



MULA KAY

sanselas

Malinaw na hindi pa mawawala ang COVID-19 sa susunod na mga buwan o baka ilan pang taon. Katulad ng meales at polio, mga viruses din, gusto man natin mawala ngunit nandiyan pa din maski mayroong bakuna.

Dahil malapit na ang pasukan, ang webinar "Bouncing Back and Gearing Up: Navigating and Preparing for Re-Entry" ay nagbigay ng mga gabay para sa mag-aaral kung paano nila maiiwasan ang COVID-19 at maipapanatag ang kanilang mga kaisipan at kalooban sa bagong sistema. Ang pangako natin sa mga mag-aaral ay titiyakin na ligtas ang estudyante sa pagharap sa mga pasyente. Hindi kasi maiwasan sa health sciences na tumingin o humawak ng pasyente.

Dahil sa nagkaka-ubusan ng supply ng Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), ang bagong disenyo ng Surgical Innovation and Biotechnology Laboratory Team na UV Cabinet ay tiyak na makakatulong upang masigurong may magagamit na mga PPE ang ating mga *healthcare workers*. Lahat ng aspeto ng COVID-19 ay pinagtutuunan ng masusing pansin ng mga dalubhasa sa sunodsunod na webinar series, "Stop Covid Deaths: Clinical Management Updates". Pati ang Forensic Science sa panahon ng COVID-19 ay tinatalakay rin natin kasama ang mga espesyalista sa ibang bansa.

Mahahalaga ang mga mungkahi ng kagawaran ng College of Public Health kung papano tayo at ang karamihan sa bansa ay magiging ligtas sa pag-alis ng lockdown kahit na mayroon pang COVID-19.

At panghuli na mababasa rito sa isyu ng Healthscape ay ang pakikilahok ng mga magaaral ng College of Dentistry ng kanilang orihinal na kanta sa isang paligsahang internasyunal. Sana ay suportahan natin sila.

Talagang kahanga-hanga ang ipinakikitang pagkilos ng bawat sangay ng ating komunidad patungo sa New Normal. Ngunit simula pa lamang ito. Lalo pa nating pag-ibayuhin ang pagtuklas ng epektibong pamamaraan ng pagtuturo at pag-aaral sa ating unibersidad habang pinalalawak din natin ang pananaliksik hanap ang mga mabisang panlaban sa COVID. At dahil sa ating pagpupunyagi, babasbasan tayo ng Maykapal patungo sa isang "Better Normal"!

Ultraviolet Irradiation Cabinet Prototype for Disinfection of PPEs

The unprecedented worldwide effects of COVID-19 are going to be with us for the long haul; but we are slowly adapting and finding ways to cope with this pandemic. With this extended crisis, one of the challenges is the anticipated shortage of personal protective equipment (PPEs). One way to address this is to find means to safely recycle and reuse personal protective equipment. In the first few weeks of the pandemic, Prof. Florencio Ballesteros of the Chemical and Environmental Engineering of the College of Engineering in UP Diliman proposed a sterilizing cabinet using ultraviolet (UV) irradiation. Using a plastic clothes cabinet and fitting it with UV fluorescent lamps, aluminum foil walls, and mesh wires to serve as trays; and equipping it with a timer, the cabinet is now ready for testing for disinfection of PPEs. Ultraviolet irradiation has been used for sterilization purposes for food, water, and in cases of pandemic, personal protective device.

The "UV Cabinet" was conceptualized to sterilize PPEs like N95 masks, face shields, coveralls, and goggles. Through collaborations between UP Diliman College of Engineering, UPM College of Public Health, and Surgical Innovation and Biotechnology Laboratory (SIBOL) of the UP College of Medicine, the disinfection unit was validated for disinfection of PPEs. Appropriate scientific validity testing methods proved that the UV Cabinet was capable of significantly disinfecting N95 masks from gram negative bacteria and spore-forming bacteria (whose



durability is similar to corona virus) when treated with UV irradiation for 30-40 minutes. Disinfection of coveralls was also successful; however, since UV disinfection relies on a line-ofsight disinfection, meaning areas not reached by the UV light will not be disinfected, appropriate positioning of certain PPEs, especially coveralls will be needed to maximize disinfection. We hope that the UV Cabinet will be able to disinfect PPEs for extended use and reuse as a means of temporarily solving the shortages of PPEs in the healthcare setting until long-term solutions are available.

