Innovations in Capacity Building: The Philippine e-learning Academy Initiative

Eva Maria Cutiongco-de la Paz MD. PhD.
(Executive Director, National Institute of Health, University of the Philippines-Manila, Philippines)

Short CV

Dr. Eva Maria C. Cutiongco-de la Paz is the Executive Director of the National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila.

She is a Research Professor at the National Institutes of Health as well as a Clinical Professor of the Division of Clinical and Metabolic Genetics, Department of Pediatrics, Philippine General Hospital.

She finished her Doctor of Medicine degree from the UP College of Medicine in 1989 and completed her Pediatric residency at the Philippine General Hospital in 1992.

She had her research fellowship in Molecular Genetics at the International Center for Medical Research at the Kobe University Graduate School of Medicine in Japan and took her subspecialty training in Clinical Genetics at The Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto, Canada.

Her research interests include genetics of monogenic and complex genetic conditions in the Filipino population such as birth defects, cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes mellitus.

Abstract

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), University of the Philippines Manila (UPM) with its mandate to serve as an institutional home of a network of researchers and research institutions, recognizes its role to set the standards in the conduct of quality research outputs.

In March of 2022, the National Clinical Trials and Translation Center (NCTTC) of the National Institutes of Health, was formally established. The NCTTC serves as an academic center that connects clinical trial units and coordinates and supports the conduct of government, national and international research networks, and multinational clinical trials. It facilitates and standardizes clinical trial sites identification and set-up, workflow SOPs, recruitment sites and strategies. It also provides an infrastructure to support the conduct of the clinical trials from initiation/conceptualization to close-out and archiving; and importantly, it provides training for Principal Investigators and Research Staff in the conduct of world class clinical research. Between 2021 to 2022, two online trainings on good clinical practice and clinical trials were conducted in collaboration with Japan's National Center of Global Health and Medicine (NCGM) and funded by the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED).
Post-training evaluation and feedback among training participants, a series of consultative meetings with established clinical trialists and experts, and a local competency assessment survey among clinical researchers were conducted to identify learning needs and gaps. In addition, feedback among training participants showed that delivery through synchronous and asynchronous methods was effective in maximizing reach and participation all over the country. As a result, the Philippine e-learning Academy initiative has been organized. This initiative will provide training using the e-learning platform to establish regional e-learning hubs in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. It aims to empower promising clinical researchers and trialists throughout the country in the conduct of high quality and effective clinical trials. Four priority modules have been identified to be developed into e-learning formats: good clinical practice, ethics, and informed consent; clinical trial design and management; data safety analysis and adverse event monitoring; and regulatory frameworks and processes. These training modules will be offered as an interactive learning program in a variety of formats including interactive PDFs and gamification through a mobile application. The effectiveness of hybrid versus the traditional face-to-face methods of training will also be evaluated. Through these innovations in training, the NIH NCTTC hopes to increase the number of Filipino health professionals conducting clinical trials research of international standards.