



UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

2020

UP SYSTEM REPORT

ON COVID19-RELATED ACTIVITIES

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Involvement of CUs in COVID19-related Research/Technology/Extension Activities

Webinars/ Web trainings and Online Consultations

Utilizing online platforms has been the norm for UP's Constituent Universities (CUs) in this time of COVID-19 pandemic. Online platforms like Zoom, Facebook live, YouTube and even Twitter have provided the CUs ample avenues to send information and messages across the general public. They have been used to host CUs' webinars that discuss various public health concerns related to COVID-19, such as the *COVID-19 Webinar Series* that featured episodes on *COVID and Kidneys and Stop COVID Deaths*. Other webinars have focused on coping mechanisms to battle the pandemic, such as UPLB's *Keeping Safe and Well: Braving the Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic* and UPOU's *Let's Talk It Over* which aimed to capacitate the general public and prepare them for the new normal. While others have focused on the concerns of the vulnerable sectors like the LGBTQI and the Senior Citizens, like *Sana All: Ensuring LGBTQI Inclusion in the Time of COVID-19* by the UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies, and UPLB's *Resilient Families amidst the Pandemic (REMAP)* for the seniors. *Edu-Hack* podcast series in its latest episode featured *Connectivity and Networks*, which focused on institutional adaptation to disruptions in higher education due to the pandemic.

Online platforms were also used to host various web trainings. These web trainings discussed topics ranging from psychosocial support such as *Peer Support Training* which provided an online training on Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Community Resiliency Model (CRM); to remote teaching and learning like the *Executive Course on Remote Teaching and Learning*. The same platforms were also utilized to undertake consultation services for the general public. UP Manila's *USAP Tayo!* offered a more accessible and free online speech pathology services, and *ITAWAG (Introducing Telerehabilitation As A Way to Access General Rehabilitation Services in PGH)* made follow-ups and consultations for patients of Rehab OPD easier. They were also used for various information dissemination initiatives. *KALUSUGAN AY KARAPATAN* which is an online

program that tackles various health and wellness topics in the field of medicine and nutrition; and *Isang Gabay sa Pagkalap ng Impormasyon sa Panahon ng COVID-19* which is a video guide on Information Literacy in the time of COVID-19, are just a few.

Updates and Upgrades on Chatbots and Web-Based Platforms

CUs were able to develop various chatbots and other web-based platforms, that help make data and information readily available for public consumption. CUs are constantly improving these platforms by adding new features. For example, Yani the EndCovbot has recently learned a new skill to answer queries regarding the latest COVID-19 statistics in one's municipality, city, province, region, or for the whole Philippines, while CoVCheck now includes mass testing data entry, patient monitoring, and dashboard functionalities for the LGUs.

New web-based initiatives were also developed by the COVID task force of several CUs like UP Cebu's Quarantine Buddy, a patient care management system; and UP Mindanao's COVID-19 Insights, web-based platform that can host big data and artificial intelligence models to enable the sharing and peer review of the models, and comparison of results under different assumptions and scenarios, for more informed decisions.

CU-Initiated Research and Policy Recommendations

Following the immense COVID-19 related research that UP has continuously undertaken, the CUs were also able to develop various policy recommendations. The COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team has recommended policies pertaining to the importance of mass testing and producing accurate, timely, accessible and relevant data on the pandemic, after discovering several lapses in DOH's data. UP Visayas' team of Public Health experts also crafted a Policy Note for Western Visayas which recommended a cautious transition to GCQ following the deceleration of the number of cases in the region. A research on the link between bats and COVID-19 from UP Mindanao was cited by Dr. Tomislav Mestrovic, MD, PhD. in an article posted in the website NEWS on Medical and Life Sciences.

Experts in CUs Sharing their Expertise

Technical assistance and sharing of expertise by UP scientists and medical practitioners trained and based overseas was recognized by the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (DoST-PCHRD) Balik Scientist Program. Dr. Edcel Maurice Salvana of UP Manila, was one of the featured scientists and medical practitioners. UPD Department of Psychology Professor, Jose Antonio Clemente was also interviewed by CNN for its online segment on the topic, #MeetTheMillennials where he talked about well-being while in quarantine. UPLB's Technology and Facility Innovation Committee of LB Kontra COVID-19 Task Force conceptualized and designed mobile Testing Booths that will protect health care workers and patients.