We wish to thank Prof. Florencio Ballesteros and Dr. Maria Margarita Lota of the Medical Microbiology Department of the UP College of Public Health for their help.

DISCLAIMER: We advise against the inappropriate use of UV light as a means of disinfecting PPEs as UV light can cause photokeratitis, skin burns, and skin cancer from prolonged exposure. Emmanuel P. Estrella, MD, MSc

UPCD students' song for heroes a finalist in international fest

After reviving an old band, Overhang, created in 2017, three UP dental students Nathaniel Kyle Adrian Delfin, Alicia Jane Bracamonte, and Victor Emmanuel Ablan joined a music competition hosted by the Association of Pacific Rim Universities.

In the next 2 weeks, they discussed the vibe for the song, made the lyrics and beats, and recorded their own voices at home with no professional or high end equipment. They spent sleepless nights finishing a song and a lyric video that would capture everyone's sentiments in the COVID-19 pandemic and society's other social issues. The three students wanted to give hope and positivity through the song and inspire others to take a stand and rise up on the issues. After their hardwork and effort to come up with an original song entry to this competition, the three finally produced Overhang's first song, "Six Feet Apart".



The group was officially announced on July 13 as one of the representatives of the Philippines in this contest and will be up against other universities from other countries. With the ongoing fight against COVID-19 and the injustices happening in the world, the song, Six Feet Apart, is the group's ode to the fearless heroes who strive to stand up to these issues and make a positive impact - big or small. It is meant to salute and praise those who continue to fight the good fight in the frontlines and in the streets amid the odds.

Readers can show your love and support to the group and its song by leaving a vote for Six Feet Apart and by listening to our song by doing the following:

1. LIKE and SHARE our song, SIX FEET APART, on the APRU Facebook post (Please leave a REACT on THEIR <u>original post</u>) 2. ANSWER this <u>FORM</u> to VOTE ENTRY #33, "SIX FEET APART"

3. LISTEN to the whole <u>lyric video</u> and leave a LIKE on Youtube. The votation period would end on **July 27** at 9am. Kyle Delfin



'New normal' health professions education woes tackled

On July 2, students and faculty of the National Teacher Training Center for the Health Professions (NTTCHP) gathered online for the e-Health Professions Education Exposition (HPEd Expo) 2020 to cap off the academic year. With the theme "HPEd in the Midst of Universal Health Care and COVID-19," the Expo served as a platform for the discussion ofb the new and sudden challenges being thrust into the landscape of HPEd.

Delivering the first of two presentations, Dr. Jose Y. Cueto, Jr. of the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) delved into the complexities of the present situation by identifying key problems from a student-centered perspective. These include the abruptly shortened academic year of 2019-2020, reduced academic requirements, and reduced clinical exposure. Dr. Cueto said that these issues are already affecting incoming licensure examinees who feel a greater lack of preparedness in taking their exams as opposed to pre-COVID-19 examinees. He also said that the PRC is still coming up with ways to handle the logistics for these exams given the strict prohibitions on mass gatherings and face-toface interactions in areas under guarantine. Nevertheless, the PRC will not ease professional standards for performance evaluation.

For the incoming school year, he mentioned that the biggest concern is the inequity of conditions for students with resources and those without resources. The absence of clinical rotations will also take its toll on their education as certain aspects in student-patient interaction may not be as easily provided by simulations and case studies. Another challenge would be the monitoring of educational conditions and ensuring that the needs of every school are met despite the variance in lockdown levels across the country.

For the second presentation, NTTCHP Professor **Dr. Nemuel S. Fajutagana** explained how institutions can successfully shift into an online educational system which is necessary not only because of Covid-19 but because educators should always strive to establish systems that are flexible and integrative.

