



UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES MANILA
The Health Sciences Center

VP Robredo stresses importance of sustainable community health



Vice President Leni Robredo delivers her keynote address at the 6th Philippine Conference on Community Health organized by UPCM RSO, at the UP College of Pharmacy Auditorium, last 2 March 2019.

Philippine Vice President Maria Leonor “Leni” Gerona-Robredo visited UP Manila on 2 March 2019 to give a keynote address at the **6th Philippine Conference on Community Health (PCCH)** organized by the REGIONALIZATION STUDENTS ORGANIZATION (RSO) of the UP College of Medicine. With the theme, “*ANINAG: Pagkilala sa mga Usapin at Lingkod-Bayang Humuhubog sa Kalusugang Pangkomunidad,*” the two-day conference brought together around 200 medical and allied health professionals and students from all over the Philippines to discuss their role in helping resolve issues besetting community health in the country.

The Vice President shared her experiences as a lawyer and congresswoman in working with community health care workers and the marginalized in far-flung areas in the country. She emphasized the importance of collaborations with all sectors in solving the issues that plague health in the country, such as financing, shortage of human resources, and poverty. “Where poverty is high, malnutrition is worst. When [the marginalized] remain poor, you also incapacitate them,” she quipped. “To solve community health problems, *hindi lang doktor ang susi (the doctor is not the only key)*. It also needs the government and focused, driven officials.”

Saying that she is not a fan of medical missions that are done for one time only, without any follow up, the Vice President also stressed the need to make health sustainable, especially for those living in areas with poor access to quality healthcare.

The conference featured plenary talks on community health by the following speakers: Dr. Gene A. Nisperos and Dr. Paolo Victor N. Medina on the Philippine Community Health Status Situationer; Dr. Ryan C. Guinaran on Indigenous Health; Dr. Vivien F. Fadrihan-Camacho on Occupational Health; Dr. Joan Rose G. Lampac, Life of a Community Health Care Worker; Windalyn G. Baluis, RN, MN on Mental Health; Dr. Winlove P. Mojica on Sexual Health; and Dr. Joanne Karen S. Aguinaldo on Reproductive Health). Participants

of the conference also engaged in small group discussions with current and former Doctors-to-the-Barrios physicians, barangay health workers, and community organizers.

Before her talk, Vice President Robredo met with UPCM Dean Dr. Charlotte M. Chiong, UPCM-Regionalization Program Committee (RPC) Chair Abdel Jeffri A. Abdulla, RPC Vice-Chair Dr. Edelina P. dela Paz, RPC Region V Adviser Dr. Cleotilde H. How, RSO officials and PCCH organizers. The vice president was briefed on the Regionalization Program of UPCM and how it aims to solve the inequitable distribution of medical graduates in the various regions of the country.

The Philippine Conference on Community Health is now on its 6th year and is being held to raise student awareness on community medicine and its role in addressing the health situation of the Philippines through the promotion of health transformation and community-oriented practice. This year's conference shed light on the smaller problems on community health that remain relevant to Filipinos today, as well as recognize the public servants who tirelessly work for the betterment of their health and wellness. #

Report by:
Vince Elic S. Maullon (UP College of Medicine)



Vice President Leni Robredo with UPCM officials, the organizers of PCCH 2019, RSO officials, and participants of the conference. Photo courtesy of the Office of the Vice President.



Conference participants listen during the open forum with Gene A. Nisperos, MD and Paolo Victor N. Medina, MD, who gave a situationer on the status of community health in the Philippines.



Vice President Leni Robredo with UPCM officials, the organizers of PCCH, and RSO officials at the PCCH Exhibit at the UP College of Pharmacy lobby, on March 2, 2019. Photo courtesy of the Office of the Vice President.