Literature Amidst the Pandemic

Aside from webinars, IECs and online consultation services, CUs have also turned to literature to help get messages of hope across. *Tsikiting Stories: Kwentong Pambata ukol sa COVID-19* featured a series of illustrated stories that aim to help children cope with the pandemic as well as other changes triggered by the crisis. *The Human Spirit Project: Beyond PGH* also aims to help spark hope and to surface the different struggles and stories of hope by collating literary pieces about COVID-19.

Showcasing the Best Practices in COVID-19 related Public Service

Several COVID-19 related public service initiatives were featured in *DZUP's Special Broadcast*. The initiatives of UPD's School of Statistics were likewise collated in an article entitled, *STAT: Finding solutions for COVID-19* where they presented initiatives and researches such as Outbreak Threshold Statistics, Daily Book of Statistics and LEADS 4 HSR Consortium. UP Manila showcases all its COVID related public service initiatives through the weekly publication, *Healthscape Special COVID-19 Issue*.

CU Involvement in COVID19-related Research/Technology in the Development or Call for Donation Phase

Several CUs have initiatives that are currently in the preliminary phase and are encouraging the general public to donate tools needed to make the initiative possible. PGC-Mindanao is calling for PPE and alcohol and bleach solutions donations to be used for training volunteers on laboratory techniques and procedures used in SARS-CoV-2 diagnostics. On a similar note, the UP Manila Medical Informatics Unit is developing a guide for health care practitioners intending to set up their own telemedicine practice.

Involvement of CUs in COVID19-Related Coping Mechanisms (for students, faculty, researchers, staff, and community/residents)

Provision for Food

CUs have engaged in various initiatives that aim to collect and distribute relief goods to various sectors. Following the immediate implementation of ECQ nationwide, CUs (Diliman, Los Baños, Baguio) have started distributing food and hygiene kits to affected sectors such as students and construction workers stranded on campus. Los Baños has also resorted to various food production initiatives in order to complement the relief goods given to stranded dormers. UPM CAMP has also undertaken #ProjectCAMPana and has delivered food to healthcare workers in PGH and nearby hospitals.



The Institute of Weed Science, Entomology and Plant Pathology harvested various produce to be donated to stranded UPLB students

Provision for Transportation

Various CUs have tirelessly been committing themselves to sending stranded students and faculty back to their respective hometowns. UPLB, UPMIn and UPB have transported and ferried stranded students back to their provinces. Following the transition to the new normal, UPV now continues to transport its employees from Iloilo City Campus to Miagao campus, while observing strict schedules and safety protocols.

Tributes for Health Care Workers and Other Frontliners

In recognition of the heroism of health care workers, and in celebration of the International Nurses Day, CUs have initiated various tributes through social media cards, poem titled, *Isang tula Manila na handog para sa Pandaigdig ang Araw ng mga Nars*, and video tributes, *A Day in The Life Of A Frontliner: Philippine General Hospital* and *Dentista Para Sa Bayan: Teeth Too Shall Pass*.

Other Initiatives

Assistance to LGUs and Government Agencies

Harnessing the expertise and the available resources of the CUs, various initiatives were undertaken to help LGUs and government agencies. UPV has extended help to several Barangays by distributing relief goods and t-shirts to families affected by the recent fire incident. It has also distributed face shields to personnel of the Bureau of Animal Industry and has facilitated the turnover of the UPV-made alcohol solutions to Iloilo Governor Arthur Defensor Jr. for the use of the health workers.



52 liters of the UPV-made alcohol solutions were turned over to Gov. Arthur Defensor Jr. for the use of health workers.

Covid-19 Related Academic Adjustments and Work Policies

Following the transition from ECQ to GCQ, CUs have drafted work guidelines and have undertaken preliminary actions in preparation for return to work. CUs have released guidelines to ensure the safety and welfare of employees, which were crafted after a thorough consultation with different stakeholders across the Constituent University.

Following a referendum conducted on May 6-9, 2020, the Board of Regents has approved the grant of the additional emergency allowance to qualified UP personnel in the amount of PhP 5,000 (Five Thousand Pesos) each, in consideration of the current situation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.