He emphasized that in order to eliminate inequity, institutions must advocate for equal access to educational technology for all of their students. In the meantime, the lack of resources should not deter teachers. Rather, they must be reminded of the basic principles of teaching and that ingenuity goes a long way in the pursuit of outsmarting restrictions, inadequacies, and unfamiliarities.

Dr. Fajutagana urged NTTCHP students and faculty to be open to the empowering role of technology and to not shy away from new methods. A multitude of platforms including Zoom, Moodle, Google Forms, as well as online simulations and gaming and quiz-maker apps can be used to hone skills such as critical thinking, curiosity, collaboration, learning independence, and management of personal data and intellectual properties. Dr. Fajutagana also **TURN TO PAGE 6**

CPH: LOCKDOWN LIFTING POSSIBLE IF PUBLIC, PRIVATE SECTOR PRACTICE PUBLIC HEALTH PROTOCOLS

The UP College of Public Health (CPH) held a virtual press conference on 3 July 2020 to discuss its faculty statement entitled "Enhancing Public Health, Surveillance, and Response in time of COVID-19 in the Philippines: Collaboration, Consensus, and Capacity Building."

Despite the anxiety of Filipinos due to the continuous lockdown, all sectors, private and public, and individuals, must understand and learn their part in "living with the virus."

As CPH Dean Dr. Vicente Y. Belizario, Jr. said during the press conference, managing COVID-19 at the population level is about preventing illness and bringing COVID-19 to levels low enough that it becomes something negligible and something we can live with. "Don't think the solution for COVID-19 is at hand; COVID-19 is here to stay similar to measles and polio that have been around for a long time and even with available vaccines, we still encounter outbreaks here and there. CPH calls for enhancing surveillance and response as part of the battle against COVID-19."

Private corporations, aside from ensuring safety of their staff and customers, must help teach behavior modification and implement policies that will ensure continued safe practices. They can work with both the Department of Health (DOH), CPH, and other expert groups.

Along with Associate Dean for Research **Dr. Katherine Ann V. Reyes**, Dean Belizario said in the same presser that the private sector should work with DOH in providing technical and logistic support for policy development and response formulation. "So much of the private sector have the expertise and means to complement government efforts.



PH Dean Vicente Y. Belizario, Prof. Buenalyn Teresita Ramos-Mortel, Dr. Katherine Ann eyes, and Prof. Kim Carmela Co during a virtual press conference held this 3 July 2020

We have many communication experts from this sector who have more effective ways of delivering health messages. This governmentprivate partnership must be sustained. This is collaboration in our official statement on COVID-19– that we contribute our share, our expertise in the interest of the public's health."

The government's response in terms of policy and action must be based on science and evidence. Aside from physical restrictions, the DOH, Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases, and National Task Force for COVID-19 must implement more public health education and engagement that would create the right mindset and attitudes towards "living with the virus."

Dean Belizario highlighted the importance of understanding the data at hand, guided by consensus of a multidisciplinary group of experts. This was further emphasized by Assistant Professor Kim Carmela Co of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. "The response needs to be directed by data and evidence from surveillance systems.We cannot expect that Local Government Units (LGUs) will work on their own. Guided by DOH policies and guidelines, LGUs can be assisted by experts in the academe who can provide technical support for local surveillance and response. In the meantime, let concerted action by all concerned be guided by available data. Public health is concerted

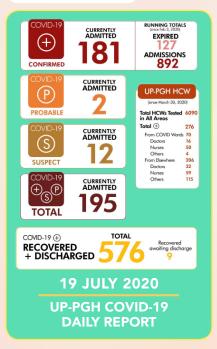
action for the control and prevention of COVID-19 and other major public health challenges guided by data and evidence."

In the same presser, CPH Chair of Health Promotion and Education **Buenalyn Ramos-Mortel** discussed health communications during COVID-19. She explained that when it comes to

health promotion, we need to look at collaborative actions involving the DOH, various LGUs, disaster relief groups, and other concerned parties dealing with health communications as part of managing the pandemic.

