

## MULA KAY

*Tsanzelor...*

Ang ating buong komunidad ay naglalaan ng malaking panahon at pagsusumikap upang labanan ang COVID-19, ngunit hindi natin pinababayaan ang ibang mga sakit na nangangailangan ng ating pagkalinga.

Parami ng parami ang mga edad higit 60 taon sa ating populasyon at lalo pa silang dadami sa mga susunod na taon. Sila ay may mga partikular na suliranin na pangkalusugan at pangkaisipan na lalong naging matingkad ngayong panahon ng pandemya. Mabuti na lamang at mayroon tayong National Institutes of Health Institute on Aging na gumawa ng malawakang pag-aaral upang tuklasin ang kanilang mga pangangailangan ng sa gayon ay makagawa ng pahayag kung papano sila maaalagaan ng mabuti.

Sa *webinar* naman ng Philippine General Hospital Department of Orthopedics ngayong World Osteoporosis Day, tinalakay kung paano maiiwasan ang *fragility fractures* sa pamamagitan ng Fracture Liaison Programs na dapat isulong lalo ngayong panahon ng COVID. Napapanahon din at napakahalagang pag-usapan ang *fragility fractures* dahil isa rin itong malaking suliranin ng mga matatanda.

Isa pang napaaktibong kolehiyo sa ating unibersidad ay ang College of Public Health na siya ring Regional Centre for Public Health, Hospital Administration, Environmental and Occupational Health ng SEAMEO TROPED (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization-Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network). Nagsimula sila ng *12-part webinar series*, Public Health in Time of COVID-19 and the New Normal, kasama ng British Embassy Manila.

Sa gitna ng lahat na ito, tayo ay magdiwang sa natamong papuri ng tatlo sa ating mga dalubhasa na iginawad ng iba't-ibang sikat na mga samahang internasyonal at pati na rin dito sa bansa!

Tunay na masalimuot pa ang paraang wawakas sa COVID, ngunit napakaraming kapaki-pakinabang na mga pangyayari sa UP Manila na dapat nating ikasaya. Pasalamat natin ang tunay na dakilang basbas ng Maykapal sa atin na nagbibigay ng lakas at tagumpay!

## COVID-19 in the Decade of Healthy Aging: A Call to Address the Needs of Filipino Older Persons

*A policy brief from the Focused Intervention for Frail Older Adults (FITforFRAIL) Research & Development Project by the Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila*

### Executive Summary

Health risks of Older Persons (OPs) and an underdeveloped health system threaten the achievement of Healthy Aging. The COVID19 Pandemic heightens these risks. The FITforFrail study identified pre-existing medical conditions, mental health problems, and social vulnerabilities that are associated with an increase in adverse COVID outcomes. Facilities, services, and health human resource dedicated to OPs are limited. There are no pandemic preparedness programs specific for this vulnerable population.

In order to achieve Healthy Aging and become more responsive to the current pandemic, these complex risks need to be addressed. We recommend the implementation of programs on wellness, mental health, prevention of frailty and align these to Universal Health Care (UHC). We need to improve existing services and facilities, strengthen the workforce and provide supportive programs specific for OPs, their community, and families. Further research on Older Persons are also needed.

### Background

Healthy Aging is defined as “the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age.” The WHO has declared 2020-2030 as the Decade of Healthy Aging.

Mortality rates and excess deaths from COVID were common among OPs and people with pre-existing medical conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and obesity.

COVID quarantine also increased the risk of OP for mental health problems such as sleep problems, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, social isolation, neglect, and abuse

Fear, stress, and loneliness affect OPs' resilience and further jeopardize their well-being.

### The Problem

The current COVID-19 pandemic threatens the achievement of Healthy

### Oldest Old (80 years and older)

This oldest age group were also found to

**Need assistance in ADL**  
**Poor functional ability**  
**History of falling**  
**Afraid of falling**  
**Poor oral health, missing teeth**  
**Undernourished**  
**Frail**



Aging and has highlighted the vulnerabilities of Older Persons and the health system.

### The Project and Methodology

The Focused Interventions for Frail Older Adults (FITforFRAIL) is a research and development program funded by the Department of Health (DOH) thru the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) under the AHEAD-HPSR Program. Using the WHO Healthy Aging Framework, the project aims to identify the current health system for the aging population and describe the health status of OP in select communities.

