

## The DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE: A Historical Perspective

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The Department of Rehabilitation Medicine (DRM) of the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) started out in 1910 as part of the Department of Radiology. The first Department head was Dr. Ricardo Fernandez, a radiologist. Aside from radiotherapy, physical agents such as ultraviolet radiation, infrared radiation and electrical stimulation were offered. From 1937 to 1971, Dr. Paterno S. Chikiamco served as the Department head. During his term, the Department's name evolved three times: from the Institute of X-ray and Radium Therapy in 1941, it became the Department of X-ray and Physical Therapy, and subsequently, the Department of Radiology and Physical Medicine.

In 1953, Dr. Guillermo R. Damian, a graduate of the University of the Philippines (UP) College of Medicine Class of 1952, became the first formally trained medical specialist in rehabilitation medicine. The Section of Physical Therapy was renamed the Section of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. The team approach to management was started. Dr. Damian also served as the Dean of the School of Allied Medical Professions (now called College of Allied Medical Professions) from 1965 to 1986. In 1959, the Section started admitting its own patients in a ward of two female beds and two male beds in Ward 8 and Ward 10 of the PGH. The Section holds the distinction of being the first in the country to offer in-patient rehabilitation services. In 1960, the UP College of Medicine included Rehabilitation Medicine in its curriculum. The UP College of Nursing did likewise in 1962, after the first seminar for nurses on rehabilitation procedures was sponsored by the Section.

The 1970s through the 1980s saw the remarkable organizational growth of the DRM. In June 22, 1971, Rehabilitation Medicine was recognized as distinct from Radiology. Thus, the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine

of the UP College of Medicine was created by the Board of Regents with Dr. Guillermo Damian as its first chairman. The DRM was recognized as a clinical department of the PGH on October 28, 1971. Dr. Damian was assisted by Dr. Antonio O. Periquet, a 1959 graduate of the UP College of Medicine and one of the first residents of the Section. He was a General Electric Fellow of the World Rehabilitation Fund, Inc. and a Colombo Plan Fellow. The DRM then consisted only of the Sections of Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT).

In 1974, Dr. Antonio Periquet became the second chairman of the Department. He was assisted by Dr. Quintin F. Oropilla, a Fellow of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. During Dr. Periquet's four terms as chairman, the three-year residency training program was formalized with the creation of four positions for Rehabilitation Medicine residents. It was in 1977 that a two-week rotation in the Department was included in the medical interns' curriculum. Also in September 1977, the Sections of Speech Therapy, Psychology, and Social Service were opened, further expanding its multidisciplinary services. Dr. Periquet served as Coordinator for Training and Research in the PGH from 1977 to 1985.

Linkages with the International Human Assistance Program (IHAP) and the Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC) to help patients with work-related disabilities were established. With support from the IHAP and the Kiwanis Foundation, renovation of the physical facilities was undertaken. The new building, inaugurated in 1979, accommodated all of the Sections, including a spacious gymnasium and a 10-bed ward. The Cardiac Rehabilitation program was started in 1978 and the Stroke Clinic in 1981. The Electrodiagnosis Clinic was started with the donation of an electromyography-nerve conduction velocity (EMG-NCV) machine by the World Rehabilitation Fund with Dr. Juan A. Alcazaren and later Dr. Estelita M. Chua as head of the clinic.

The Department spearheaded the formulation of the National Manual on Community Management of Childhood Disabilities sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund. Dr. Periquet pioneered the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Program by establishing the first CBR Program in Bacolod, Philippines in 1980 which is the first

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established internationally.<sup>1</sup> The DRM was given a national award by First Lady Imelda R. Marcos for this achievement. Dr. Periquet served as Assistant Director for Health Operations in the PGH from 1985 to 1986 and was seconded to the Department of Health (DOH) in 1986. He was subsequently appointed as Secretary of Health in 1992. The Department transferred to its present site in the right rear wing of the PGH in 1985.

