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We care, and we'll always do

By Albert H. Uy

SM Foundation's workplace is unique in its own right. We, in the health and medical programs, provide care in crowded gyms or wherever our Mobile Clinic takes us. We work in local health facilities with peeling paints, and dim lights—an environment that mirrors the struggles of the community we hope to serve.

SM Foundation's mission in health is to mend not just the physical structures or provide instant relief but also give a lasting impact in the hearts of the people who breathe life into communities.

In our journey, we always start by actively engaging with all stakeholders, conducting thorough community consultations. This ensures that when the ribbons are finally cut, they mark the dawn of a promising new tomorrow.

When we explore potential collaborations with healthcare workers, we witness a shift: their weary eyes, burdened by the weight of decisions, are replaced with hope. When we consult with patients, those who once lamented long waits and distant healthcare facilities find themselves energized with anticipation.

The SM Foundation team has proven that when one truly listens to the heartbeat of a community, you don't see the cracks in the walls as failures, but as opportunities to rebuild.

At SM Foundation, we are dedicated to fostering tangible connections within communities. Through strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations, ranging from



The Health and Medical Program team spearheading the medical mission provides free check-ups as SM Foundation turns over the Santa Cruz Rural Health Unit (SCRHU), Laguna



Samson assists a patient inside the newly refurbished waiting area of LHC



Dr. Bertos (rightmost) and volunteers from SM Supermalls arrange for the medicines to be distributed in Baguio.



SM Foundation Health and Medical Programs Executive Director Connie Angeles with the Santa Cruz, Laguna community.



The Health and Medical Program team spearheading the medical mission provides free check-ups as SM Foundation turns over the Santa Cruz Rural Health Unit (SCRHU), Laguna



The author in action as he places the 200th health center marker in SCRHU

local NGOs and national government agencies to SM group employee-volunteers and community members, we have been able to achieve remarkable milestones. This collaborative approach has been instrumental in establishing our 200th Health Center*, a significant achievement for the SM group. Moreover, it has paved the way for the successful execution of various projects over the years, including our recent initiatives at:

- Department of Education (DepEd) Quezon City Schools Division Office (QC-SDO) Medical and dental clinic
- UP-PGH's Division's Pulmonary Medicine Post-COVID PulmoCare Hub.
- Brgy. 118-120 Health Center, Caloocan City
- Santa Cruz Rural Health Unit, Laguna*
- Lucban Health Center, Baguio City
- Air Force City Hospital, Clark



Senior Project Manager Dr. Bless Bertos and Samson distribute free medicines in one of their medical missions

The change didn't happen overnight. It was a steady hum of progress. The children, once hesitant shadows in the corners, are now eager to play with our inclusive Mobile Play Cabinets. With the introduction of rainwater catchment systems, air-cleaning paints as well as the vibrant interiors, energy-efficient fixtures, and appliances, patients began to feel a step closer to healing. The health workers, their shoulders now lighter, walked in their conducive workspaces with a renewed spring in their step.

For years, the SM Foundation team has proven that when one truly listens to the heartbeat of a community, you don't see the cracks in the walls as failures, but as opportunities to rebuild. As we move forward, we will continue to mend the broken bridges of healthcare, one community, one health facility, one heartbeat at a time. We will continue to extend our passion, service, and care like we always do. (With Connie Angeles, Dr. Bless Bertos, Dalfhen Samson, Roma Hierro, Rolando Sagun)



Breastfeeding room in Brgy. Irawan Birthing Facility, Puerto Princesa, Palawan



The Rainwater Harvesting System installed by SM Foundation



The new Apolonio Jalandoon Medical Dispensary



Inside the new Brgy. 118-120 Health Center in Caloocan City.



Dr. Elmira Montesa and the health workers of Santa Cruz Rural Health Unit (SCRHU) are all smiles in front of the new health center.

200 reasons to smile

SM Foundation brings cutting-edge care as it achieves a milestone in its health program

Rural health centers are more than just buildings—they're lifelines, offering a comprehensive range of health services at a minimal cost or even free to the most vulnerable.