**TURN TO PAGE 5**

## Drs. Destura, How, and Chavez among Asia's Top 100 scientists

Three scientists from UP Manila made it to *Asian Scientist* magazine's 100 most outstanding researchers in Asia. The three are Dr. Raul V. Destura, Dr. Cleotilde Hidalgo-How, and Dr. Joselito R. Chavez.

Since 2016, the magazine has been honoring the region's most excellent researchers from different scientific disciplines. To be included in the list, the honoree "must have received a national or international prize in the preceding year for his or her research. Alternatively, he or she must have made a significant scientific discovery or provided leadership in academia or industry." Since the list was begun in 2016, 42 Filipinos have made it into the roster. The *Asian Scientist* magazine is an award-winning science and technology magazine established in March 2011.

**DR. RAUL V. DESTURA** was honored in 2019 with the *Presidential Lingkod Bayan Award* for his creation of the award-winning Biotek-M Aqua Dengue Kit which gives a faster, more affordable, and accessible dengue diagnosis. The Biotek-M Aqua Kit is also one of two Philippine inventions which won a gold medal in the 46th International Exhibition of Inventions in Geneva, Switzerland last April 2018.

Earlier this year, he and a team of UP scientists from the National Institutes of Health and the Philippine Genome Center came up with the first locally developed COVID-19 testing kit, the GenAmplify™ Kit. Dr. Destura is a well-known microbiologist and infectious disease expert. He is Director of the NIH's National Training Center for Biosafety and Biosecurity as well as the Vice President of the DOST National Research Council of the Philippines.

Dr. Destura, who described his "research bench to community approach is ultimately geared towards developing low-cost technologies for the control of infectious diseases in the Philippines and the generation of new knowledge to find sustainable and equitable solutions to disease of poverty" (source: <http://nih.upm.edu.ph/content/destura-raul-v>),



edu.ph/content/destura-raul-v), has also received other prestigious national and international awards including: International Training and Research in Emerging Infectious Diseases Research Fellowship Award (Center for Global Health Division of Infectious Disease and International Health, University of Virginia); The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) of the Philippines, 2011; Outstanding Young Scientist of the Philippines, 2008; and Dr. Jose Rizal Memorial Award in Research given by the Philippine Medical Association, 2015.

**DR. CLEOTILDE HIDALGO-HOW** is recognized by *Asian Scientist* for her Dr. Paulo Campos Award for Health Research in 2019 given by the Philippine Association for the Advancement of Science and Technology (PhilAAST). The award is for her excellent contribution in the understanding, management, and diagnosis of tuberculosis among children and adolescents.

The Dr. Paulo Campos Award was created in 2012 by the PhilAAST and the Campos family to honor outstanding medical researchers whose dedicated service and contributions result in the betterment of the country.

Dr. How clusters her contributions to science into two fields: teaching of pharmacology and her work on childhood TB.

Dr. How is a professor emeritus of the UPCM Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology where she has been teaching Basic and Clinical Pharmacology for 30 years. She considers introducing students to the World Health Organization

Guide to Good Prescribing as her specific contribution to the field of Pharmacology or Therapeutics. The Guide teaches students to learn how to select drugs based on efficacy, safety, suitability, and cost. This has been integrated into the curriculum of Therapeutics 202.

Dr. How was a member of the WHO core group for Childhood TB for seven years, where she was involved in reviewing the essential list of drugs for TB in children in 2008. She was also in the technical working group that produced the 2010 Rapid Advice for Anti-TB drugs that facilitated the adoption of recent adjustments in dose requirements for children. Lastly, she was part of the team that produced the fixed-dose-combination of isoniazid-rifampicin-pyrazinamide in a child-friendly formulation designed to improve compliance.

As Chair of the Committee on the TB Book of the Philippine Pediatric Society, she actively worked as editor of the last 3 editions (2003, 2010, 2016/17) and as a member in the first edition of 1993.

Aside from teaching, Dr. How presently heads the Philippine Coalition Against TB (PhilCAT) as National Chair, with special focus on Child and Adolescent TB. This organization of 60 professional societies is working hard for the global aim to END TB by 2035.

