573 delegates graced the scientific meeting

HBV is to improve survival of afflicted patients by preventing disease progression to decompensated cirrhosis, liver failure, and hepatocellular carcinoma.

According to Prof. Hamid, sustained virological suppression of HBV DNA levels has been linked with histological improvement and regression of cirrhosis, as well as a reduced risk of end-stage liver disease and hepatocellular carcinoma.

He added that although a complete cure for HBV remains elusive, effective antiviral therapy, such as with tenofovir disoproxil fumarate, has been shown to suppress HBV DNA, reduce inflammation, reverse fibrosis, and reduce the risk of hepatocellular carcinoma and liver-related events.

Prof. Hamid also highlighted the current state of HBV therapy and discussed the unmet needs. There is now a paradigm

shift towards achieving a 'functional cure' in terms of HBSAg seroconversion and immune control.

He noted that in spite of the recent advancements, it's still a challenge in the medical field to formulate an effective therapeutic strategy for the total elimination of cccDNA from the patient's system. Prof. Hamid explained that eradicating or 'silencing' cccDNA is an appealing novel therapeutic target, since it is the transcription template for all mRNAs, and is responsible for chronicity in an infected cell and rebound after treatment withdrawal. Furthermore, it is the reservoir which prevents lasting functional cure.

During the open forum—moderated by Dr. Judy Lao-Tan, an influential gastroenterologist in Cebu City; and participated by Dr. Diana Payawal, current president of the Asian Pacific for the Study of the Liver (APASL); and Dr. Jose Sollano Jr.,

past president of the APASL, as reactors—delegates raised some concerns, stimulating questions about the currently emerging targets for HBV treatment aside from the existing available drugs, improvements in drug delivery systems, mechanisms for the destruction of HBV cccDNA, the Philippines' status on HBV and HCV testing, among others.

The discussion had been very interactive and the lecturers distinctly addressed the concerns raised. Thus, Prof. Hamid, as well as Dr. Sollano and Dr. Payawal, earned praise and applause from the delegates.

Prof. Hamid remained optimistic of the future of HBV therapy, but at the moment, there is still a continuing search for a treatment that will provide either long-term off treatment suppression in most individuals or to complete radical virological cure. ^{H&L}



Dr. Stephen Wong, current president of the HSP, officially opening the luncheon symposium



Dr. Saeed Hamid, Ibn-e- Sina Chair and Professor of the Department of Medicine of the Aga Khan University, talks about the breakthroughs in hepatitis B therapy

This year's biennial convention featured six international speakers and 39 of the country's top gastroenterologists and liver experts who tackled interesting and up-to-date topics on liver diseases, such as Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD), Liver Cirrhosis, Hepatobiliary Malignancy, among others. To make the discussions more interesting, the biennial convention also featured two clinical debates and multidisciplinary case discussions. The event was attended by 573 physicians from all over the country.



Dr. Jose Sollano Jr., Dr. Saeed Hamid, and Dr. Diana Payawal during the open forum



Dr. Jose D. Solano and Dr. Saeed Hamid during the symposium's open forum segment

The PCP Exemplars

This year, the Philippine College of Physicians once again recognizes some of its members who have walked the proverbial extra mile to contribute their share in promoting the ideals of the organization. Serving in various capacities as community leaders, passionate health advocates and dedicated clinicians, these exemplars have served as fitting role models in assuming leadership roles in their respective communities, in mentoring, and inspiring today's generation of internists to be more staunch health advocates and do more for the country as a whole

BY LYKA MAE P. CHIANG



From left to right: Immediate past president Dr. Nenita A. Collantes; PCP Exemplars Dr. Araceli A. Panelo, Dr. Roberto C. Mirasol, Dr. Manuel C. Jorge II, Dr. Angeles Tan-Alora, Dr. Raul V. Destura, Dr. Rene I. Juaneza, and PCP president Dr. Kenneth Hartigan-Go

Angeles Tan-Alora, MD, FPCP

Dr. Gonzalo F. Austria Memorial Awardee

A highly esteemed specialist, Dr. Angeles Tan-Alora has served like a beacon in the field of Bioethics, guiding physicians how to remain faithful in their sworn oath. She has published several papers, guidelines and commentaries concerning Bioethics. These include "A Handbook in Bioethics," published in 1999; "Beyond a Western Bioethics: Voices from the Developing World," published in 2001; "Bioethics for Students," published in 2006; among others.

Dr. Tan-Alora is a professor at the University of Sto. Tomas-Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, where she also held the position of chief of the Section of Infectious and Tropical Diseases. With her vision of upgrading the competence and quality of health education in the country, she has been an advocate of continuing training and development of teachers of medicine and nursing students. After all, the fruits can only be as good as the tree which produced them.

For many years, she has conscientiously dedicated her time and effort at the National Training Center for the Health Professions at the University of the Philippines, where she served as a professor and later as the director.

In 1990, she became a member of the Professional Regulatory Commission Board of Medical Examiners. She was also appointed as the executive director of the Southeast Asian Center for Bioethics and a member of Philippine Medical Association Ethics Committee.

Currently, she holds the position of chairman of the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board Sub-Committee on Information, Dissemination Training and Advocacy.

Dr. Tan-Alora's accomplishments make her truly deserving of the Dr. Gonzalo F. Austria Memorial Award, the PCP's highest exemplar award.



Araceli A. Panelo, MD, FPCP

Distinguished Healthcare Advocate



The dire need to address the pressing health needs in the country, especially among the poor, and those living in far-flung rural areas, has long been a concern that has not been effectively resolved up until this day.

Dr. Araceli Panelo, current chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Medical Center (UERMMC)–Institute for Studies on Diabetes Foundation (ISDF), Inc., director of the UERMMC Diabetes Research Project, and president of Consortium of Government Diabetes Clinics, knows too well that the physicians, particularly those in primary care, holds the key to address this problem.

With dedication, perseverance, and leadership, she and the various diabetes organizations she leads, have contributed their remarkable share in empowering these clinicians across the nation by providing them updated and clinically pragmatic education on the diagnosis, prevention, and management of diabetes.

Her enthusiasm for diabetes started when she was still a third-year medical student at the UERM and got inspired by one of his professors, Dr. Ricardo Fernando, who eventually founded the ISDF. Dr. Fernando, fondly referred to as "Tatay Ric" by the hundreds of internists he has mentored, sought to innovate on a masteral program to further the education and training of committed physicians in the management of diabetes.

"I imbibed his love for his patients with diabetes, giving equal attention to both the rich and the poor. After the residency training, he took me in as his preceptee for two years, where the practice started to evolve from preventing complications to eventually helping prevent diabetes among those at risk for the disease," relates Dr. Panelo.

Dr. Panelo's efforts in establishing the Consortium of Government Diabetes Clinics exemplify her staunch advocacy to address issues of social inequity when it comes to healthcare, specifically in the management of diabetes, which has increased in prevalence alarmingly in the country and in Southeast Asia.

COVER STORY

Well loved by her peers for her compassionate and motherly demeanor, Dr. Panelo has made her services and those of the organizations she leads to all physicians and other stakeholders who share the vision of curbing the incidence of diabetes in the country and preventing serious complications in those who have this metabolic disorder.

Particularly for her younger colleagues, she advises: "As the future leaders of the medical profession, it is important that you have a vision. Follow that vision and work hard for it. Seize every opportunity that brings your vision closer to when you started. Eventually, you will see your hard work get paid off—effecting positive impact in our society and lighting the way for others sharing the same vision."