Underscoring its firm belief in the power of health centers to uplift communities, the SM Foundation revitalized the Santa Cruz Rural Health Unit (SCRHU). This marks a significant milestone for the organization, representing its 200th health center nationwide.

Service amidst challenges SCRHU lies in Laguna province, serving nearly 140,000 residents. Its reach extends beyond the immediate community, welcoming those from neighboring municipalities, primarily from low-income households.



SCRHU features a vibrant lobby with new furniture and appliances.

Dr. Elmira Montesa, leading the SCRHU for almost a decade, said that despite the challenges, she and her dedicated team of health workers report for duty daily, their hearts set on serving the community, particularly the most vulnerable—because for them, public service wasn't just a job; it was a calling.

“Marami kaming programa na hindi namin malagyan ng lugar kasi kulang ang space kaya’t naghahagilap kami kung saan ito ipu-pwesto,” she shared.

“Iba ‘yung nararamdaman mong fulfillment sa trabahong ito. Napakasaya tuwing natutulungan mo ang pasyente at kita mo sa mga ngiti’t mata nila na thankful sila dahil binigay mo ang pangangailangan nila ng walang kapalit,” she said.

Uplifting community anchors Following Department of Health’s guidelines, SM Foundation elevated the SCRHU. The center now boasts clearly defined areas for different programs, improved layout for accessibility, and enhanced facilities for patient comfort. A rainwater catchment facility was introduced to contribute to water conservation.



Following the rehabilitation, SCRHU health workers are more eager to serve the community.



Dr. Elmira visits a patient, nursing her child in the newly built breastfeeding room.



SM Foundation's Senior Project Manager Albert Uy places the 200th Wellness Center marker as they complete the final stages of the renovation.

The rehabilitation transformed the center into a welcoming space, featuring comfortable waiting areas, a reception area for health workers, and designated facilities for breastfeeding mothers, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. It has a mobile play cabinet with gender-neutral toys to nurture comfort and promote coping during illnesses.



The center features a mobile play cabinet with gender-neutral toys to nurture comfort and promote coping in the face of illnesses.

As SM Foundation turned over the health center, Dr. Elmira and SCRHU turned over a new leaf in health care.

“Kayamanan ng tao ang kalusugan. Kahit wala kang masyadong pera, pero intact ang kalusugan mo, maituturing mo nang kayamanan iyon,” she said with a smile.

“Iba kasi pag maganda ang surroundings mo. Minsan, ‘yun lang ay sapat na para gumaan ang pakiramdam mo. Ngayong comfortable na ang center, mae-enhance na ang communication namin. Sa tulong ng organized at good environment, maipaliliwanag ng mabuti at magagawa kung ano ang nararapat na treatment para sa pasyente,” she added.



SCRHU health workers serve its community with renewed passion after the renovation of SM Foundation's 200th health center.



The rainwater catchment system helps lessen the center's reliance on municipal sources and contribute to water conservation efforts.

Breathing new life into UP-PGH's pulmonary hub

From pandemic relief to long-term rehabilitation, SM Foundation happily serves the community

SM Foundation, the social good arm of the SM group, continues to extend its helping hand, especially in areas where support is crucial. From providing various assistance during the height of the pandemic, it now breathed new

life into UP-PGH's post-COVID & PulmoCare HUB.

Breathing better together

Prior to the rehabilitation of the facility, UP-PGH Division of Pulmonary Medicine chief

Dr. Lenora Fernandez recalled that the facility has struggled to expand its services to meet the growing needs of the community.



Through UP-PGH and SM group's collab for social good, the hub was laid out with rooms that will help the Division of Pulmonary Medicine staff comfortably perform their tasks.



Through the rehabilitation, a spacious area has been dedicated to medical tests to fight the effect of 'long COVID.'