**DR. JOSELITO R. CHAVEZ** is an internist and pulmonologist who received the 2019 Presidential Lingkod Bayan Award for his groundbreaking work using Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) technique in

**TURN TO PAGE 3**



## PGH Dept of Orthopedics marks World Osteoporosis Day

With special focus on the Fracture Liaison Programs (FLS) in the Philippines and strategies for their promotion during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UP PGH Dept of Orthopedics celebrated World Osteoporosis Day on October 20 with a webinar on the theme “Pushing Forward the Fracture Liaison Service Programs during the Pandemic.”

The keynote speakers were **Dr. Edward Wang**, “Osteoporosis in the Time of the Pandemic” and **Dr. Mark Anthony Sandoval**, “The Importance of Continuing the FLS in the Outpatient Setting.” **Dr. Kassim Javaid**, Associate Professor of Metabolic Bone Disease, Oxford University, talked on “Key Performance Indicators for Effective Secondary Fracture Prevention.”

The World Health Organization projects that this year, the number of people aged 60 years and above will outnumber the number of children 5 years and below. And in the Philippines, this age group accounts for 8.2% or 9 million. Over half of the Filipino elderly are at risk for osteoporosis, that if not given immediate attention, severe consequences are bound to happen. Many Filipinos are unaware that the quality of their bones that move, support, and essentially enable the body to perform and maintain specific duties are gradually worsening over time until they suffer from osteoporosis-related fractures.

At the webinar, UP Manila Chancellor

### EDITORIAL BOX

The UP Manila Healthscape is published by the Information, Publication, and Public Affairs Office (IPPAO) of UP Manila.

**Dr. Olympia Q. Malanyaon**  
Director, IPPAO  
Editor-in-Chief

**Cynthia M. Villamor**  
Assistant Editor

**Cynthia M. Villamor**  
Anne Marie D. Alto  
Fedelynn M. Jemena  
Charmaine A. Lingdas  
January Kanindot  
Staffwriters

**January Kanindot**  
Anne Marie D. Alto  
Design/Layout

**Sigrid G. Cabiling**  
Circulation Officer  
**Joseph A. Bautista**  
Photographer



Carmencita Padilla stated that with the prevailing pandemic, much of our resources are being funneled to the demands of this health crisis. “UP Manila, as the nation’s health sciences center, will continue to endeavor to address not only this pervading great challenge that is COVID-19; but also ensure the least collateral damage to other health concerns. We are all being called upon to make sure that other medical conditions, like fragility fractures, will not be neglected during this time,” she added.

She noted how the FLS launched in October 2017 has been able to reduce the long wait of hip fracture patients to just five days from previous long waits and is working hard to decrease it to three days. The FLS involves the Orthogeriatric Multidisciplinary Team which is composed of different fields that care for bone diseases and trauma in the elderly; including orthopedics, family and community medicine, rehabilitation medicine, internal medicine, among others.

The World Osteoporosis Day (WOD)

### DRS. DESTURA, HOW, AND CHAVEZ FROM PAGE 2...

poor people suffering from massive pulmonary hemorrhages due to leptospirosis which improved their chances of survival from 20% to 75%. The use of this technique also put the country in the world map for having the most number of patients who survived leptospirosis.

His more than 30 years of government service at the Philippine General Hospital and the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTi) are characterized by charity work among the poor in the clinic, hospital, and community. He is also a volunteer in numerous medical missions.

As a mentor, he pioneered the implementation of the First Integrated Internship Program in the country. The Program gives medical interns the chance to rotate and hence, learn state-of-the-art medicine in six government hospitals including the specialty centers. This Program is now adopted by the Department of Health (DOH) as its official

**World Osteoporosis Day October 20**

**“Pushing Forward the Fracture Liaison Service Programs during the Pandemic”**

2020 UP-PGH WORLD OSTEOPOROSIS DAY CELEBRATION WEBINAR

**Keynote Talks**

- “Osteoporosis during the Time of the Pandemic”  
**Dr. Edward H. M. Wang**  
Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines
- “Importance of Continuing the FLS in the Outpatient Setting”  
**Dr. Mark Anthony S. Sandoval**  
Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines
- “Key Performance Indicators for Effective Secondary Fracture Prevention”  
**Dr. Kassim Javaid**  
Associate Professor in Metabolic Bone Disease, University of Oxford