Rene I. Juaneza, MD, FPCP

Distinguished Internist

Despite the lure of a lucrative practice in the big hospitals of Manila, Dr. Rene Juaneza chose to go back to his hometown in Iloilo City when it was not that progressive yet a city as it is now. His overarching desire was to render service to his hometown, so those with pulmonary problems need not go to Manila to seek specialist treatment.

For more than three decades, he has been a symbol of an exemplary clinical practitioner in Iloilo, inspiring many young physicians to also follow the path he has taken. He is currently the chairman of the Department of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at the Iloilo Doctor's Hospital, a position he has had since 1983.

His dedication to serve the underprivileged members of society is unwavering. During the time of his presidency of the Philippine Foundation for Lung Health Development and Research in 1998-2000, he participated in numerous outreach projects across the different regions in the country. In 2006, he was named as one of the 25 "Most Outstanding Citizens of Western Visayas (for Medicine)" and was awarded "Most Outstanding Fellow" by the Philippine College of Chest Physicians in 2011.

Dr. Juaneza had also served for over a decade as an associate professor of medicine at the Iloilo Doctors' College of Medicine. He was a member of the Philippine Specialty Board of Internal Medicine in 1995 and was assigned as chairman in 1997 up until 1998. His exemplary practice of internal medicine, serving patients with utmost dedication, empathy, and compassion above personal gain has earned him his title as this year's PCP Distinguished Internist.



Roberto C. Mirasol, MD, FPCP

Distinguished Community Leader

Not many doctors choose to serve in remote areas in the country. Being an internal medicine practitioner specializing in Endocrinology for over three decades, Dr. Roberto Mirasol, realizes this need and dedicates his work as a servant leader in empowering the community, especially the underserved sectors, to address diabetes, obesity, and thyroid cancers.

He is currently the chief of the Section of Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism at St. Luke's Medical Center, Quezon City; the head of Endocrinology at Manila Doctors Hospital; and the vice president of the Philippine Lipid and Atherosclerotic Society.

"Achieving a balance between serving the privileged versus the poor members of the society is foremost in my mind," he says. "Reaching out to the poor is satisfying and gratifying. The benefits are far greater than any material rewards."

His commitment to leadership has brought the establishment of the Philippine Thyroid Cancer Survivors, a thyroid cancer support group, and Camp COPE, a camp for children with type 1 diabetes that helps them take better care of themselves and be

productive citizens. He also spearheaded the training of endocrinologists who are now servant leaders in every region of the Philippines.

"I believe that if you serve from the heart, all your contributions would be unique... I'm grateful to my mentors, teachers, and professors who have molded me to become a true servant leader. Thank you to all my patients who continually place their trust and confidence in me for all their health and, more importantly, their non-health issues," remarks Dr. Mirasol.

Dr. Mirasol undeniably continues to do his ample share in improving healthcare delivery and empowering the marginalized sectors of society with a stronger health-promoting behavior. And his concept of servant-leadership is likewise an exemplary model of how true and selfless leaders should be.

Manuel C. Jorge II, MD, FPCP

Distinguished Teacher

It has been frequently said and written that behind every great person is a teacher or mentor who has immensely influenced that great person. Dr. Manuel Jorge II, chair of the Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines–Philippine General Hospital; associate professor 5 in the College of Medicine, University of the Philippines; and project leader of the Integrated PTB–Paragonimiasis Surveillance and Control Program, is one such mentor.

Indeed, Dr. Jorge has touched the lives of many medical students, interns, residents and fellows in training, to mold them into the best physicians they could be.

Aside from educating aspiring health professionals, Dr. Jorge has also made a significant contribution to the knowledge of his fellow physicians through his participation in numerous researches. He has worked on 32 publications, most of which are related to obstructive sleep apnea, tuberculosis, asthma, and allied pulmonary disorders. He has also been involved in various multicenter clinical trials and delivered lectures in different parts of the country.

Dr. Jorge is a great source of inspiration for both young and senior physicians. His dedication and fervor to teach has inspired his students and trainees, equipping them not only to be better physicians, but to be better persons. Indeed, he is an exemplary mentor and a true friend to many.



Raul V. Destura, MD, FPCP

Distinguished Researcher

The secret behind every scientific discovery, be it small or life-changing, is an immense amount of time dedicated to seeking answers to research questions, faithfully executing stringent methodologies, validating hypotheses, coming up with definitive conclusions, and hopefully filling in the knowledge gaps that exist on certain medical conditions.

Dr. Raul Destura, infectious diseases physician and molecular microbiologist, has made it his passion to seek answers that can translate to better outcomes for patients with prevalent medical problems like Dengue Fever. In 2016, Dr. Destura developed a state-of-the-art molecular dengue test, an affordable kit that can diagnose dengue fever in 40 minutes.

This pioneering work is called the "Lab in a Mug" project. The device integrates and miniaturizes an isothermal platform the size of a mug, which functions as a portable laboratory. This discovery is a big boost for financially burdened Filipinos dengue cases

wherein a prompt, reliable and affordable test to rule in or rule out dengue could be life-saving.

Some other research innovations of Dr. Destura include iDengue, a computer program technology for real-time dengue surveillance in the Philippines; and the United States Patent Drug Discovery, a study on the synergistic effect of arginine and zinc for repair of intestinal epithelial cell injury.

He also founded the Enteric Study Group at the National Institutes of Health, which has since become the most productive study group in the University of the Philippines.

Aside from his remarkable works as a scientist, Dr. Destura still spares his time to serve his community. Touched by the state of poverty-stricken deaf children in Payatas, he actively participates in Bahay Bata 127, an aid organization that nurtures the talents of these children and encourages them to increase their self-esteem and become useful members of the society despite their condition.

'Healthy Diet, Gawing Habit – FOR LIFE!'

Declining consumption of plant foods noted

By Lyka Mae P. Chiang

For this year's Nutrition Month celebration, the National Nutrition Council (NNC) urges Filipinos from all walks of life to adopt a healthy diet and keep it as a lifelong habit.

With the theme "Healthy Diet, Gawing Habit – FOR LIFE!," the occasion aims to raise awareness among the public and mobilize them against both undernutrition and obesity, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, and diabetes in the country.

NNC emphasizes that healthy diet means a balanced and moderate intake of a variety of foods from different food groups. According to the Department of Science and Technology – Food Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI), most Filipinos ingest a lot of energy-dense and nutrient-poor

foods which are also rich in saturated fats, trans fats, refined carbohydrates, or sodium. Still, seven out of 10 Filipino households do not meet their dietary energy requirements needed for a productive day at school, work, or home.

As a result, disruption occurs in metabolic processes, physiological functions, and well-being of an individual. With a healthy diet, there can be an adequate supply of daily energy and nutritional needs, and thus, optimal health is ensured.

NNC also addresses the declining consumption rates of plant foods in the country, consequent to the shifting dietary patterns of Filipinos in the last 35 years. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that insufficient fruit and vegetable consumption is responsible for approximately 1.7 million of deaths worldwide and causes

around 14 percent of gastrointestinal cancer mortality, 11 percent of ischemic heart disease mortality, and about 9 percent of stroke mortality.

With the increased availability of highly processed foods, such as canned goods and instant meals, NNC reminds those in the food industry to promote healthy diet as well by reformulating products to reduce fat, sodium, and glucose contents in the foods they produce.