In 1986, Dr. Robert D. Lim was appointed as the third chairman of the Department. During his term, a Memorandum of Agreement was drawn between the UP Manila and the Don Juan Cojuangco Foundation for a trust fund to upgrade infrastructure and to augment the paramedical staff of the Department. With the inclusion of Rehabilitation Medicine services in the PGH Out Patient building donated by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, more specialty clinics (Brace Clinic, Pain Clinic and Arthritis Clinic) were offered. Dr. Lim was also appointed chairman of the Board of Physical and Occupational Therapy of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). He was awarded one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) in 1988.

Dr. Rosalinda Elena B. Milla became the fourth chairman of the Department in 1991. Upgrading of facilities for treatment and training, and expansion of the Rehabilitation Medicine ward to 16 beds were done. Drs. Sharon D. Ignacio, Cynthia D. Ang, Teresita Joy Ples Evangelista and Reynaldo R. Rey-Matias joined the faculty. Dr. Milla, in collaboration with the UP College of Public Health and the ECC, was at the forefront of a nationwide study on norms and disabilities of Filipino workers, presently being used as standards for physical abilities of workers. The DRM, in collaboration with the DOH and the World Health Organization, drafted the master plan for the CBR Program which was implemented nationwide.<sup>2</sup>

In 1994, Dr. Betty Dy-Mancao started her six-year term as chairman. During her term, the vision, mission and goals of the DRM were drawn. The annual celebration of the National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week in July was actively pursued which included lay fora and seminars; awards and events which showcased the talents of the disabled; and recognition of the DRM donors and achievers. The DRM became the lead partner of the DOH's Community Based Rehabilitation Program wherein barangay health workers and volunteers were taught basic principles of disability recognition and management.<sup>3</sup>

In 1994, the Electrodiagnosis Clinic was the recipient of a computerized EMG-NCV machine from the ECC. The Pulmonary Rehabilitation program was organized into the Comprehensive Ambulatory Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program (CARE) with the Section of Pulmonology, Department of Medicine. The Cardiac Rehabilitation Program was revived in 1985. The Burn Clinic and Pediatric Rehabilitation Clinic were also established.

In 2000, the Luntiang Paraiso, a pediatric therapeutic playground and a flagship project of the DRM through Doña Lualhati C. Conjuangco, was inaugurated. In 2001, two special education (SPED) classrooms for pre-schoolers were added to the playground through the Rotary Club of Manila San Miguel. The DRM became the first government institution to offer hospital-based pre-school SPED services as an early intervention program in collaboration with the then Department of Education, Culture and Sports. In 2000, DRM became actively involved in the Organ System Integration program of the UP College of Medicine for medical students.

In 2001, Dr. Josephine R. Bundoc was appointed as chairman. The next three years saw the strengthening of the research program of the Department with the designation of dedicated faculty for research, re-organization of the residents' research training program<sup>4</sup> and the establishment of the Research Unit. The first Departmental Residents' Research Forum was held in 2000. For residency training program, the DRM Self-Directed Learning Curriculum integrating a problem-oriented and competency-based approach won the 2003 UPCM Dean's Award for Innovation in Medical Education.<sup>5</sup> The Prosthetics and Orthotics Fellowship program was initiated in 2002.

In 2002, the first DRM Postgraduate Course was held. To further provide clinical training, other subspecialty clinics and ancillary services were added such as: Prosthetics and Orthotics Service; Vocational Rehabilitation Unit; Ilizarov Clinic; and Sports Medicine Clinic with the Department of Orthopedics which include training on management of collegiate- and national-level athletes and medical coverage; and the Geriatric Rehabilitation Program in cooperation with the Geriatric Clinic, Department of Medicine which included outreach programs for institutionalized elderly on long-term care. Other clinics established were the Vestibular Rehabilitation and Hearing-Impaired Clinic with Department of Otorhinolaryngology and the revival of the Cleft Lip and Palate Clinic with Section of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Department of Surgery. Interdepartmental conferences with Pediatric Neurology, Multidisciplinary Child and Adolescent Unit, Burn Unit, and Orthopedic Hand Service were continued. Training in electrodiagnosis gained more depth with the introduction of intra-operative monitoring of somatosensory evoked potentials for facial nerve and spinal cord procedures.