**Panel Discussion**

- Dr. Allan Brubaker**  
Professor, Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines
- Dr. Jose Antonio San Juan**  
Professor, Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines
- Dr. Iwan Tatu**  
Professor, Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines

**TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2020**  
7pm-9pm Philippine Standard Time

Register now! follow the link: <https://upgho-pgho-link1919pco> or scan the QR code

**IOF** International Osteoporosis Foundation  
**FFNP** Federation of National Postgraduate Nurses' Associations  
**ZUellig Pharma** Commercial Solutions  
**UP** University of the Philippines

is celebrated on October 20 each year to raise global awareness of the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of osteoporosis. WOD aims to make osteoporosis and fracture prevention a global health priority by reaching out to health-care professionals, the media, policymakers, patients, and the public at large. **CYNTHIA M. VILLAMOR**

### Internship Training Program.

Because of his exemplary work, Dr. Chavez received many awards in 2019 including the following: The Outstanding Filipino (TOFIL) award in Medicine; Philippine College of Physicians Exemplar Distinguished Internist; Dr. Jose Rizal Memorial Award for Outstanding in Government Service from the Philippine Medical Association; and UP Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award in Public Service and Good Governance.

Additionally, because of the work of Dr. Chavez and his team in saving leptospirosis patients and the NKTi's outstanding performance in this health emergency, the institute received honors from Healthcare Asia, the Service Innovation of the Year and Facilities Improvement Initiative of the Year, 2019 and Service Innovation of the Year 2020. Dr. Chavez is the Deputy Executive Director for Medical Services at the NKTi and a Clinical Associate Professor at the UP-PGH. **FEDELYNN M. JEMENA**

# UP CPH and British Embassy Manila hold inaugural webinar on Public Health and COVID-19



Five hundred eighty-one local and international participants attended the inaugural offering of *Public Health in the Time of COVID-19 and the New Normal*, a 12-part webinar series for public health workers jointly organized by the UP College of Public Health (UP CPH) and the British Embassy Manila (BEM), last October 8, 2020. Spearheaded by the UP CPH Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics (DEB), this inaugural webinar carried the theme “COVID-19 in the Asia Pacific Region: Moving Forward Amidst Challenges in Public Health.”

The webinar kicked off with messages from UP CPH Dean Dr. Vicente Belizario, Jr. and Dr. Kevin Miles of the UK National Health Service Joint Unit. Talks were then given by Dr. Rabindra Abeyasinghe, the World Health Organization Representative to the Philippines; Dr. Maria Rosario Vergeire, Undersecretary of the Department of Health; and DEB Assistant Professor Angelica Anne Latorre.

Dr. Abeyasinghe exhorted all countries in the region, even those with no or few reported cases, to sustain capacity-building and be prepared for a possible new wave of COVID-19 cases. In anticipation of a safe, effective, and affordable vaccine, he also emphasized the importance of non-pharmaceutical interventions and strict observance of health protocols.

Dr. Vergeire discussed concerns regarding the spread of misinformation, particularly in social media, which are often inconsistent with surveillance data. She also stressed the importance of risk communication and evidence-based actions in the pandemic response. She also shared how the DOH implemented the Coordinated Operations to Defeat Epidemic (CODE) strategy, a patient- and community-focused response strategy that aims to

prevent, detect, isolate, test, and treat.

Finally, Assistant Professor Latorre highlighted how data analysis facilitates effective pandemic response since this process helps identify strengths and weaknesses of the system, fosters learning from past experiences, and promotes intersectoral action. She also recommended that testing strategies, community quarantines, and border entry policies be guided by data, specifically the number of newly detected cases in affected barangays and neighboring local government units, and results of cluster investigation in workplaces.

Reactions were subsequently given by Dr. Eleanor Galvez, Medical Adviser of the National Task Force Against COVID-19 and Professor Neil Squires, Director of Global Public Health at Public Health England. Dr. Galvez noted that recommendations should be considered alongside the current status of health professionals in the country while Professor Squires provided lessons learned on how similar action points were carried out in England.

Dr. John Robert Medina, DEB Assistant Professor, served as moderator for the session. The session was capped  
**TURN TO PAGE 6**

## Trial for Lagundi as COVID-19 supplemental treatment commences

Clinical trials for Lagundi as adjunct therapy for COVID-19 have started with 37 coronavirus patients enrolled in the initial clinical trial being spearheaded by the Institute of Herbal Medicine (IHM) of the UP Manila National Institutes of Health.