The NNC continues to gather support from different sectors and government levels to advocate healthy diet in homes, schools, and workplaces. It also persuades the public to support the nationwide campaign towards better nutrition in the country that can be implemented the whole year and not only every July. This is aligned with the belief that good nutrition is not only a month-long commitment but should become a daily habit. ^{HA}



The theme for Nutrition Month 2017 is "Healthy diet, gawing habit – for life!"

'Gift of Life'

REGALO urges Filipinos to donate organs

BY LYKA MAE P. CHIANG



Stakeholders sign a commemorative version of REGALO's ad. It aims to encourage Pinoys to give the gift of life through organ donation

Most patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) need to undergo kidney transplantation in order to improve their quality of life and prolong survival. However, not many people are given the chance for a transplant due to an inadequate number of donors.

During the launch of the 'Handbook of Organ and Donor Recipient' at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Dr. Romina Danguilan, head of the organizing committee of the REGALO Organ Donation Advocacy, said that one Filipino dies from kidney failure every hour.

REGALO stands for Renal Gift Allowing Life for Others—an organ donation advocacy

"In 2015, there were more than 18,000 new patients who started dialysis. Here at NKT, we start about 100 new patients on dialysis every month," she reported.

Although dialysis is said to be life-extending for ESRD patients, it is considered only as a "bridge" because transplantation is still the best option for such patients.

Medical assistance program

Department of Health Secretary Dr. Pauly Jean Rosell-Ubial also reiterated the importance of organ transplantation and organ donation. She also reminded everyone that the DOH has a medical assistance program (MAP) to help the poor get access to tertiary care and high technology surgeries.

"Yan po ang ninanais ng ating pangulo, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, na hindi po magiging dahilan ang kahirapan para hindi po mabigyan ng karapatang serbisyong medical o health service ang ating mga kababayan (That is what the President wants, that poverty

should not be a reason why our countrymen cannot avail of necessary medical or health services)," Sec. Ubial said.

REGALO aims to increase awareness on kidney transplantation and encourage more Filipinos to give the gift of life and sign up as organ donors.

Dr. Danguilan also explained that only 495 out of 18,000 patients are receiving a kidney transplant, a portion too small considering that transplantation must be a priority. This is why she is asking the public to help out in this advocacy, by indicating it at the back of their driver's licence.

"Carry an organ donor card, so that if anything happens to you, doctors will know that you wish to donate your organs. Please give the gift of life and help us give a new life to our patients with kidney disease," appealed Dr. Danguilan.

NKTI released two handbooks: *Gabay Para sa (Guide for) Kidney Donors* and *Gabay Para sa (Guide for) Transplant Patients*, both of which promote the importance of organ donation and kidney transplantation.

The *Gabay Para sa Kidney Donors* provides basic information about kidney and kidney donation, its benefits, procedures, and the possible effects it might cause the donor; while the *Gabay Para sa Transplant Patients* contains information on kidney diseases and transplantation—what and what not to do before and after the procedure, and the financial assistance they can avail for the surgery.

Life-long commitment

During the launch, Gabrielle Anne Gabaton, a transplant recipient, made a testimony with her father, Jumel Gabaton. At the age of 19, Gabrielle was diagnosed with ESRD. She was a Latin honor candidate student at the time with a double major in Management Engineering and Economics at Ateneo de Manila University (AdMU).

On her initial evaluation, they found out that 91 percent of both her kidneys weren't functioning anymore, that's why she underwent dialysis and took various oral medications treatment. She was confined at NKTI for 5 months.

"Basically, my academic life was a series of catching up missed lessons, chasing deadlines, and arranging consultations with my professors. If I weren't in school, I would be at NKTI having laboratory tests and ultrasounds, as necessary workups for the transplant," Gabrielle said.

Aside from the exhausting routine, Gabrielle's family had also been financially challenged due to the expenses required for her medical needs.

"We were financially drained after a few weeks, so I availed of every government financial support there was," Jumel disclosed. He added that they even started a GoFundMe account for Gabrielle to raise funds for her operation.

After receiving help from different institutions and individuals, they were able to save enough for a down payment. But then, they still needed one thing—an organ donor.

Fortunately, it wasn't difficult for their family to look for a donor. Jumel, Gabrielle's father, is a healthy man who didn't smoke and drank rarely, and it turned out that they were a match.


On February 10, 2017, Gabrielle finally went through the operation and received one of her father's kidneys.

Gabrielle is doing well nowadays. She

left a reminder that "it wasn't the end of a kidney journey but rather the beginning of a life-long commitment to care for the kidney through a healthier lifestyle, religious intake of medicines, and regular checkups."

For Jumel, having served as an instrument to give her daughter a chance for a long and meaningful life made him jubilant.

"Being a donor and knowing that someone's life is made better give me a sense of pride and purpose," he said.

REGALO was founded by the Maria Corazon Torres Y. Javier Foundation, Kidney Foundation of the Philippines, and Kidney Transplant Association of the Philippines in partnership with Novartis Healthcare Philippines. 



Health Sec Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial & officials from NKTI, MCTJ, KFP, KITAP

twitter.com/ie_takumi

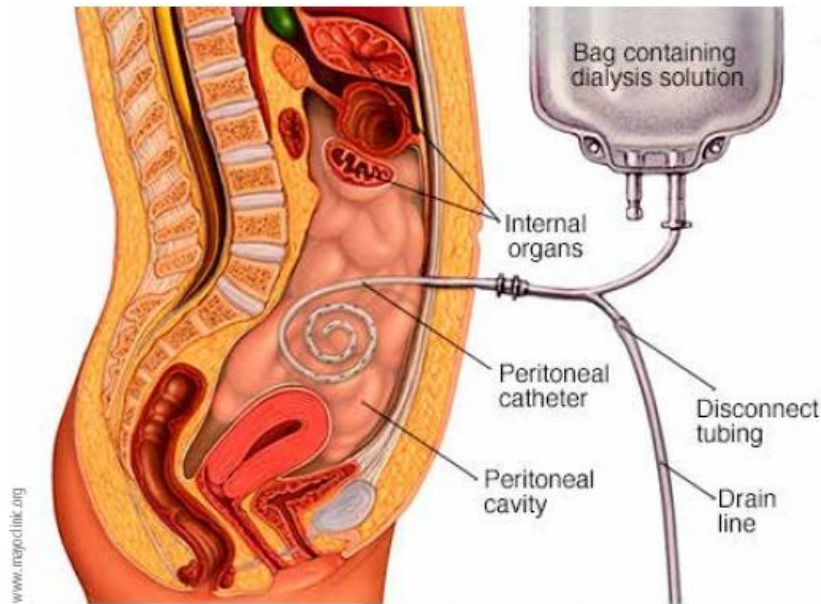


Gabrielle Anne Gabaton, ADMU merit scholar & ME, EcH double major, shared her story of how she beat ESRD w/ a kidney transplant

twitter.com/ie_takumi

First choice renal replacement therapy

PhilHealth prioritizes peritoneal dialysis over hemodialysis



PhilHealth announced that starting June 1, 2017, it will no longer accept claims application for hemodialysis under case rates submitted by health care institutions nor filed directly by the members, except only if needed for acute kidney injury cases such as leptospirosis which require immediate medical attention.

During this transition period, PhilHealth encouraged all of its accredited health institutions that offer PD to file a pre-authorization application for all the patients that will make use of the PD First Z benefit.

In 2014, PhilHealth launched the PD First under the Z benefit package, in order to provide bigger financial support and secure a quality service for patients with CKD.

The package is allotted with P270,000 a year and includes PD solutions, accessories, and professional fee.

