

Novartis partners with DOH, medical societies, hospitals to strengthen healthcare system and improve heart failure management in PH

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- Novartis is partnering with medical societies and hospitals to help strengthen the healthcare system and enhance the quality of care for HF thereby easing its socioeconomic burden in the Philippines.

Novartis is partnering with the Department of Health (DOH), medical societies, and hospitals to help strengthen the healthcare system and enhance the quality of care for heart failure (HF) thereby easing its socioeconomic burden in the Philippines.

Heart Failure is a debilitating and potentially life-threatening condition where the heart cannot pump enough blood around the body, leaving patients fatigued, short of breath, and at risk of sudden cardiac death.¹ It is known to cause more hospitalizations in people over 65 years of age than pneumonia and heart attacks.² In a developing country like the Philippines, where healthcare delivery is mostly paid through patients' out-of-pocket expenses, the economic burden of HF, especially hospitalization, is heavy.³

"Novartis is committed to partnering with medical and patient communities, hospitals, and the government in addressing unmet medical needs. By supporting initiatives that strengthen the healthcare system and conducting real-world evidence research, we aim to improve the outcomes of patients with heart failure," said Joel Chong, Country President, Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc.

Novartis and the Philippine Heart Association (PHA) signed a Memorandum of Agreement to launch a project to support the capacity building of nurses and elevate the standard of care for HF management.

"The Department of Health has taken the cudgels of crafting national guidelines for the country. It has assigned a multi-sectoral group, mostly PHA Fellows, led by Philippine Heart Center, to craft the 2023 Clinical Practice Guidelines on the Diagnosis and Management of Heart Failure for Primary Care Physicians, specifically aimed at helping all practitioners towards Universal Health Care," said PHA President Dr. Jude Erric L. Cinco.

"We must plan to treat these patients early and urgently to prevent any long-term complications. Clinical pathways should integrate these issues and address these problems. We cannot do everything by ourselves. The development of such a pathway requires involvement from all disciplines," emphasized Dr. Wilbert Allan Gumatay, Chair of the Council of Heart Failure, Philippine Heart Association.

Novartis is also collaborating with the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) to enhance the knowledge of primary care physicians in HF management and address the fragmented referral system through online continuing medical education (CME). Through the collaboration, interactive CME sessions are held among cardiologists and primary care physicians to discuss how to better recognize HF signs and symptoms among patients, when to refer patients to a cardiologist, and therapeutic options using a patient-centered and

family-oriented approach.

"The National Practice Guidelines Program (NPGP) sets the stage for the development and implementation of evidence-based care to establish the standards on how individuals should be given care. The NPGP addresses the goals of the UHC act to promote evidence-based actions and contributes to the universal healthcare goals of improving health outcomes, responsiveness, and financial risk protection," highlighted Dr. Ruth Divine Agustin, Division Lead, Evidence Generation and Management Division, Disease Prevention and Control Bureau of the Department of Health.

To foster scientific collaboration for enhanced HF management, Novartis is working with local hospitals to develop clinical pathways and establish HF Clinics. These healthcare system-strengthening initiatives open up opportunities to establish guideline-directed medical therapy and adherence across institutions that will help enhance health outcomes of HF patients in the country. To date, 32 HF Clinics and 19 HF clinical pathways have been established in hospitals across the country, with 9 institutions generating real-world evidence (RWE) on HF and 192 multidisciplinary healthcare professionals trained in HF management.

"The RACE (Real-World Evidence in Aspiring for Innovative Partnerships, Capability Building, and Established Clinical Pathways) Program of Novartis explores the importance of clinical pathways and guideline-directed medical therapy, as well as the key role of the PHA and DOH for healthcare system strengthening. The RACE program aims to reinforce the clinical pathway development for HF that will ultimately enhance the quality of life of Filipino patients living with HF," said Dr. Giovell Barangan, Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc.

Novartis is working with the Manila Doctors Hospital, Medical Center Manila, and Philippine General Hospital to establish an HF Registry that will describe the demographics, clinical characteristics, treatment patterns, and clinical and resource utilization outcomes of patients with chronic HF. These data are envisaged to encourage PhilHealth to increase the budget allocation for HF care.

References:

1. <https://www.novartis.com/diseases/heart-failure>
2. <https://www.novartis.com/stories/heart-failure-leading-cause-hospitalizations-it-doesnt-have-be>
3. <https://heartasia.bmj.com/content/heartasia/10/2/e011039.full.pdf>

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