

## Philippine chiropractic community health project: International Medical University and Intercare Chiropractic Centre Inc. collaborate to bring hope and healing to marginalized communities

Between August 27 and September 9, 2023, a groundbreaking health mission unfolded in the Philippines, thanks to a strategic collaboration between the International Medical University (IMU) and Intercare Chiropractic Centre Inc.

Celebrating its 30th anniversary, Intercare seized the occasion to enhance its community outreach. With the partnership of IMU, they launched the Philippine Chiropractic Community Health Project, targeting marginalized sectors across multiple Philippine cities.

Martin Camara, the CEO of Intercare, combined his center's three-decade expertise with IMU's academic and practical prowess. Leading the charge from IMU were faculty members, including Janice Chan Vey Lian, the Interim Director of Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CCAM), and Wong Yi Kai, the Chiropractic Programme Director, along with four dedicated students, namely Chong Zen Haw, Tan Jia Quan, Tan Xin Yi, and Zhang Jun Ai. Among the participants was also an IMU alumna, Chew Hui Min, who has been working in the Philippines for more than 3 years. Their unified goal led them through Taguig, Pasig, Caloocan, and Greenbelt.

Janice Chan Vey Lian, the Interim Director of CCAM, remarked, "In collaboration with Intercare, we at IMU are honored to extend our hands of hope and healing to the marginalized communities of the Philippines. This opportunity isn't just service, it's a privilege."

Over a span of two weeks, the combined teams' efforts resulted in an impressive 700 individuals receiving chiropractic care. The outreach didn't go

unnoticed. The Taguig City Council showcased the project's success on its social media, amassing commendable community engagement with over 100 shares and over 700 likes.



*IMU faculty Dr Yi Kai Wong treats a patient at Taguig*

While the project was certainly a boon for the community, it also served as a unique learning experience for IMU students. On-field application of their academic knowledge intertwined with understanding real-world healthcare challenges, thus amplifying their professional growth.

During their time in the Philippines, the four IMU students, while coming from diverse backgrounds, uniformly felt the profound impact of their journey. Tan Xin Yi described her experience as "transformative", an enlightening transition from the classroom to the real-world application. Chong Zen Haw, borrowing a term from the local vernacular, referred to his experience as "masarap", capturing the deep sense of satisfaction he felt in serving the community. Zhang Jun Ai expressed being "grateful", a sentiment of appreciation for both

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*The Philippines health mission took place as a consequence of a strategic collaboration between the International Medical University (IMU) and Intercare Chiropractic Centre Inc.*

the opportunity to serve and the lessons learned. Lastly, Tan Jia Quan felt "fortunate", not only for being a part of this historic collaboration but also for the personal growth and connections made during the project. Their shared sentiments underscored the undeniably positive impact the Philippine Chiropractic Community Health Project had on both its beneficiaries and its participants.

Reflecting on the project's significance, Martin Camara stated, "As the director of the Philippine Chiropractic Community Health Program, I found this to be a validation not only of the necessity for community-level chiropractic

care but also of the profound fulfillment it brings to all members of the team. The multidisciplinary team of chiropractors, chiropractic interns, physiotherapists, and support staff all experienced the joy that comes from assisting those in need, and the gratitude expressed by the community was tangible."

Reiterating the project's dual impact, Yi Kai Wong commented, "The initiative not only benefited the community but also provided our students with an unparalleled opportunity to translate their theoretical knowledge into practical experience."

Intercare's commitment to

offering comprehensive, patient-specific healthcare shone brightly throughout the project. Embodying values like Passion, Integrity, and Compassion, the mission became a testament to their unwavering dedication over the last 30 years.

The Philippine Chiropractic Community Health Project sets a commendable example of how academic institutions and healthcare providers can collaborate for larger community benefits. As the journey continues, it leaves behind not just healthier individuals but also a template for future community healthcare projects.