The CPH statement emphasized that its faculty are joining hands with the DOH and other government and non-government agencies as well as the rest of the country in helping to enhance surveillance and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The faculty member speakers mentioned that Filipinos from the public and private sectors must learn situational awareness as well as practice public health protocols for this pandemic to be well managed.

CPH Information Committee



Students' physical and mental health discussed in webinar

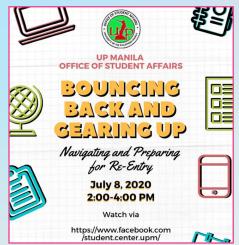
To help students cope with the changes wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare them physically and mentally for the opening of classes, the UP Manila Office of Student Affairs held a webinar, "Bouncing Back and Gearing Up: Navigating and Preparing for Re-Entry."

Addressing the students online, Chancellor Carmencita Padilla assured the students that her administration is committed to provide an excellent and relevant education amid the crisis through existing and new online learning management platforms, such as the University Virtual Learning **Environment and CANVAS. She** disclosed that additional budget will be allocated for the purchase of personal protective equipment when students need to see patients. For its part, the Philippine General Hospital has reengineered its wards and developed guidelines for the students and health workers' safety.

Reminding the students that they are not helpless against COVID-19, the first presenter, DOH Director of Health Promotion and Communication Service Dr. Beverly Lorraine C. Ho reiterated the nature of transmission of the virus and the environment for transmission, touching on the importance of the social determinants of health in advocating behavior change. She shared basic tips on how to keep physically healthy and safe during this pandemic, such as wearing mask, sanitizing hands and frequently touched surfaces, and physical distancing of at least one meter apart. Temperature checks and monitoring of students and staff must be employed upon entry. Schools and workplaces should make it easy for people to report if they are not feeling well.

To address the students' general concerns and questions, she presented guidelines based on DOH protocols:

On requiring students to sign waivers or subject themselves to testing when in school - Testing is not required but asking them for



symptoms during the last 14 days will be a norm. If with the slightest mild symptoms, students will be required to take a leave or self-quarantine.

When commuting to and from school - Follow minimum public standards: disinfecting, washing hands, keeping at least a one meter apart distance, wearing mask, and being mindful of high touch surfaces in the transport; if less than five kilometer distance, biking or walking is recommended.

On group and other activities that make use of physical learning spaces - If necessary to meet in person, limit to 10 participants or consider room size and adhere to minimum public health standards: for classes in multiple classrooms, sanitize the armchair or other high touch surfaces; avoid loud places as talking over the music or noise entails higher chances to spread droplets; study in wellventilated spaces and avoid crowds; when in cafeterias and coffee shops, go to well-ventilated areas; and in study areas, observe minimum public health standards.



For onsite events - Once shifted to MGCQ, the maximum will be 50 attendees with physical distancing; interviews, screenings, or auditions should be online as much as possible but if in person, physical distancing should be observed.

Sports and other physical activities still being discussed with the Philippine Sports Commission; for now, contact sports are not allowed; physical tryouts, auditions, and practices are allowed with a maximum of ten participants for non-contact sports; competitions are allowed but without audience.

For the second presentation, UP College of Medicine Associate Professor of Psychiatry Dr. Norieta C. Balderrama dwelled on how mental health impairs the quality and quantity of learning and decision making. She emphasized that one can be resilient or heal and recover from a stressful situation through physical, emotional, social, and spiritual self-care. In making a self-care plan, she stressed the importance of having a partner who will also monitor and look at the preferred strategies to identify what works and what doesn't when one is overwhelmed.

She presented a ten-point resilience plan: 1) visualizing success, 2) giving themselves credit to boost their self-esteem, 3) enhancing their selfefficacy, 4) becoming more optimistic, 5) managing stress, 6) improving decision-making 7) asking help, 8) dealing with conflict, 9) asking themselves what they have learned for the day, and 10) being themselves. She also shared mindfulness techniques and exercises. Charmaine Lingdas

"As a business operating here in the Philippines, it is our responsibility as entrepreneurs to give back to the community in any way we can. And with this pandemic, we just really want to recognize the efforts of our health workers and frontliners in fighting COVID-19."