According to the National Kidney and Transplant Institute website, peritoneal dialysis is a form of dialysis in which the patient's peritoneal membrane serves as an artificial stone or kidney. No blood is taken from or given to the patient in this procedure. In fact, this dialysis type can also be used to effectively release body toxins and excess fluid that accumulate in the body of the patient whose kidneys are no longer functioning properly. **Lyka Mae P. Chiang**

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) reminded its accredited health care providers to recommend the use of peritoneal dialysis (PD) to their patients as the primary procedure for the dialysis of the kidney, particularly to those with Stage 5 chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Through Advisory 2017-0010, PhilHealth urged all of their accredited

doctors to recommend PD and always include it as an option for renal replacement therapy.

The PD First policy reiterated in line with the commenced reforms on the implementation of benefit packages. The policy also aims to help patients with Stage 5 CKD in choosing the best medical care option.

As a result of this development,

DOH highlights cervical cancer awareness



The Department of Health (DOH) led the campaign to promote awareness on cervical cancer with the theme “Babae, Mahalaga Ka! Magpa-Screen, NOW NA!” last May 15.

DOH tied up with non-government and private sector organizations such as the Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society Foundation Inc., Society of Gynecologic Oncologists of the Philippines and Cervical Cancer Prevention Network as they launched the campaign at Almendras Gym in Davao City.

According to the health bureau, women are advised to educate themselves on HPV or Human Papilloma Virus-related diseases and encouraged them to undergo early and regular screening for their protection against HPV. The said virus is the culprit for nearly 100 percent of cervical cancer cases.

For the whole month of May, the DOH provided free cervical cancer screening using the VIA (visual inspection using acetic acid) method for women aged 25 to 55 years at selected DOH hospitals nationwide. With regular screening, women will be able to monitor possible cervix changes due to HPV infection, which may eventually lead to cancer.

Furthermore, DOH announced the expansion of its HPV immunization program to more provinces around the country, in order to reach more beneficiaries of the free quadrivalent HPV vaccines, including 9-year-old Grade IV girls in public schools.

More than 6,000 Filipino women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year, and more often than not, the disease is detected late because affected women are showing no obvious signs or symptoms. Such cases increase the mortality rate of cervical cancer, although about one-third of these patients are still able to survive five years after their diagnosis.

Health Secretary Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial stressed the important role of women in society highlighting the need for them to stay well. “Indeed, women have a very important role to play in the society so much

so that when cervical cancer strikes them, the entire community gets hurt,” she said.

With its combined vaccination and screening programs, the country is within reach of a cervical cancer-free future for Filipinas as the DOH commits to bringing protection to more women against HPV-related cervical cancer, and save them from the physical, psychological and financial burden of this disease. **Lyka Mae P. Chiang**

Filipinos sign petition to lift TRO on contraceptives

More than 300,000 Filipinos signed a petition to lift the existing temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by the Supreme Court (SC) on the distribution, dispensing, and promotion of contraceptive implants and on certification and recertification of family planning (FP) materials due to concerns on the possible impact it may bring.

In June 2015, the high tribunal ordered the Department of Health (DOH) and its agents to temporarily stop "procuring, selling, distributing, dispensing or administering, advertising and promoting the hormonal contraceptive Implanon and Implanon NXT." Two months later, the SC also prohibited the DOH and FDA from registering and recertifying contraceptives.

Consequently, 15 certificates of product registration (CPR) have been voided in 2016 and another 10 expired as of May this year, with only 23 contraceptives left available for public consumption. By 2020, all contraceptives will have run out of stock from the market, and all FP commodities and programs will be put to a halt as a result of CPR expirations.

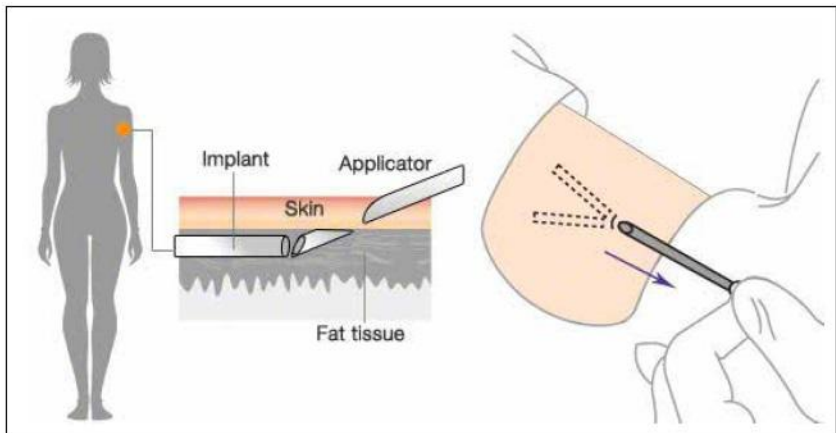
The 300,000 respondents of the petition are composed of women, couples, and their families and friends from all over the country. The signed petition has been submitted to the High Court by over a hundred individuals mostly from urban poor communities who are more likely to be affected by the TRO.

The lifting of the TRO will also give reconsideration for the full implementation of the 2012 Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health (RPRH) Act that has been deemed as dysfunctional by the CSOs and the population and development sector for five years.

The RPRH law guarantees easy access to all forms of modern contraception, comprehensive sexuality education, and maternal and child care.

With the TRO in place, unplanned pregnancy rate may arise, which can lead to induced abortion and maternal deaths. ^{H&L}

Lyka Mae P. Chiang



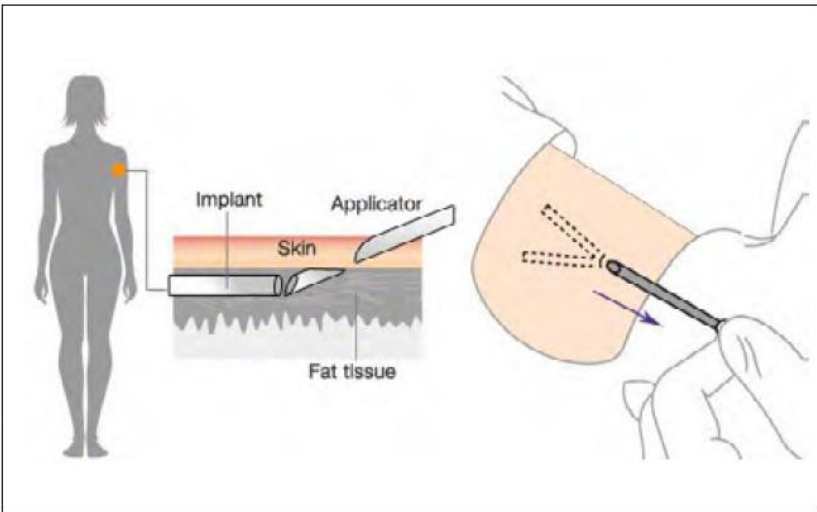
www.healthpress.co.uk



13.rntire.co.uk



FDA to comply with SC Resolution



www.healthexpress.co.uk



13.mirror.co.uk

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said in a statement on June 6 that it would comply with the SC's command to promulgate the rules of procedure in the screening, evaluation and approval of all contraceptive implants, and resolving the issue on whether these contraceptives are abortifacient.

This is in line with the SC's modified decision to lift the TRO on contraceptives if the FDA provides evidence that the contraceptives are safe.

FDA Director General (DG) Nela Charade G. Puno stated that the SC required the FDA, as well as the DOH (Department of Health), to come up with the amendment of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 rules and regulations.

The FDA received a copy of the resolution on June 1.