“Those patients who continued to suffer from debilitating shortness of breath in silence still lacked essential services such as pulmonary rehabilitation equipment. These hurdles made it a little challenging but we always try to find ways to overcome these challenges as there always are people and organizations willing to help,” Dr. Fernandez shared.



Dr. Fernandez checks a patient inside the new UP-PGH's Division of Pulmonary Medicine Post-COVID PulmoCare Hub.



Doctors and staff at UP-PGH use renovated areas for patient consultations.



Inside the new vibrant and spacious hub, UP-PGH Division of Pulmonary Medicine chief Dr. Lenora Fernandez (third from left) and her colleagues are able to attend to patients simultaneously.

Driven by their staunch commitment to patient care, they have explored solutions by partnering with supportive organizations to meet the evolving needs of their patients.

Today, through UP-PGH's social good collaboration with the SM group, the hub can serve the community around it and reach other patients virtually in other parts of the Philippines.

The hub was prudently built with a vibrant lobby to increase patients' comfort. It also has spacious rooms, with dedicated areas for rehabilitation, ultrasound, cardiopulmonary exercise testing, and virtual consultation.

The collaboration for social good also equipped the facility with state-of-the-art equipment that will complement the expertise of

UP-PGH Pulmonary Division's doctors and staff.

Dr. Fernandez envisions a promising future for the hub, aiming to double the number of patients served annually. This milestone not only enhances patient care but also encourages the extension of assistance to other centers nationwide, contributing to the overall improvement of pulmonary health in the country.



Through UP-PGH's social good collaboration with the SM Group, the hub can serve the community around it.



In photo are representatives from UP-PGH led by UP-PGH medical director Dr. Gerardo Legaspi, Division of Pulmonary Medicine chair Dr. Lenora Fernandez, Division of Pulmonary Medicine consultant Dr. Joselito Chavez, and Department of Neurosciences chair Dr. Carissa Diquino, and SM Foundation led by SM Foundation trustee Engr. Chito Macapagal, SM Foundation executive director for Health and Medical Programs Connie Angeles, and Senior Project Manager Albert Uy.



