

## The road from discovery to healing: What does it take?

Education and career choices are two major life decisions.<sup>1</sup> One who considers a degree in Medicine may ask: “am I up to the challenge,” “am I curious about how medicine improves life,” and “do I care profusely about human life?” Practicing clinical medicine is the most common path; but, not all those with a career in Medicine are physicians. There are researchers in the basic sciences, and there are inventors and innovators of biomedical devices. All those working in Medicine start with valuing and pursuing the improvement of life.

The ideal medical school integrates disciplines for a complete understanding of medicine.<sup>2</sup> Two of the articles in this edition describe challenges facing Philippine medical schools. The first article re-evaluates the adjustment factor used in the admission process. The second article highlights flexibility and innovation in the sudden shift to online learning.

The MD-PhD Program connects scientific research with clinical practice. In the US, this program started in the 1950s and expanded through the Medical Scientist Training Program to more than 90 active MD-PhD programs in 2016.<sup>3</sup> The country’s first MD-PhD Program started in 2010 at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine (UPCM). One of our physician-scientist graduates authored an article on the pharmacologic potential of locally harvested edible mushrooms.

Many other UPCM graduates do research at the Philippine General Hospital. As an academic medical center, it houses “a large and diverse sample of patients, experienced and interested investigators, with organizational support.”<sup>4</sup> In this edition, physician trainees and faculty authored or mentored seven studies. They study various disease and systems processes with the goal of health promotion.

Three articles studied hospital processes related to health service delivery. Radiation oncologists explored delays in repeated CT simulation for the radiation of head and neck cancer patients. Ophthalmologists formed a time quality management team to reduce the total consultation time at their outpatient clinic. OB-GYN sonologists looked at methods of manual disinfection of transvaginal probes to keep patients safe while undergoing such procedures.

Two articles studied the epidemiology of cerebrovascular diseases and neoplasms (periampullary malignancies), two of the top causes of mortality in the country. Two other studies looked at diseases that affect the quality of life: visual impairment in the young, and the use of a modified approach to hip arthroplasty.

Case reports remain valuable sources of unusual information and new ideas.<sup>5</sup> This edition also features a case report on a rare childhood malignancy found in an elderly patient who was successfully treated.

The road from discovery to healing can take many forms as exemplified by the 11 articles in this edition of *Acta Medica Philippina*. Publication is a step on the road from discovery to healing. To complete the journey is to implement their findings in clinical practice. Many implementation challenges exist due to differing approaches.<sup>6</sup>

The road from discovery to healing is not an easy one. We hope to close the gap between evidence and practice; we contribute to an ever-evolving and growing body of knowledge; and we offer the best treatment to our patients, the lives we value the most.

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