

## Contributing to the knowledge base in health care services

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Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Southern Philippines Medical Center Journal of Health Care Services!

We are very enthusiastic about starting to share with you the knowledge that we have been producing from this part of the Philippines. We want to make our documented experiences accessible to others. Our goal is to contribute to local and international efforts to broaden the knowledge base of health care services.

Southern Philippines Medical Center (SPMC) is a major player in health care services in the Southeastern Region of

the Philippines. It is a government-owned tertiary care and training center, with a full complement of inpatient and outpatient health care services. The center also implements some public and community health programs of the Department of Health (DOH). SPMC maintains close links with the DOH Region XI Office and Davao Regional Hospital, two other government-owned health institutions, in delivering broad-ranging health care services within the administrative region. Thousands of other government-owned and private hospitals, health centers, specialty care facilities, and clinics within and outside the regional landscape of health care services operationally interconnect with each other and, in one way or another, with SPMC.

The body of knowledge that we produce resonates with other government health care facilities. With these facilities, we share similar issues of limited health care resources, large volume of patients, limited number and fast turnover of human resources for health, and difficulties in training second liners. In dealing with patients, we also have problems of limited health-personnel-to-patient interaction time, issues in compliance with medications and high costs of medical care. It is important to take the perspective of a government health care facility like SPMC in answering questions pertaining to health care services. Knowledge produced by health care institutions generates useful information that can help shape service delivery.

As a field of discipline, health care services has such an immense scope. It covers both the clinical and the administrative aspects of health care. The clinical aspect involves services that stretch from disease prevention, to diagnostics, to therapeutics, and then to

rehabilitation. Services can have a focus on individual patients or families, or can involve the general public at large. The concerns can range from the medical to the psychosocial, emotional, cultural, or financial. The administrative aspect can involve programmatic concerns, facility development, public relations, health financing, or human resource management. Contributing to the knowledge base of health care services, therefore, should address questions on: how health care is organized, delivered, financed, and sustained; how human resources for health are trained and managed; how health facilities are developed and enhanced; and how health programs are planned, implemented, and monitored. It also deals with questions on how diseases are prevented, and how patients are diagnosed and treated, rehabilitated, and educated. In systematic inquiries in this field, we look for outcomes of effective treatment approaches, accurate diagnoses, efficient operations, quality services, and client satisfaction.

A more extensive knowledge base provides us with greater understanding of our field and improves decision-making in health care.<sup>1</sup> Well-informed decisions make for sound policymaking. Sound policies make the health care systems more efficient<sup>2</sup> and support the attainment of our desired health outcomes.

In preparing for this journal, we took great care in incorporating elements that would ensure the overall quality of the journal and conformance to existing practice standards in producing medical literature. We structured a peer review process that would help us in determining the suitability of articles for publication. We required full declaration of research funding from authors, as well as disclosure of competing interests from authors and peer reviewers. We also follow the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals.<sup>3</sup>

We invite everyone who is directly or indirectly involved in the delivery of health care services to contribute to this

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journal. We welcome different submissions, including research reports, systematic reviews, case reports, perspectives, and editorials on any aspects of health care services. We also encourage readers' correspondence pertaining to the articles that we publish or to other related topics.

For this first issue, we have carefully chosen articles that we think would best represent our idea of a journal of health care services. Topics in this issue include training of health care professionals (Bravo, et al., 9-13), biopsychosocial health (Vison, et al., 14-19), clinical implications of a hospital policy (Maranian, et al., 20-24), financial aspects of a disease (Fabian, et al., 25-30), clinical effectiveness of an intervention (Lim, et al., 31-37), and clinical case reports of rare diseases (Guevara, et al., 38-41; Cordero, et al., 42-46; Mitchao, et al., 47-

51). We are also publishing opinion and perspective articles on several other aspects of health care services (Guevara, 3-4; Española, 5-6; Concha, 7-8; Vega, 52-54), and we hope that you will find them relevant in your practice. Happy reading!

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