



Letter to the Editor

Answering the health needs of the Filipino community

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Article Received: 19 March 2019

Article Published: 18 July 2019 (Online)

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Health research should answer the needs of the Filipino community which range from communicable and non-communicable diseases, mental health, disaster risk reduction, maternal and child health. The National Unified Health Research Agenda 2017 -2022 (NUHRA) is a six-year plan developed by the Philippine National Health Research System facilitated by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development so that health research will answer the needs of the Filipinos. It is envisioned to be inclusive, realistic and collaborative. The collaboration will be among the academe, government agencies, the private sector, industry, and non-governmental organizations.

There are six themes of the NUHRA of which two have an impact in rehabilitation. These are the global competitiveness and innovation in health; and research in equity in health. Most of the equipment used in rehabilitation are developed in other countries. It is high time that we should be able to develop this equipment. However, this will never happen if researches are only done within the discipline. Researches should be a collaboration of disciplines that are involved in health care. Medical and paramedical researchers in the field of Rehabilitation Medicine are cognizant of the needs of the persons with disabilities. The solutions to some of these problems could be answered by

engineering researchers. On the other hand, engineering researchers are able to design equipment, but they are not fully aware if their innovations are suitable for persons with disabilities. Collaboration among scientists will enable us to meet the needs of the disabled communities.

The other aspect that should also be considered is the social dimension of disability. We have to be attentive to the response of our patients to the equipment that is being used in their disability and not just look at it at the point of view of the developers. The end user of all these innovations are our patients who are the most important stakeholders. And the social researchers will be able to assist us in determining the positive and negative effects of the innovations.

Barriers and borders among different disciplines should be minimized if not demolished to be able to leap forward in finding solutions to the health needs of the Filipino community.