The EVICT Program (Efficacy of Vitex negundo for COVID-19 Trial Program) will help define the role of Lagundi for the treatment of COVID-19. “We are hoping that Lagundi will also decrease the number of patients who will progress to moderate

and severe COVID disease and decrease mortality if given early in the disease,” the IHM states in its Facebook account.

Only 37 from over 150 screened patients qualified for the trial that started after the research project’s approval by the Food and Drug Authority and ethics approval by the UPM- NIH. However, the target number of volunteers for the clinical trial has yet to be reached.

Department of Science and Technology Secretary Fortunato dela Peña has said they need around 200 COVID-19 patients displaying mild symptoms to complete the medical research. Dela Peña said the medical study seeks to find out if Lagundi could reduce the severity of coronavirus symptoms.

Lagundi (*Vitex negundo*) is a proven treatment for cough which is among the major and common symptoms of COVID-19. It was discovered by researchers of the National Integrated Research Program on Medicinal Plants founded by Dr. Nelia Maramba in 1977. Her daughter, Dr. Cecilia Maramba-Lazarte, is director of IHM that conducts several researches on herbal and medicinal plants as potential cures for the common ailments of Filipinos. Lagundi has been commercialized into several brands that are now available in the market.

Aside from Lagundi, the DOST is also conducting trials for the effectiveness of virgin coconut oil and *tawa-tawa* in the recovery of COVID-19 patients. (With report from the IHM Facebook and Philippine News Agency website)



## HEALTHY AGING FROM PAGE 1...

Study 1 analysed the health system and Study 2 evaluated the health status of OP with a focus on frailty.

Mixed methods and community participation were hallmarks of this research.

Study 1 listed the health services and workforce specific for OP in twenty-seven (27) hospitals to be Geriatric Centers and 17 rural health units (RHUs) across all regions in the country. Study 2 conducted the comprehensive geriatric assessments (CGA) among persons aged 60 years and older, in four regions (n=405). A modified Fried's Criteria was used to identify and classify the frail. Anthropological narratives were prepared for a subset of participants.

## Results

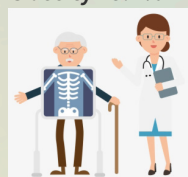
### A. DESK REVIEW OF PAPER AND POLICIES

- **REPUBLIC ACTS AND RESOLUTIONS**
  - > Expanded Senior Citizens Act RA 9994
  - > Bayanihan to Heal as One Act RA 11469
  - > Interagency Task Force (IATF) on Emerging Infectious Diseases Resolutions and Guidelines
- **POLICY BRIEFS**
  - > United Nations: The Impact of COVID-19 on Older Persons
  - > UP Pandemic Response Team: Addressing the Immediate Needs of All, Especially the Most Vulnerable Sectors: Analysis and Recommendations
  - > Ateneo de Manila University: COVID-19 and Greater Manila's health system: The Next Frontline?
- **PLANS AND GUIDELINES**
  - > Health Facility Development Plan (DOH HFDP)
  - > DOH Guideline on Geriatric Ward Planning and Design
  - > National Health and Wellness Program for Senior Citizens DOH AO 2015-009

### B. COVID-19 RISKS AND MORBIDITIES OF FILIPINO OLDER PERSONS

Of 355 that completed Geriatrician Assessment:

**Hypertension** 55.6%  
**Diabetes** 16.8%  
**Obesity** 15.4%



Among the 405 CGA Participant-reported diagnoses **Pneumonia** and **asthma** top-10

Lifestyle questions (n=405) revealed that although most participants never smoked tobacco, **11.6% are current smokers, mostly men**. Of the 405, very few received **pneumonia** (35.6%) and **flu** (21.2%) vaccines.

**Frailty** is defined as reduced strength and physiological malfunctioning that predisposes an older person to increased dependency, vulnerability, and death (Morley et al., 2013). The FRAILEST are at risk for COVID complications, hospitalizations, and death. Fifteen percent (15%) of the 355 participants were frail, especially among age 80 yrs and older. However, **a great majority were NOT frail**: 19.3% were ROBUST and 60.5% were PRE-FRAIL.