DG Puno added that they have an "ample time" to comply with the resolution, as they were given 60 days to decide on the case "from the date it will be deemed submitted for resolution."

The FDA's Center for Drug Regulation and Research, the Center for Device Regulation Radiation and Research, and the Legal Services Division have started working on the compliance as directed by DG Puno.

"We assure the general public that FDA will comply based on scientific evidence and follow what is prescribed under the law with the public's health and safety being our paramount concern," DG Puno concluded.

Lyka Mae P. Chiang

Filipino doctors in Qatar now qualified for specialist title



of Public Health Dr. Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari and Philippine Department of Health Secretary Paulyn Jean B. Rosell-Ubial. DOH's Bureau of International Health Cooperation Director Maylene Beltran and Medical Mission Group (MMG) Hospitals and Health Services Cooperative of the Philippines Chief Executive Dr. Jose Tiongco were also present at the meeting.

The meeting, which was organized by the Philippine Business Council (PBC), also tackled discussion on MMG's plan to build a Filipino health institution in Qatar in partnership with Qatari investors. The equivalency of qualifications awarded to duly qualified Filipino doctors is a huge leap towards achieving this plan.

In 2015, the Filipino Medical Association in Qatar spearheaded the discussion on the equivalency of physician qualifications. Philippine Business Council officials noted that such recognition strengthens the competency of Filipino health practitioners in that nation, which will result to bolstering number of qualified physicians addressing the healthcare needs of Qatar's countrymen. Qatar is one of the countries in Middle East wherein a notably number of Filipino doctors are practicing their profession.

"This is indeed a significant milestone not only for the health sector but for the Philippines as a nation, providing competent Filipino medical specialists to the outside world such as Qatar. This accolade to our very own doctors signifies partnership of two countries to move forward in the quest to raise quality healthcare to a new level," Secretary Ubial said.

Sec. Ubial added that she is "deeply honored and very proud" and wants "to extend gratitude and appreciation of the Philippine Government and all Filipinos to the Government of Qatar" for supporting and assisting the Philippines to achieve its health and development goals. **Lyka Mae P. Chiang**



Filipino doctors in Qatar now eligible for specialty qualification

For the first time in history, the Qatar Council for Health Practitioners (QCPH) has certified Filipino physicians' eligibility for the "specialist" title within the said country's healthcare system.

The recently modified Approved Specialty Qualifications List for Physicians issued by Qatar Ministry of Public Health acknowledges the specialization training acquired by Filipino doctors in the Philippines

to make them qualified as specialists in Qatar.

This includes all Filipino physicians who are Philippine Specialty Boards diplomates and have completed their post-qualification degrees with 3 years work experience, unless otherwise stated.

The list was released in April 2017 subsequent to the successful meeting held in Doha in January of top health officials from both countries led by Qatar's Minister

Dr. Evelyn Tantomco-Gusi

The People's Doctor



She found great joy in serving the people, especially the poor of society; and even in her weakened condition due to ovarian cancer, she continued to serve. She was laid to rest at the Philippine Heroes Cemetery (*Libingan ng mga Bayani*), a fitting tribute to her life of dedication and service for the underprivileged sectors of society. She is truly a venerable Philippine heroine, admired nationally and internationally

BY LYKA MAE P. CHIANG

Not a few describe Dr. Evelyn Tantomco-Gusi as the Imelda Marcos of the Gusi Peace Prize Foundation (GPPF). There is a striking similarity of facial and other physical features, and they share the same sophisticated elegance whenever they don the Filipiniana gown.

Dr. Gusi was also acknowledged as the 'First Lady' of the GPPF, for which she offered the best years of her life to serve the people, who could not afford the services of a doctor.

Even when she was already undergoing chemotherapy for her ovarian cancer, she still helped organize the medical missions and other socio-civic projects of the foundation; and against medical advice, she made it a point to join these outreach missions for so long as her weakened body would allow her. Until the very end, when she breathed her last on August 31, 2017, she still had in mind and heart the foundation's socio-civic projects, to ease the burden of the poorest of the poor in society.

She was laid to rest at the Libingan ng Bayani, alongside the country's heroes. In all respect, she was indeed a heroine, who has shown remarkable courage and bravery, and strength of character, putting the people's interests above hers, as she served them selflessly and with utmost devotion.

Community service over private practice

Despite the lure of a lucrative private clinical practice in prominent hospitals in Metro Manila, Dr. Gusi, a general pediatrician, chose to devote her career doing community service on behalf of the foundation. Together with her husband, Ambassador Barry Gusi, the founding chairman of the GPPF, she traveled to different areas of the Philippines—even in far-flung areas—to serve indigenous people and other marginalized sectors of society, and help them attain better and more comfortable lives.

Dr. Gusi organized and led medical missions that helped address the poor people's health and basic needs. "These included medical and dental missions, minor surgeries, financial aid, provision of clothing, shoes, clothes, foods, and at the same time, counseling for children's care, education, and medical issues, and caring for the preservation of the environment," explains Amb. Gusi.

Her efforts also encouraged these people, especially the indigenous tribes, to preserve their culture while enjoying the basic niceties of modern civilization. It was her aim to maintain and even enhance the rich culture of the Philippines while promoting development and some degree of modernization to help improve the lives of the people in these underdeveloped communities.



Col. Evelyn Tantomco-Gusi with the generals and colonels from the AFP

Sans fanfare

In all these philanthropic projects of the foundation, no one can argue that Dr. Gusi gave her all sans fanfare and trumpet blasting to announce to one and all what they have done. She served selflessly out of her genuine desire to serve and help the people. The service was done with the purest of intentions, and not only out of pressure since she was the 'First Lady' of the GPPF.

"Her character really showcased her love for her fellow countrymen," says her loving husband. In fact, she also extended her community service through another organization, not only the GPPF. For her, it didn't matter which organization or which leader get the credit, for so long as what the people needed are delivered.

Aside from her community service rendered through the GPPF, she was also a commissioned officer of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Reserve Command (AFPRESCOM), and her duties involved disaster preparedness and response, and other humanitarian endeavors, be it medical, surgical, dental, feeding, and public health education.

"All the help she provided was solely for the welfare of the indigenous people, without her expecting or asking anything in return," says Amb. Gusi. "But with God's grace and will, everything that she worked for was paid back abundantly."

In 2015, she was elected as the president of the Pasig Medical Society (PCMS), a component society of the Philippine Medical Association. She was the society's first voted female president.

Being accorded the privilege to be laid to rest with the country's heroes in the Libingan ng mga Bayani, the "People Doctor" is truly one of our modern-day heroines worthy of emulation by her fellow physicians and colleagues in the healthcare profession.

Her memory in the hearts of the people she has selflessly served and saved will live on. ⁽¹⁸⁾



Dr. Evelyn Tantomco-Gusi voted and won nationally as the Philippine Medical Association Governor representing Rizal region with son Mikko



Gusi Peace Prize Zone in San Antonio, Quezon is a National Highway honoring the Mercy Mission of the Gusi Peace Prize Foundation with Hon. Amb. Barry Gusi, Dr. Evelyn Tantomco-Gusi, with children Evanka and Mikko together with PNP Col. Ebram Moxir and Mayor Wagan of San Antonio, Quezon



Col. Evelyn Gusi with the generals and colonels from the Armed Forces of the Philippines



Ribbon cutting of the Gusi Peace Prize Blvd. held during the Charity Mission at Milaor, Camarines Sur, Bicol

“For Dr. Evelyn Gusi, it didn't matter which organization or which leader got the credit, for so long as what the people needed were delivered”

Kilusang Malusog na Baga

With smoking, air pollution, fume exposure from burning fuels as common risk factors, chronic respiratory diseases remain a prevalent problem in the Philippines with milder cases being undiagnosed, hence untreated. The Philippine College of Chest Physicians (PCCP) calls for increased awareness on prevention and early treatment

BY LYKA MAE P. CHIANG

Chronic respiratory diseases (CRDs) are diseases associated with the airways and structures of the lungs. Some of the most common are chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), hundreds of millions of people suffer from CRDs worldwide.

The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) reports that CRDs rank as the third leading cause of death next to heart disease and cancer. In the Philippines, the mortality attributed to CRDs has reached 16,407 in 2014, making it rank as the seventh among the top causes of death in the country.

With such an immense figure of Filipinos costing their lives due to these diseases, it really calls for an urgent action.

Pursuing its commitment to increase awareness on common pulmonary diseases in the country, the Philippine College of Chest Physicians (PCCP)—the nation's premier organization of lung specialists—recently conducted the “Kilusang Malusog na Baga,” a mini-health fair which highlighted the importance of preventive healthcare to maintain healthy lungs.

Lung health fair

The fair, which took place last August 27 at the Quezon City Memorial Circle, tackled various topics related to the lungs, including chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD), asthma, smoking cessation, exercise, and improving lung health.

COPD is an umbrella term for



progressive lung diseases such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema. With an overall prevalence rate of 14 percent among Filipino adults aged 40 and above, only 2 percent of the cases are diagnosed and properly treated.

The disease is characterized by an immense production of mucus, wheezing, shortness of breath, and chest tightening as a result of bronchospasm.

Chronic bronchitis occurs when there is an increased cough and mucus production

caused by inflammation of the airways; while emphysema refers to the damage of the air sacs in the lungs, which traps the carbon dioxide inside leading to hypercapnea, and reduces the amount of oxygen that reaches the bloodstream causing hypoxemia.

Dr. Glynn Ong-Cabrera, member of the Council on COPD and Pulmonary Rehabilitation of the PCCP, says that in most developed countries, cigarette smoking is the primary cause of COPD; however, other factors can also contribute to the disease. In

fact, roughly 25 percent of COPD patients are non-smokers.

In developing countries, people exposed to fumes from burning fuels used for cooking are at high risk of the disease. Moreover, long-term exposure to lung irritants—such as pollution, chemical fumes, or dusts—may also lead to COPD. In some cases, it can be inherited through a rare genetic condition called alpha-1 antitrypsin (AAT) deficiency.

According to Dr. Cabrera, a person with COPD gets tired easily even when doing simple activities like bathing, eating, or walking as it affects one's functional capacity. She also notes that poorly managed COPD may result to frequent exacerbations and significant damage in the lungs over time.

"If COPD becomes severe, he [the patient] may also develop a heart condition called cor pulmonale, wherein the right side of the heart enlarges due to exposure to low levels of oxygen in the blood," says Dr. Cabrera.

Even if the disease is not fully reversible, the patient can increase his quality of life with proper treatment. Dr. Cabrera states that a person with COPD must avoid smoking at all cost and must be compliant with medications prescribed by their pulmonologist. She also cites some of the treatment procedures available for COPD.

"Bronchodilators are the main medication usually prescribed. Since COPD also causes muscle atrophy or deconditioning, it is advised that COPD patients undergo pulmonary rehabilitation. Pulmonary rehabilitation programs comprise of education regarding COPD and exercise training," explains Dr. Cabrera.

Since COPD patients are prone to developing infections, they are also advised to get annual flu vaccines and have their pneumonia vaccination as well.

Asthma

The 2007 WHO Global Surveillance Report shows that there are 300 million people who suffer from asthma, with 250,000 deaths recorded every year.

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory condition affecting the size and shape of the airways of the lungs. Like COPD, its symptoms include difficulty of breathing, coughing, wheezing, and chest tightening.

Sudden worsening of these symptoms is considered as asthma attack, which often occurs at night or early morning as a result of bronchospasm or the tightening of muscles around the airways. Asthma attacks can be triggered by infections, exercise, changes in weather, laughter, and irritants such as car fumes, cigarette smoke, or strong odors.



Dr. G Magtibay and Dr. E Tayag dance during the Lung Fair "Kilusang Malusog na Baga"

Allergens such as pollen, spores, dust mites, and pet dander may also trigger asthma, that's why it is vital that the patient knows his allergies in order to avoid having contact thus minimizing triggers. Consulting a physician that can conduct procedures such as skin testing can help properly identify the allergies of a patient.

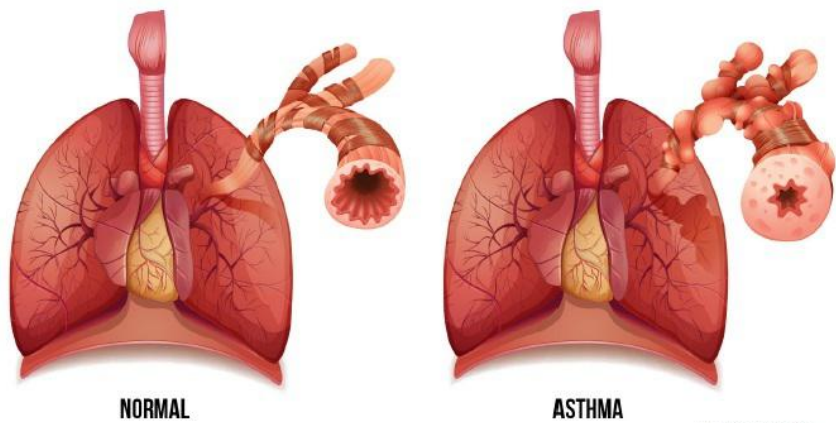
Although not curable, there are preventive measures and treatments available for the management of the condition.

Prevention of asthma attacks can be easily done by regularly taking the prescribed medications by the pulmonologist, quitting

smoking, keeping distance from triggers, and getting annual flu shots.

However, in case of an asthma attack, the patient is advised to follow the "red zone" or the emergency instructions provided in the asthma action plan immediately. If experiencing trouble in breathing, walking, or talking, or the lips and fingernails are turning blue, the patient must then be brought to the nearest ER.

Asthma can be treated with two types of medications—the controllers and the relievers. Controllers are long-term control medicines that reduce airway inflammation and prevent asthma



www.sensiseeds.com

“Even if the disease is not fully reversible, the patient can increase his quality of life with proper treatment”



symptoms, while relievers are quick-relief or rescue medications that relieve asthma symptoms that may flare up during an exacerbation.

In addition to this, living a healthy lifestyle including adequate exercise and proper diet may benefit an asthmatic patient. Although also a trigger, exercise may improve the overall health of an asthmatic person if done properly. If an asthmatic patient plans to undergo physical activity, he is advised to take his reliever medications and warm up prior to exercising.

Smoking cessation

In its bid to combat CRDs, the PCCP also extends an anti-smoking campaign to the public. Cigarette smoking is widely spread with an estimated 1.3 billion smokers worldwide, with 4.9 million users dying of tobacco every year.

In the Philippines, over half of the household population practices habitual smoking. Hence, the vast mortality rate attributed to CRDs.

Roughly 600 ingredients are found in a cigarette which creates more than 7,000 chemicals when burned, and 69 of these chemicals are a culprit for cancer and many are poisonous—namely acetone, ammonia, butane, lead, nicotine, tar, among others.