Collaboration with agencies such as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority and organizations like Physicians for Peace resulted in the expansion of the DRM's services. The PGH-DRM Alumni Association was established. In 2003, the Department spearheaded the UP College of Medicine's Annual Post-Graduate Convention.

Dr. Sharon Ignacio was appointed chairman of the Department in 2004. Dr. Ignacio developed the "Our Home, Our Hearth" program which encompasses programs on physical and social upliftment of the Department. The pediatric therapy area was renovated to keep up with the treatment needs of pediatric patients. The PT Section started an Advanced Physical Therapy Clinical Training Program for licensed physical therapists. It was during her term that the Stroke Support Group (PARAISSO) was initiated. Linkage with the Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine, New York University School of Medicine, New York, USA through Dr. Bryan J. O'Young was finalized. He was appointed Adjunct Professor of the UP College of Medicine in 2005.

The Department was actively involved in the UP College of Medicine's Centennial celebration and the new Organ Systems Integrated curriculum. The faculty was at the forefront of nationwide programs for the disabled including the: Philippine Disability Survey in collaboration with the DOH and UP Manila,<sup>6</sup> Bone and Joint Decade, Pain Society of the Philippines, and Stroke Society of the Philippines. The faculty members are also officers of the Philippine Academy of Rehabilitation Medicine (PARM), Philippine Board of Rehabilitation Medicine, Pain Society of the Philippines, and Stroke Society of the Philippines. In 2006, the Department launched the "Walking Free" Project with the Physicians for Peace and the Mahaveer Foundation to provide free high technology-low cost prostheses to indigent Filipino amputees. The Department also embarked on research on indigenous materials, training of prosthetic technicians abroad, and continuing medical education abroad for the DRM residents.

Dr. Teresita Joy Ples Evangelista assumed chairmanship in 2007. She was concomitantly Chairperson of the PRC Board of Physical and Occupational Therapy and President of the PARM. The DRM website was launched, including online linkages with the PGH and the PARM. Participation of the faculty and residents in international Rehabilitation Medicine was strengthened with presentation of research papers and lectures abroad and officership in the Asia Pacific Rehabilitation Medicine associations.

In coordination with the Physicians for Peace, the Walking Assistance and Learning Key (WALK) unit and the Amputee ward were opened in 2008. The WALK unit provided a pioneering harness on treadmill to assist patients assume early verticality. The Department sponsored the first National Prosthetic Conference. The DRM started its Musculoskeletal Ultrasound (MSK UTZ) Clinic, the first Rehabilitation Medicine training institution in the country to offer MSK UTZ services. A new EMG-NCV machine was acquired through Rotary Foundation Matching Grant No. 68904. Dr. Hiyasmine D. Mangubat and Dr. Joel E. Contreras joined the faculty. The DRM spearheaded the celebration of the PGH Foundation Week in 2009.

Dr. Jose Alvin P. Mojica assumed chairmanship in 2010. He was Dean of the National Teacher Training Center for the Health Professions (NTTC-HP) of UP Manila from 1999 to 2009. Dr. Mojica aims to further strengthen training programs to produce more competent, compassionate and socially responsible health care providers.

The Department of Rehabilitation Medicine continues to offer excellent, comprehensive evaluation and management of patients, the differently-abled, through its highly competent Medical and Allied Medical Staff, its 16-bed Rehabilitation Ward, and outpatient and inpatient services and specialty clinics. Through the years, the Department remains at the forefront of the delivery of high quality training, service and research in rehabilitation medicine in the country.

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