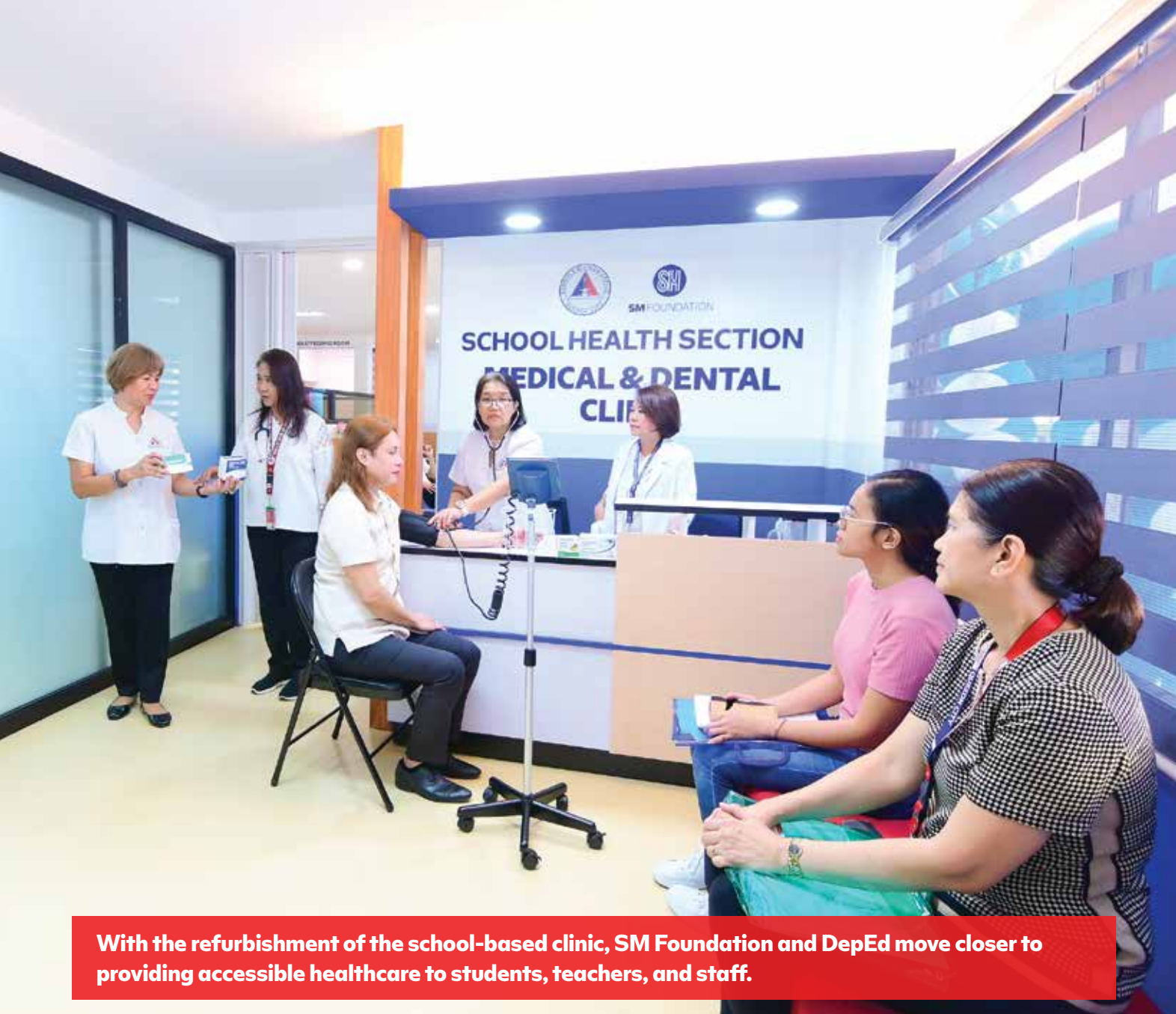
Inside one of the meeting rooms of the UP-PGH PulmoCare Hub.



Work stations are strategically placed for virtual consultations.



Heads of UP-PGH PulmoCare Hub proudly show the newly renovated hub.



With the refurbishment of the school-based clinic, SM Foundation and DepEd move closer to providing accessible healthcare to students, teachers, and staff.

SM Foundation revamps educational clinic, strengthens commitment to health, education

SM Foundation Inc. (SMFI) has consistently invested in critical areas such as health and education to support the country in attaining inclusive growth. A testament to this commitment is the transformation of the medical

and dental clinic at the Quezon City Schools Division Office (QC-SDO) of the Department of Education (DepEd).

The refurbished clinic, nestled behind the Annex Building of SM North EDSA, features state-of-the-art equipments and a

welcoming environment for students, teachers, and staff.

The clinic will also serve as a platform for preventive healthcare, promoting healthy lifestyles and encouraging regular check-ups.



A DepEd employee undergoes free prenatal care in the newly refurbished medical and dental clinic at the Quezon City Schools Division Office (QC-SDO).

Building a healthier future

With 158 schools and over 436,000 students in public schools, along with 16,000 teachers, SDO Superintendent Dr. Carleen Sedilla shed light on the critical need for school-

based health services. Its value is further highlighted as the country recorded increased cases of hand, foot, and mouth diseases (HFMD) among young students, along with the prevalence of other illnesses.

With the development, the DepEd NCR is hopeful that they will become better equipped to provide extensive medical services to promote the positive impact of health on academic performance.



Teachers and teaching staff monitor their blood pressure inside the new clinic.



A dentist performs a tooth extraction inside the newly renovated medical and dental clinic at the Quezon City Schools Division Office (QC-SDO).



(From left) SM North EDSA Mall Manager Miguel Gaspi, SM Supermalls Operations SAVP Jocelyn Clarino, SM Foundation Executive Director for Health and Medical Programs Connie Angeles, