



**Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman
Climate Change Commission**

“BUILDING A GREEN HOSPITAL A MUST”

**43rd Foundation Day of the
Philippine College of Hospital Administrators
Post Graduate Course in Hospital Administration 1
Bayanihan Center UNILAB, Pioneer St. Pasig City
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Dr. Alfredo Padua; Dr. Huberto Lapuz; Past President Dr. Elmer Pedregosa; officers of the Philippine College of Hospital Administrators; hospital and healthcare professionals; good afternoon.

First of all, allow me to extend my sincerest gratitude for according me the opportunity to address you on your 43rd Foundation Day.

The successes and challenges of your organization through the years are awe-inspiring. The Philippine College of Hospital Administrators has come a long way in its mission to build a network of hospital administrators and health care professionals that would make the biggest difference in hospital management and services in the country.

For today's forum and post graduate courses, I want to talk about the need to reshape this mission, as climate change becomes the most defining issue of our time.

Climate Change Outlook

There is probably nothing in the history of humanity as game-changing as climate change. It is a development issue that has called the rethinking of paradigms and the redefining of our approaches to sustainable development.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction had reported that 90 percent of recorded major disasters was caused by natural hazards linked to the changing climate. The increasing weather extremes, and water-related phenomena.

The World Health Organization estimated that by 2030, the direct damage costs of climate change to health would be between 2 to 4 billion US dollars per year.

These projections should be a major cause of concern for a country as climate-vulnerable as ours.



The Philippines has constantly been in the top ten of the rankings of countries that suffered most from global warming. We have undergone cycles of destruction and reconstruction in the past, which has set back or stalled our economic growth and socio-economic development.

Every year, we are ravaged by an average of 20 typhoons which have intensified on recent years.

Supertyphoon Yolanda alone in 2013 claimed more than six thousand lives and inflicted more than P89 billion pesos worth of damages to public and private infrastructure and lands.

Scientific data showed that the rise in global average temperature in 2015 and 2016 had breached 1°C above pre-industrial levels. In a business-as-usual scenario, global warming could reach the range of 4°C to 6°C towards the end of the century with devastating consequences.

Imagine, if Yolanda occurred at a global temperature below one-degree Celsius, how much more of our businesses do we put at stake, how much more lives do we put at risk – in a four or six-degree world?

Records also showed that the Philippines posted the highest average increase in sea level since 1901, more than 60 centimeters or roughly three times than the global average of 19 centimeters.

This puts at risk 60 percent of our LGUs covering 64 coastal provinces, 822 coastal municipalities, 25 major coastal cities, and an estimate of 13.6 million Filipinos that would need relocation.

Moreover, the World Meteorological Organization confirmed that 2015, 2016, and 2017 were the three warmest years on record.

Extreme heat in our workplaces will continue to be an issue. We expect significant losses of productivity from increased incidence of heat strokes and dehydration in a very hot work environment.

Higher temperatures also trigger the surge of diseases such as dengue, malaria, cholera, and typhoid.

Greening hospitals to reduce carbon footprint

These impacts of climate change will continue drive vulnerability and exacerbate existing risks in our communities.

However, as we prepare to tackle these risks, we are confronted with this glaring paradox that defines the current relationship between our hospitals and our environment: As health care facilities strive to provide the best health care solutions,



their prevailing carbon footprints significantly contribute to climate change trends, which in turn, undermine public health.

In our country, providing health-care services has been an energy-intensive pursuit. Now is the time for change and transformation.

The health care sector ranks as one of the leading energy consumers, with hospitals projected to be using approximately twice the energy as office buildings of the same size.

With energy consumption dominating the Philippines' greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, healthcare institutions have substantially contributed to the country's overall carbon footprint.

Moreover, healthcare facilities are also major consumers of water, computer technologies, food and other resources. This expands the health sector's carbon footprint beyond the mark made by energy consumption.

It is in this context that we in the Climate Change Commission urge the healthcare sector to take on a leadership role in mitigating climate change by reducing the carbon footprint of hospitals and other healthcare facilities.

The healthcare sector can spearhead real change by going beyond advocacy and research by rethinking how hospitals and other healthcare facilities are being run and operated.

The path to building green and sustainable healthcare facilities starts by promoting public health hand-in-hand with protecting the environment.

This includes using resource-efficient and sustainable building designs, deploying on-site renewable energy technologies, and shifting to environment-friendly alternatives for food and transportation systems.

The good news is that several hospitals in the country have already started implementing green and sustainable practices.

We now have hospitals that are already using low-cost green technologies for generating energy and managing wastes. We also have hospitals that are now using a system to treat and disinfect wastewater and use it to irrigate hospital grounds.

Imperative of adaptation and building resilience

In addition to greening our healthcare facilities with sustainable and environment friendly systems and practices, we also wish to underscore critical responsibility of the healthcare sector to ensure the safety and resilience of its infrastructure for hospital care and health service delivery.



With the life-saving role of healthcare systems in our society, it is crucial for hospitals to stay up and running, as especially during the onslaught of extreme weather events.

The resilience of hospitals to the impact of natural hazards and disasters which becomes the new normal with climate change is dependent on how well hospitals could integrate climate projections and assessment into its planning and management processes.

Thus, it is imperative to revisit and to ensure the relevance and responsiveness of plans of hospitals. The goal is to identify adaptive strategies that will enable our healthcare services in times of calamities and amid a changing climate.

Post-2015 global development frameworks

Ladies and gentlemen, a problem as big and daunting as climate change requires us to change the way we think and the way we do business. Clearly, business-as-usual would not work and would not be acceptable as an option.

However, while the challenge of a new paradigm is not an easy endeavor, it is achievable. Three post-2015 global development frameworks are in place to guide both the government and the private sector in addressing development challenges in the context of climate change.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change should be our guide in moving our development agenda forward in a balanced and systematic fashion – such that we do not only adapt to the impacts of climate change, but come out even stronger and more resilient to disasters.

The Paris Agreement, in particular, aims to stop global temperature rise at 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels – the global warming threshold for vulnerable countries like the Philippines to survive and thrive.

What CCC has done

With the country's accession to the Paris Agreement, the Climate Change Commission has been facilitating a bottom-up approach in developing the country's Nationally Determined Contribution or NDC, which will serve as our roadmap as well as an investment plan towards a climate-resilient and 1.5°C-compatible economy.

As we pursue climate change adaptation, interventions that reduce carbon emissions also deliver the development benefits we long for our people: cleaner air, a healthier and greener environment, and a safer and more secure future for Filipinos.



I am pleased to inform you that the initial draft of our NDC is already at hand and is set for promulgation and submission to UNFCCC this year.

The Climate Change Commission has also undertaken several initiatives to mainstream climate change in the country's national development policies, plans and programs.

Pursuant to our mandate under the Climate Change Act, we have established a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System to monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan or NCCAP.

Through a series of consultations with different stakeholders, we have also successfully facilitated the national policy review and framework development on energy.

The energy policy framework, which is now being finalized, will be our guide on how we could introduce reforms and make our energy policies more relevant and more responsive to climate change and sustainable development challenges.

To ensure climate-resilient planning and programming at the local level, we have initiated also the development of a set of standard training modules for local development planning founded on science and aimed at reducing risk or loss and damage from the impacts of disasters and climate change. We have called these training modules Communities for Resilience or CORE Module Series.

This year, we continue to train faculty members from higher education institutions on the use of these standard training modules. These institutions shall, in turn, use the modules to train local government executives and planners, and to help them prepare LCCAPs which the Climate Change Act asks of LGUs, and access PSF grants.

Heeding the directive of the President for agencies to look into climate change and food production issues, we in the Commission supported last year the efforts of the Department of Agriculture to scale up climate information services and climate-resiliency field schools in 17 municipalities, effectively doubling the number of such schools in the country.

In support of the full implementation of the Green Jobs Act of 201, we have conducted policy roundtable discussions to tackle important issues in the implementation of the law and their consideration in finalizing our NDC.

Recognizing the role of public and private banks in catalyzing investments on green and sustainable ventures such as green hospitals, the Climate Change Commission has also embarked on promoting green banking and financing.



We have recently forged a partnership with the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to mainstream sustainable climate action within financial institutions in the country.

Through the LECB Project, we have also been conducting roundtable discussions and regional consultations on the greening of Philippine hospitals, and the response of the country's hospital sector has been very positive and encouraging.

This year, we are taking these consultations outside Metro Manila. These regional consultations come at a time when the Department of Health is in the final stages of developing the Green Healthcare Facility Standards.

What remains to be done

While a lot has already been accomplished, thanks to our development partners, more work needs to be done to prevent climate change from eroding our social economic gains.

Thus, 2018 will be another busy year for the Commission as we lay the groundwork and help pave the way, through international climate negotiations, for the full implementation of Paris Agreement by 2020.

On top of our list is to update our NCCAP to articulate both our National Adaptation Plan or NAP and our NDC.

To address the fragmentation and shortage of risk information in the country we are now facilitating the establishment of a National Integrated Risk Information System or NIRIS by various government agencies concerned. A singular platform for risk information will let national and local government stakeholders access risk data that inform policy and planning purposes.

The risk information platform will also strengthen multi-hazard early warning system and impact-based forecasting in the country, an innovative approach to saving lives and property, especially in disaster-prone communities, through effective early warning.

The platform shall also benefit the private business sector by providing risk information that informs climate-resilient investment planning.

On top of that, we are also working with the Office of Civil Defense to develop a loss and damage registry, which could provide the insurance sector with better profiles of risk in the country.



In line with the mandate of the Commission in the Green Jobs Act, we are now developing the standards for green jobs and establishing an accreditation and certification system that would provide incentives to businesses that support green jobs, green skills and green workplaces, and collectively support a just transition to a green economy.

For all these more, we will release before the year ends, the First State of the Philippine Climate Action Report, which reports on the progress of all sectors on their programs and activities on climate change. The report serves also as a comprehensive baseline on the country's climate action.

Transforming the healthcare sector

Indeed, we must do more and do better to sustain our gains through the years. We must promote more adaptation and disaster risk reduction interventions in all sectors of society, including the healthcare sector.

Partnership and cooperation is key to resilience building against the impacts of climate change. Government cannot do the work alone. Your actions are crucial to advance our cause and deliver the benefits and progress we all desire for the country, for our communities, and for our families.

It is in this context that the Commission calls on the healthcare sector to stop making bets on an unsustainable future that places our people and our economy at greater risk.

Investing in climate-friendly development is the way to go to ensure a safer, more secure, and more sustainable future for all.

Together, let us work to build a better future and a climate-adaptive and disaster-resilient nation that the generation of Filipinos today and tomorrow truly deserves.

Thank you for your kind attention.