

GUEST EDITORIAL

Philippine Journal of
Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

The Evolving Research Landscape in the Field of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

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In recent decades, we have witnessed dramatic changes in the field of allergy, asthma and immunology. The prevalence and global burden of allergic diseases greatly increased, and there were rapid advancements made in the field of immunology, with breakthrough discoveries in molecular and clinical immunology. With these changes, the volume of research in the field of allergy, asthma and immunology exponentially rose. In PubMed, there were 227,576 research publications related to allergy, asthma or immunology in the year 2023 alone. This is a 3.3-fold increase from 3 decades ago when there were only 68,507 research publications related to allergy, asthma or immunology in PubMed in the year 1993.¹

Despite the abundance of research publications globally, it is important to highlight the need for local Philippine studies in this field. Studies have established that geographic variation in the prevalence and epidemiology of allergic diseases and asthma exists.^{2,3} Inborn errors of immunity, which are heterogenous genetic disorders causing immune system defects, also exhibit geographic and ethnic variation.⁴ The social and economic impact of allergic and immunologic conditions is largely context-dependent, with varying patient experiences, perspectives and quality of life across settings.

Furthermore, with the passage of the Universal Health Care Law in the Philippines, research is very important to inform health policies and programs. Research investigating the burden of disease, risk factors, health utilization rates, and patient experiences in the field of allergy, asthma and immunology across various settings in the Philippines will help ensure that health policies and programs are targeted, cost-effective, and acceptable to the Philippine population.

Although several landmark research publications have been made by Philippine researchers, there is much room for improvement in the research landscape in the Philippines. Common hindrances to research include organizational

barriers such as lack of financial and administrative support, limited research facilities and equipment, and limited information sources; as well as personal barriers such as competing responsibilities, and inadequate knowledge or skill in research methodology.⁵

With the revitalization of the Philippine Journal of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology as an online, open-access, and peer-reviewed journal, it is envisioned that some organizational barriers to research in the Philippines will be removed particularly for researchers interested in the field of allergy, asthma and immunology. With its policy of no charges for article submission, processing and downloads, it can hopefully motivate researchers, even those with limited or no funding, to pursue their research interests and publish their findings.

Research is an important component that drives growth and improvement in health care. Through research and publication, we can collect and share vital information with key stakeholders to improve health care in the Philippines and worldwide.

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