Social and functional risks that were identified include social isolation and dependency.

- **4.2% living alone**
- **15.6% had a primary caregiver**; in particular 44.2% of those aged 80 years and older

### MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

CGA Diagnosis by Geriatricians revealed: sleep problems 29.6%, depression 19.8%, cognitive impairment 24.4%, dementia 9.1% (Alzheimer's 3.2%), and anxiety 7.7%.

**Geriatrician diagnosed mental health problems exceeded participant-reported diagnoses.** Self-reported symptoms exceeded both participant-reported diagnosis and Geriatrician diagnosis (Figures 1 and 2).

### C. GERIATRIC SERVICES IN REGIONAL FACILITIES

These are the services that improve health outcomes of hospitalized OPs.

- > Discharge planning - 100% of the 27 regional hospitals conduct this, and activities that ensure patient care

Fig. 1 Geriatrician diagnosis of dementia, anxiety and Alzheimer's disease (n=355), compared to self-reported symptoms and previous diagnosis (n=405)

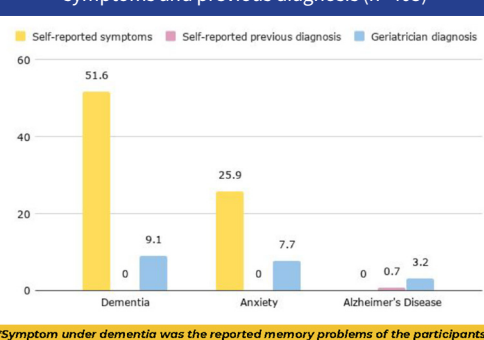
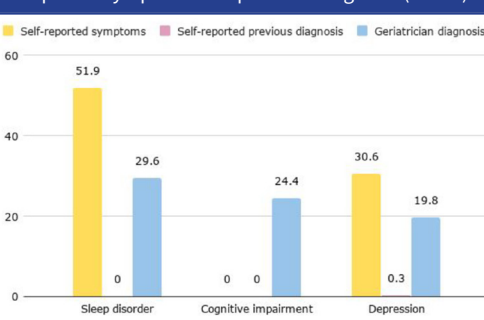


Fig. 2 Geriatrician diagnosis of sleep disorder, cognitive impairment, and depression (n=355), compared to self-reported symptoms and previous diagnosis (n=405)



participation

- > Rehabilitation services - 96%
- > Medication reconciliation review - 81%
- > Geriatric programs - 78% have this (none in Cordillera Administrative Region and Region 12)

A great majority of the facilities visited conducted these. The facilities visited in CAR and region 12 did not have a geriatric program. Majority of services are outpatient - 70.4% of the 27 regional hospitals identified as Geriatric Centers only provide outpatient geriatric services.

### D. GERIATRICS IN RHU

- > Most facilities have Geriatric services in the form of free medical and dental checkup and Psychological counselling
- > Only 25% provide CGA and Cognitive health evaluation

### E. HUMAN RESOURCE DEDICATED TO OLDER PERSONS

- > There are **only 160 Geriatricians in the Philippines** and 100 DOH Certified Geriatric Nurses (Sources: Philippine College of Geriatric Medicine and DOH Nurse Certification Program)
- > FITforFRAIL Services Listing:
  - Not enough OP dedicated and trained nurses and doctors in regional hospitals and none in RHUs.
  - No psychologists, psychometricians, occupational therapists, and pharmacists dedicated to geriatric patients in most hospitals and none in all RHUs.
  - Nutritionist and dietitian – 2.5% OP dedicated; 2.5% with training
  - Social Workers - 2.74% OP dedicated; 0.21% with training

### F. PANDEMIC RESPONSIVENESS AND GERIATRIC PROGRAMS IN REGIONAL FACILITIES

- > No pandemic response provision for OPs who need special attention.
- > Lack of Geriatric wards - Only 4 (14.8%) out of the 27 DOH regional hospitals have geriatric wards
  - 1 Geriatric ward was converted to COVID-19 ward
  - 2 facilities identified to be Geriatric Centers have a separate COVID-19 area for geriatric patients.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

There are COVID risks and vulnerabilities among OPs and multiple opportunities to create a supportive environment especially the health system. **TURN TO PAGE 6**



## UP CPH participates in SEAMEO TROPMED Network Governing Board Meeting

As the pandemic has led to the unprecedented reconfiguring of important international meetings to virtual mode, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization-Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network (SEAMEO TROPMED) held its 59th Governing Board Meeting (GBM) virtually on August 27-28, 2020 via Zoom.