Moreover, smoking is also a major risk factor for heart failure, strokes, hypertension, and liver and lung diseases.

Several countries, including the Philippines, have taken measures to control tobacco consumption with usage and sales restrictions as well as warning messages printed on packaging. Just recently, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte

also implemented a nationwide ban on smoking in public and enclosed places.

Moreover, the Department of Health (DOH) spearheaded the National Smoking Cessation Program (NSCP) in the country, which aims to promote and advocate smoking cessation among Filipinos and provide smoking cessation services to current smokers interested in quitting the habit.

Some of the services covered by the NSCP include risk assessment, tobacco use assessment, brief intervention advice, and nicotine replacement therapy.

The PCCP also urges smokers to reach the national quitline by dialing 165-364 for smoking cessation counseling or texting “STOPSMOKE” to 29290-165-364.

With report from Precious B. Liason

FDA assures public transparency in contraceptives reevaluation



insidemanila.ph

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently assured public transparency in its conduct of evaluation and reevaluation of contraceptives, including those covered by the Supreme Court order.

According to the agency, the results of the process "will be fully compliant with the standards set by the High Court."

FDA Director-General Nela Charade Puno issued the said assurance as the review in line with the certification and recertification of some 50 contraceptives will soon be completed.

Puno said that the pieces of evidence obtained from various groups either supporting or opposing the approval of contraceptives have been fully-considered and thoroughly evaluated which greatly influenced the process.

This is compliant with SC ruling that ordered the FDA "to observe the basic requirements of due process by conducting a hearing, and allowing the petitioners to be heard, on the re-certified, procured, and administered contraceptive drugs and devices, including Implanon and Implanon NXT; and to determine whether they are abortifacients or non-abortifacients."

Puno said that the agency appreciates the interest and the productive participation of these civic groups in the process of health products regulation and that the input provided by these groups contribute to the insurance that the results of the review will have "solid technical and scientific bases."

Last August 21 this year, the agency urged groups interested in submitting inputs to provide evidence that would help with the certification and recertification process. The interested parties were allotted 10 days for submission.

Puno also reiterated that the FDA is strictly following the standards set by the High Court.

"We will make sure that the results of the technical and scientific processes to evaluate and reevaluate these contraceptives will be made accessible to the public," Puno said.

She also noted that the scientists mandating the technical evaluation team of the agency meet the highest professional standards and commit to a transparent evaluation process thus securing public interest. **Lyka Mae P. Chiang** H&L

ACCU-CHEK[®] Instant

Roche

Clever ideas can be so simple

new



Above range



In range



Below range

The Accu-Chek[®] Instant meter:
Your effortless choice¹⁻²

- No set up required¹
- Instant Clarity through intuitive target range indicator²
- Effortless synchronization

₱1,350

Per DOH-FDA Permit No.: CDRRHR-0087 s. 2017

INTRODUCTORY OFFER

To learn more, call the Accu-Chek Customer Hotline:
02-7187575 / 02-7187588 / 0917-8978000

Consult your doctor for advice.

References: 1. Accu-Chek Instant Package insert. 2. Parkin CG, et al. Use of an Integrated Tool for Interpretation of Blood Glucose Data Improves Correctness of Glycemic Risk Assessment in Individuals with Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes. J Diabetes Sci Technol. 2016 Sept 12.

ACCU-CHEK and ACCU-CHEK INSTANT are trademarks of Roche.
© 2017 Roche Diabetes Care

Roche (Philippines), Inc.
Diabetes Care
16th Floor, One World Place
32nd Street, Bonifacio Global City
Taguig City, Philippines 1634
ROCAPHDC0052 8/17

ACCU-CHEK[®]

Available in:



& other leading drugstore

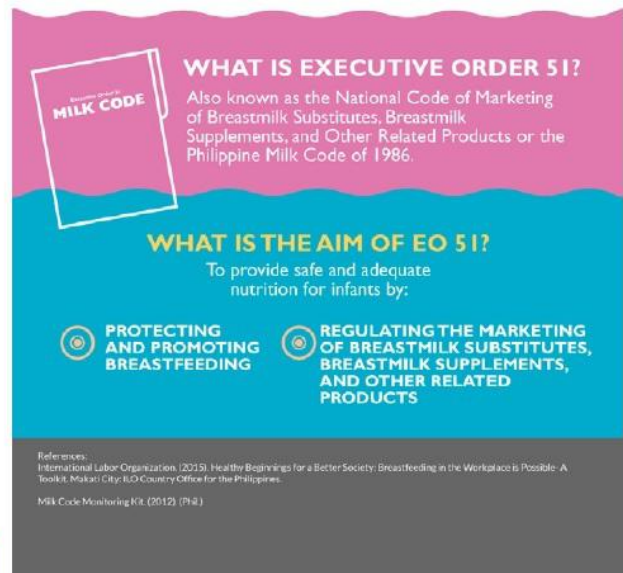
Mother–Baby Friendly Philippines

DOH, World Vision partner to strengthen breastfeeding promotion

The Department of Health (DOH) and World Vision signed a memorandum of agreement on October 6, 2017 that formalized their collaboration in the Mother-Baby Friendly Philippines (MBFP) project.

The event was attended by then Health Secretary Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial, DOH undersecretaries and assistant secretaries, World Vision National Director Rommel Fuertes and World Vision Health and Nutrition Technical Manager Carleneth San Valentin.

Prior to the agreement was the launching of the Crowd-Based Monitoring of Milk Code Compliance (CMMCC) project by the international humanitarian organization in November last year. The project aims to strengthen the implementation of Executive Order (EO) 51, also known as the Philippine Milk Code of 1986, and its revised Implementing Rules and Regulations and Republic Act (RA) No. 10028, through the promotion of crowd-sourced monitoring and development of reporting channels where the public can disclose non-abiders of the aforementioned laws.

WHAT IS EXECUTIVE ORDER 51?
Also known as the National Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, Breastmilk Supplements, and Other Related Products or the Philippine Milk Code of 1986.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF EO 51?
To provide safe and adequate nutrition for infants by:

- PROTECTING AND PROMOTING BREASTFEEDING
- REGULATING THE MARKETING OF BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES, BREASTMILK SUPPLEMENTS, AND OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS

References:
International Labor Organization. (2015). Healthy Beginnings for a Better Society: Breastfeeding in the Workplace is Possible. A Toolkit. Manila City: ILO Country Office for the Philippines.
Milk Code Monitoring Kit. (2012). (PH)

Products involved in E.O. 51

EO 51 aims to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding, as well as regulate the marketing of breast milk substitutes, breast milk supplements, and allied products. While the RA No. 10028 or the Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009 seeks to uphold breastfeeding in the workplace by setting regulations among companies and establishments that require them to assign appropriate lactation stations and to allot breastfeeding schedule to lactating moms.

The MBFP project committee, prioritizing accessibility in achieving its goal, officially launched three new reporting channels for public use—the Mother-Baby Friendly Philippines website, Mother-Baby Friendly Philippines mobile application, and Mother-Baby Friendly Philippines SMS or texting mechanism.

In its commitment to flourish breastfeeding advocacy, the World Vision supports and promotes exclusive use of a steady diet of breast milk for babies up to six months and continued breastfeeding with complementary food up until the child reaches at least two years of age in order to ensure healthy growth and development. **Lyka Mae P. Chiang**



WHAT IS A WORKPLACE LACTATION POLICY?

A workplace policy is a set of guidelines that protects, promotes, and supports the breastfeeding program.

