



The College of Public Health of the University of the Philippines Manila is pleased to share with the scientific and academic community, and the general public manuscripts authored by its faculty members, research / extension / professional staff (REPS), and students published in the 4th Public Health Issue of *Acta Medica Philippina*. The journal articles included in this special issue emanated from the different researches and projects conducted by faculty members, REPS, and students of the College, and are testaments to our contribution to the University's pursuit of excellence in research.

Last year, the College celebrated its 90th Founding Anniversary with the theme "SPECTRUM: 90 Vibrant Years of Enriching Public Health Across Boundaries". Indeed, the College has gone a long way from its inception as an Institute of Public Health founded by Dr Hilario Lara – the Father of the Modern Public Health Movement in the Philippines. Through the years, the College has produced generations of public health professionals who have contributed to improving health systems nationally and across boundaries. However, changing tides in public health impedes the College from resting on its laurels if it were to remain socially-relevant. A far greater challenge faces the College at present, especially in the era of sustainable development. Building on the successes of the millennium development goals, sustainable development goals (SDGs) expand on new areas (such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, and sustainable consumption), and attempts to address the root causes of poverty. The urgency and complexity of the SDGs puts a great onus on the College to take the lead in identifying and describing determinants of health inequities, in developing and implementing interventions that address these determinants, and in monitoring and evaluating these interventions.

The articles published in this special issue give indication of the College's actual and potential contributions to helping achieve the country's bid for SDGs. Articles included in this special issue manifest both the breadth and depth of the expertise of faculty members, REPS, and students – that is, the articles range in interest from biomedical sciences to health systems and policy. In addition, the majority of the articles included in this special issue result from collaborations both from within and outside the College. More importantly, these articles are products of critical inquiry into the nature and causes of, and potential interventions that address pressing national and local health concerns.

While socially-relevant and responsive research is a critical component of health systems strengthening, the utility of research findings is only fully realized when they are used in helping shape evidence-informed policies to help further global and national health goals. Thus, it is our hope that the College's contribution to knowledge will be made more meaningful as our research findings help drive innovations to upscale "Health for All".



Romeo R. Quizon, MSc Eng'g, FPSSE, ASEAN Eng
Dean and Centre Director
College of Public Health
University of the Philippines Manila