Attended by Governing Board members representing 11 SEAMEO member countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Timor Leste, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines), the meeting convened the Directors of the three SEAMEO TROPMED Centres, among them the UP College of Public Health (CPH), designated as the SEAMEO TROPMED Regional Centre for Public Health, Hospital Administration, Environmental and Occupational Health. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Sengchanh Kounnavong, Director General, Lao Tropical and Public Health Institute,

Ministry of Health, Lao PDR.

CPH was represented by Dean and Centre Director Dr. Vicente Y. Belizaro Jr., who shared a video presentation of the accomplishments of CPH from July 2019 to June 2020. The presentation specifically highlighted the Dean and Centre Director's Five-Point Agenda, which includes the goal to strengthen CPH as a Regional Centre of Excellence in Public Health Academics, Research, and Public Service. Each country then took turns in reporting its achievements and accomplishments for the previous year in line with the SEAMEO TROPMED Network's mission.

A symposium was held on the second day that provided the opportunity for member countries to share their response, experiences, and lessons learned in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Jaime Montoya, Executive Director of the Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Health Research and Development and representative of the Philippines, shared the Philippines' COVID-19 response report.

**DR. VICTORIO B. MOLINA**  
**AILEEN HONG**  
**DR. EMERITO JOSE A. FARAON**

## HEALTHY AGING FROM PAGE 5...

The establishment of quality geriatric programs and services will enable the health system to achieve HEALTHY AGING and respond better to challenges of Older Persons NOW, during this pandemic, as well as future pandemics and disasters.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. Promote and enhance** HEALTHY AGING programs

- 2. Align the delivery of the services** of healthcare facilities and RHUs with Universal Healthcare (NCDPC and DPCB DOH, PhilHealth, LGUs)
- 3. Establish National Programs for Disaster Response and Resilience.**
- 4. Support Communities** and families in their care for the frail and isolated OPs (DSWD, Barangay officials, OSCA, SC Federations, CSO, NGO)
- 5. Conduct Aging research, monitoring, and evaluation** for improvement

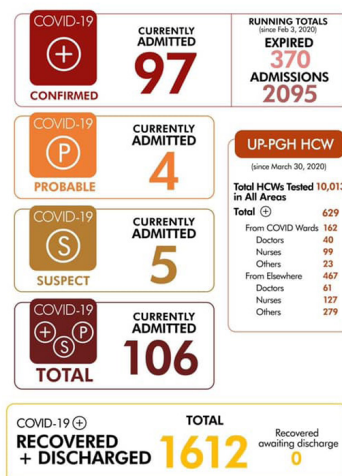
## CPH AND BRITISH EMBASSY FROM PAGE 1...

by closing remarks from Dr. Abubakar Asaad, Chair of DEB, who thanked all the speakers for their valuable insights, the UP CPH faculty and staff, and all local and international participants for making the webinar a success.

Succeeding webinars in this series will be on October 22 ("Amplifying Vaccine-Preventable Disease Control During the COVID-19 Pandemic") and November 5 ("Double Trouble: Fighting (Hyper) Endemic Tuberculosis Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic") to be led by the Department of Medical Microbiology. For further details on how to register for these upcoming webinars and to access the recording of the first webinar, please visit the UP CPH Facebook page: [facebook.com/upcph](https://facebook.com/upcph).  
**DR. JOHN ROBERT MEDINA**

## COVID-19 DAILY REPORT

as of 30 October 2020 (6PM)



of services and policies. (DOH, DOST-PCHRD, Academe, Research Institutions)

A policy brief prepared by the FITforFrail Project Team: *Angely P. Garcia, RN, MPH, Xyzra Kyte S. Bober, Harvy Liwanag, MD PhD; Susan P. Mercado, MD, MPH (Study Leader); Shelley Ann F. de la Vega, MD, MSc (Project Leader).* For references and details, please email Dr. Shelley Ann F. de la Vega at [nihi-ia@post.upm.edu.ph](mailto:nihi-ia@post.upm.edu.ph).