Edmundo "lggy" Ramos Tenya Philippines





STOP COVID DEATHS: Clinical Management Updates

Healthscape Issue 4 ran an article on the holding of the **STOP COVID-19 DEATHS: Clinical Management Updates** webinar series to share the experiences and current practices of clinicians, scientists, researchers, and hospital administrators in the fight against COVID-19. The series is a joint project of the University of the Philippines through the UP Manila National Institutes of Health's National Telehealth Center and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation.

The article included descriptions of three completed webinars at that time. The first webinar on 24 April 2020 featured pulmonologists while the second webinar on 01 May 2020 focused on managing COVID-19 cases from an infectious disease perspective. The third webinar last May 15 focused on the Philippine involvement in the

The University of the Philippines Manila with the Sherlock Institute of Forensic Science (SIFS India) and the Universitas Ahmad Dalan (UAD) Indonesia, held on July 1 a webinar on the role of forensics in pandemics. Speakers were **Dr. Nurfitria Swastiningsih (UAD)**; **Dr. Corazon De Ungria**, Natural Sciences Research Institute , UP Diliman; and **Dr. Ranjeet Kr. Singh**, SIFS, India.

Challenges of Forensic DNA Testing during a pandemic

Since COVID-19 is infectious, law enforcement agencies and forensic practitioners must be extra careful in getting evidence from viral-positive individuals (whether asymptomatic or symptomatic); in handling, storing, analyzing biological samples; and in cleaning up laboratories. The work of forensic DNA teams are sample collection, sample processing, DNA extraction, and DNA testing. For her talk, Dr. De WHO randomized clinical trials to test the safety and effectiveness of four investigational drugs for COVID-19.

Since then, the webinars held as of this writing are as follows:

#4, May 15: COVID-19 AND THE KIDNEY, **Dr. Elizabeth Montemayor**, Vice President, Philippine Society of Nephrology and UPCM Professor, discussed the high association between patients with chronic kidney disease and severe cases of COVID-19

#5, May 22: THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CONTROL OF DENGUE, TB, HIV, AND OTHER INFECTIONS, **Dr. Rontgene Solante**, Head, Adult Infectious Diseases, Tropical Medicine, San Lazaro Hospital, gave a situationer of COVID-19 at the San Lazaro Hospital in terms of interventions, co-infections,



Forensic science in the time of COVID-19

Ungria focused on sample collection for evidenciary purposes and crime scenes.

She enumerated what is being done (and what needs to be done) by forensic DNA teams to ensure good collections and the safety of co-workers, victims, and survivors with regard to crime scenes, getting medical evidence from victims of abuse/violence, disaster victim and healthcare workers COVID-19 surveillance testing

#6, May 29: HOSPITAL PERSONNEL SAFETY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, **Dr. Antonio B. Ramos**, Manager, Dept of Administrative Services, Lung Center of the Philippines, talked on how hospitals retrofitted their physical, social, and therapeutic environments to ensure safety of hospital personnel

#7, June 5: SUPPORTIVE CARE FOR MILD PNEUMONIA IN COMMUNITY ISOLATION: THE QUEZON INSTITUTE EXPERIENCE, **Dr. Paulyn Jean B. Rosell-Ubial**, Former Health Secretary; Medical Volunteer, Quezon Institute (QI) COVID-19 Community Isolation Facility; Head, PRC Biomolecular Laboratories; described the COVID situation at QI in terms of organizational structure, roles and responsibilities, and process flow and algorithm.

#8, June 12: COVID AND THE HEART, **Dr. Chito Permejo**, Medical Specialist III, Cardiology Intensive Care, Philippine Heart Center, narrated the connection between COVID-19 and cardiovascular diseases and ways to prevent the catastrophic progression of the disease TURN TO PAGE 6

identification, paternity or kinship analysis, management of forensic databases, routine storage of biological samples post-analysis in biobanks as part of the evidence laws of a country or locality, and the impacts of the pandemic on forensic casework.

