

Pediatrics at its Best: Training, Service, Research and Policy Making



The Department of Pediatrics is one of the largest clinical departments in the Philippine General Hospital (PGH). It provides service to underprivileged Filipinos coming from all parts of the country. An average of 30 – 40,000 patients are seen in the different clinical areas of the Department such as Wards 9 and 11, Nursery, Outpatient clinics, Emergency Room and the Intensive Care Units (pediatric and neonatal). These patients obtain a variety of services including specialized medical management, intensive care, and/or complex procedures which are only available through the Department of Pediatrics at PGH. By the time the Department observes its 100th birthday in 2015, over 5 million patients will have been served.

It is the continuing commitment of the Department to deliver medical services and provide holistic care for all children, including counseling parents regarding health maintenance. Additionally, the Department is dedicated to excellence in training students, residents and fellows in the different subspecialties. At least 600 medical students (LU4, LU5, LU6, LU7) of the UP College of Medicine pass through the department annually. Seventy-five pediatric residents and at least 40 fellows in various fields provide expert care to our patients. The Department has the most complete complement of pediatric subspecialties in the Philippines. The 16 Fellowship Training Programs currently offered include: Allergy and Immunology, Adolescent Medicine, Ambulatory Medicine, Cardiology, Developmental Pediatrics, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology and Nutrition, Genetics, Hematology and Oncology, Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine, Neonatal Medicine, Nephrology, Neurology, Pediatric Intensive and Critical Care, Pulmonology, and Rheumatology. We are proud that the Department has been responsible for hundreds of pediatricians and at least 350 subspecialists practicing in different regions in the country. It is impressive to note that most of our graduates become leaders in their regional areas of practice. Seventy five faculty members, leaders in their own fields, are responsible for the training of medical students, residents and fellows.

This special ACTA issue is intended to give readers a glimpse of the varied and important research activities within the Department – nutrition education, hepatitis B, metabolic syndrome, tuberculosis, drug trials (virgin coconut oil for sepsis, ibuprofen for closure of PDA, immunoglobulin for SSPE), DNA test for sepsis, and service programs for patients with chronic renal disorders and inborn errors of metabolism. The review on child maltreatment provides a good description of the treatment difficulties in the Philippine setting and provides recommendations for legally mandating and implementing a national plan to end violence against children. The paper on expanded newborn screening provides details of the national plan for increasing the number of congenital conditions screened in newborns from 6 to 28, consistent with Republic Act No 9288 (the Newborn Screening Act of 2004).

This special issue is dedicated to our mentor, Perla Dizon Santos Ocampo, former Chair of the Department of Pediatrics. Among her many legacies, we highlight in this issue the School for the Chronically Ill Children founded on Sept. 23, 1966. This school remains the only one of its kind in the Philippines. Dr. Santos Ocampo valued education and convinced the Department of Education to provide a teacher for the sick children and to accredit the classes conducted in the hospital. The school began in one of the small rooms (4 sq meters) of then Ward 12, the old pediatric ward before construction of the seven-storey Central Block. It began with 11 chronically ill pediatric patients who were admitted in Pediatrics and other

wards of PGH. For patients who were too sick to come to the classroom, lessons were given at their bedsides. The school was fortunate to have a dedicated teacher, Esterlita Samson, our first and longest running teacher until her demise. The school was named Silahis ng Kalusugan in 1975, a special education unit of the Division of City Schools, Manila. In the past 40 years, the school had several faces with contributions of a small building between Ward 9 and 11 from the family of Jose Concepcion Sr. in 1994. The City Bridge Foundation through David Bradley contributed to the renovations of the school in 2006. On February 13, 2013, Silahis ng Kalusugan will move to a new building adjacent to Ward 9, the Teddy Rey Healing Place. The School for the Chronically Ill Children a.k.a Silahis ng Kalusugan will continue to serve our pediatric patients in PGH. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the late Perla Dizon Santos Ocampo.



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