WHAT MAKES A WORKPLACE BREASTFEEDING-FRIENDLY?



There should be a clean and private LACTATION STATION, where a breastfeeding worker can breastfeed or express breastmilk.



A workplace must also allot LACTATION BREAK for a nursing mother.



There should be a written workplace policy and all workers should receive the information that this benefit is being offered, as well as why it is important to have.

References:
International Labor Organization. (2015). Healthy Beginnings for a Better Society: Breastfeeding in the Workplace is Possible. A Toolkit. Manila City: ILO Country Office for the Philippines.
Milk Code Monitoring Kit. (2012). (PH)

Workplace lactation policy

Zero Rabies by 2020



Department of Agriculture- Bureau of Animal Industry Director Dr. Simeon Amurao, Jr. in his speech during the 2017 National Rabies Summit (Photo from Department of Health (Philippines) Facebook page)

The Philippines is listed as one of the top ten countries carrying the rabies burden. It is estimated that 200 to 300 Filipinos die of rabies infection every year. Can we eliminate it?

BY LYKA MAE P. CHIANG

Rabies is a preventable zoonotic and human infection usually transmitted through the bite or scratch of a rabid animal. Transmission of virus may also occur when infectious material, such as saliva, comes into contact with the victim's mucous membrane or with fresh skin lesions. In rare cases, it can also be transmitted through inhalation of virus-containing aerosol or via infected organ transplants.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), rabies affects population in more than 150 countries and territories with tens of thousands of worldwide deaths every year. The most highly attributed mortality is found in Asia and Africa.

During the 2017 National Rabies

Summit, Dr. Ernesto Eusebio Villalon III, Program Manager for Rabies Prevention and Control Program, highlighted the constant increase of animal bites and human rabies cases in the country.

"In 2016, we had over a million and three hundred thousand bites, and every year, the number increases significantly," said Dr. Villalon, citing a data from the Department of Health (DOH) Rabies Prevention and Control Program Status.

With the theme, "Rabies: Zero 2020," the activity is geared towards the elimination of human rabies in the country and the declaration of a rabies-free Philippines by 2020.

In order to attain this vision, the WHO designed a framework called "Global Framework for the Elimination of Dog-Mediated Human Rabies," which is intended

to harmonize actions and provide adaptable and achievable guidance for country and regional strategies.

While rabies can be acquired from various animals such as dogs, cats, raccoons, bats, among others, Dr. Simeon S. Amurao, Jr., Director III of the Bureau of Animal Industry-Department Agriculture (BAI-DA), reiterated that dogs are the main culprit of animal bite cases, and 90 percent of human rabies deaths are due to dog bites. That is why the framework is pertinent to the elimination of dog-mediated human rabies.

Socio-cultural pillar of rabies elimination

Dr. Maria Nerissa Dominguez, National Professor Officer for Emerging Disease Surveillance and Response of WHO, explained the five pillars of the framework namely—socio-cultural, technical, organization, political, and resources.

A successful rabies control entails the efforts of a wide range of stakeholders including the general public. That's why it is crucial that the at-risk population is aware of the burden of the disease. The socio-cultural context influences this target.

"Socio-cultural pillar is more of the community being engaged, being aware, and being on top of the program," said Dr. Dominguez.

The pillar implements various activities



cebudailynews.inquirer.net

that encourage the public to be responsible pet owners and be mindful of the burden of the disease.

These include building the concept of dog-mediated rabies as preventable; promoting responsible dog ownership; implementing education programs on preventive measures and first-aid treatment; increasing understanding of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) imperatives and options;

and encouraging the community to get involved in the process of combating dog-mediated human rabies.

The pillar visions a community that has a hundred percent awareness of the disease, thus diminishing its morbidity and mortality.

Technical pillar

Dogs are naturally born healthy, and just like humans, rabies is a disease they just acquire. A successful elimination of dog-mediated human rabies entails an effective animal health and public health systems.

According to Dr. Dominguez, the technical pillar influences the development of policies and guidelines to support the implementers of the national program, which is why it is aligned with the activities that would improve the welfare of both the people and the animals, some of which are mass dog vaccination and data gathering for proper forecasting to create and sustain logistics required for an effective implementation of the vaccination programs.

It also ensures the capability of quick and accurate rabies diagnosis through a high-end healthcare system. This is due to the fact that many individuals rely on herbal medicines that have no scientific basis when bitten by dogs, thus increasing the risk of dog-mediated human rabies.

Overall, the pillar aims to promote mass dog vaccination as the most effective intervention to achieve dog-mediated human rabies elimination.



Dr Ernesto Eusebio Villalon III, head of the Health department's Rabies Control and Prevention Program (middle) says they need more Animal Bite Treatment Centers to handle rising number of animal bite cases. (Photo from today.mims.com)

FEATURE STORY

Organization pillar

In order to attain an effective strategy, joint efforts of groups and individuals are required. The framework made use of One Health, a collaborative, multisectoral, and trans-disciplinary approach—working through national and regional networks—to achieve an optimal health. This creates collaboration among human and animal health sectors and other stakeholders to implement rabies elimination activities.

In this pillar, the framework aims to establish good governance in order to successfully implement activities to the public. It focuses not only on one sector but the nation as a whole by aligning work plans and activities with national and regional priorities to secure harmony.

It also ensures sufficient supply of quality-assured canine rabies vaccines through vaccine banks. Additionally, every plan is made secured that it is properly targeted and will be monitored and evaluated to ensure timely and cost-effective delivery.

The One Health approach will be of a great help in this vision as it helps various groups and individual work collaboratively.

Political pillar

Political will is vital to the success of a rabies-free nation vision. Huge bodies' support can help gain more attraction to the project and assist in the provision of resources as needed, as well as promote the One Health approach.

Dr. Dominguez said there are international bodies that support the national program and recognize it as a national, regional, and global public good. Some of which are the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and WHO.

This pillar is geared towards the collection of greater support from political and international bodies that can help establish and enforce appropriate legal frameworks for rabies elimination, demonstrate the impacts of dog vaccination programs on human lives, and get support for active engagement and commitment to the program and promote exchange of information and experiences to leverage resources.

Resources pillar

Rabies elimination is a long-term work thus entails a long-term support. Dr. Dominguez stressed the need for sustained financial support as the cost of some resources, such as the PEP, is excessively

high. That's why the framework includes a pillar that discusses possible methods to attain the needed resources for the program.

Case for investment is the primary source of financial aid suggested by the framework. It aims to persuade countries, policy makers, and donors to invest in the project. Having an established framework can lead to a positive impression during sales talk with the investors.

Another financial source included in the framework is to create business and investment plans. Having a basis for a plan can help avoid errors and negative impact, that's why it is suggested that the plans must be based on the framework itself in order to know its targets, thus achieving optimal leverage resources and engagement.

Total elimination of dog-mediated human rabies is a vision that entails long work and cooperation. However, it is also a vision that is not impossible to attain. In fact, there are numerous regions in the country that have already achieved a zero-rabies community, proving that all regions of the nation can also follow such big step.

The summit—which was spearheaded by the DOH in collaboration with the Departments of Agriculture (DA), Education (DepEd), the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and other stakeholders—gathered LGUs and members of the National Rabies Prevention and Control Committee (NRPCC) to commend those municipalities that are declared rabies-free as of today and demonstrate the successful implementation of the rabies program in those areas. ¹⁴⁸



“In 2016, we had over a million and three hundred thousand bites; and every year, the number increases significantly”

www.bfrc.gov.ph