Dr. De Ungria stated that given these considerations, law enforcement agencies and forensic institutions must balance the need to conduct investigations in order to maintain public order, with the biosafety requirements of protecting their human resources. This balance can only be achieved with the support of the national government, ample multilateral collaborations amongst government agencies and private institutions, careful planning by institutional administrators, technical input from experienced forensic practitioners, and full compliance by all personnel with biosafety guidelines provided by internationally recognized health institutions. TURN TO PAGE 6

FORENSIC SCIENCE...

Effect of the pandemic on mental health

The mental health problems on the rise today due to COVID-19 are stress, anxiety, depression, domestic violence, and cyber violence. To support mental well-being, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends non-use of stigmatizing words. Terms like disease, victims, cases are replaced with people who have COVID-19, people being treated for COVID-19, and people recovering from COVID-19.

Other suggested mental health approaches are emphasizing that there is no health without mental health; multidisciplinary approach; collaboration; positivity (we can survive the pandemic if we work together constructively) but not to the point of being blind or obtuse to negative things that are happening; control only the controllable; and importance of prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation.

Dr. Swastiningsih's advice is to ask for the best solution in one's country/ area to deal with the pandemic and to consider the existing culture, support system available, and local wisdom.

Safe data and secure space

With most people playing, learning, and working online during the lockdown, cyber criminals are taking advantage by methods such as passing on software viruses, frauds (WhatsApp lottery, holiday fraud, online fraud, pension fraud, Automated Teller Machines fraud), Honey Trap, Phishing scams, Subscriber Identity Module swap, and hacking. Other cyber crimes involve identity theft, cyber bullying, online activism, child sexual abuse, revenge porn, online hate crime, and stalking. Dr. Singh discussed each of these cyber criminal activities and presented easy-to-do preventive measures.

The webinar series Forensics and Pandemics is presented for free using Zoom and Facebook Live. Fedelynn M. Jemena



STOP COVID DEATHS.

#9, June 19: COVID-19 CLINICAL MANAGEMENT: THE CEBU EXPERIENCE, Dr. Mitzi Marie Chua, ICC Chair, Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center, Cebu City, reviewed the Cebu City COVID-19 pandemic timeline and discussed its clinical management updates

#10, June 26: COVID-19 AND THE CHILDREN: EXPERIENCE **OF THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES** MEDICAL CENTER (SPMC), DAVAO, Dr. Delta Aguilar, Pediatric Infectious Disease Specialist, SPMC, Davao City, elucidated on how to protect and care for children during the pandemic

#11, July 3: REHABILITATION OF CRITICAL CARE SURVIVORS OF COVID-19, Dr. Celso F. Bate, Physiatrist of The Medical City and VRP Medical Center, emphasized the role of rehabilitation in the care of COVID patients and shared information on the rehabilitation of acute, inpatient, and outpatient COVID survivors; in addition to practical rehab tips

#12, July 10: COVID-19 CHALLENGES FOR ANESTHESIOLOGISTS, Dr. Grace Anne Herbosa, UPCM Professor and PGH Dept of Anesthesiology Chair, delineated the challenges posed by COVID-19 on the practice of anesthesiology, with focus on the PGH experience

Each webinar's full proceedings may be accessed via Youtube under Stop COVID-19 Deaths Webinars. Cynthia M. Villamor



NTTCHP EXPO...

BAYANIHAN NA!

PGH SARS-COV2 OUT-PATIENT

suggested maximizing these platforms while restrictions on clinical exposure are still in place.

Whatever method/s they choose, Dr. Fajutagana said that institutions can ease each other's burdens through collaboration and resource-sharing and encourage the free flow of ideas between their faculty members and students not only for academic purposes but also for peer support. Hazel Juris Domingo

EDITORIAL BOX

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