

## Philippine pharmacists join patients, pharma sector in ethical collaboration



Stakeholders in the Philippine healthcare sector moved to expand collaborations to promote ethical and responsible interactions between patients, healthcare professionals and the pharmaceutical sector.

The Philippine Pharmacists Association, composed of 15,000 members, signed the Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration to demonstrate their commitment in ensuring that relationship between patients, healthcare professionals, and the pharmaceutical sector, is based on ethical and responsible decision-making. The PPhA is the only government-accredited, national organization of licensed Filipino pharmacists with 83 regional and local chapters.

The PPhA signed the framework collaboration with the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) in the presence of the Philippine Alliance of Patient Organizations (PAPO) in a ceremony at the Seda Hotel in Taguig City on 22 March 2018.

“To practice the profession in an ethical manner is one of the key competencies expected of a pharmacy graduate in the Philippines...they take their vow to serve within legal, professional and ethical boundaries,” said PPhA president Dr. Yolanda Robles during the ceremony.

Dr. Robles said that with the passage of the Philippine Pharmacy Act of 2016, pharmacists now have expanded roles in the health system particularly in the pharmaceutical supply chain in both government and private settings.

“As patient safety and health outcomes are on top of the agenda of stakeholders in the healthcare industry, we need to be united in ensuring that these goals are met through ethical practice. On behalf of the Board and Officers of the PPhA, I am signifying our commitment to adopt the Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration,” she stated.

The PAPO, representing at least one million patients, first signed the consensus framework at the Dusit Thani Hotel in Makati City on 29 November 2017.

“A health system which integrated the patient perspective results in better healthcare policies. Collaboration that is anchored on an ethical framework creates solutions and better health outcomes,” said PAPO vice president Ms Karen Villanueva.

Philippine Department of Health Secretary Dr. Francisco Duque III, who was present during the ceremony, congratulated signatories of the framework collaboration in support of partnerships that aim to deliver better outcomes and high quality of care for Filipino patients.

“The *Consensus Framework* builds on the partnership established by the DOH with the industry when the DOH first adopted the *Mexico City Principles* in 2014 and then later signed the national policy on business ethics for the biopharmaceutical and medical device sector. This was part of our good governance campaign and the national effort to promote patient safety and welfare by ensuring that the highest ethical standards are maintained between the industry, the health professionals, the patients and the national government,” said Secretary Duque.

He said that the framework collaboration is aligned with the government’s vision of attaining sustainable and responsive health care system, equitable healthcare financing and better health outcomes for Filipinos.

“I also emphasized that we need to put our patients first as the centerpiece of the health sector reform agenda and that in fact, patients are the “Plus” in “Fourmula One for Health” as we embark on a national strategy for people-and patient-centered healthcare to ensure that Filipinos have access to the kind of care that works for them,” added Secretary Duque.

The International Alliance of Patients’ Organizations (IAPO), International Council of Nurses (ICN), International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA), International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), and World

Medical Association (WMA) endorsed the Consensus Framework for Ethical Collaboration.

It aims to ensure that the relationship between patients, healthcare professionals, the pharmaceutical sector, and their organizations, is based on ethical and responsible decision making. It has four overarching principles namely, (1) Put Patients First; (2) Support Ethical Research and Innovation; (3) Ensure Independence and Ethical Conduct; and (4) Promote Transparency and Accountability.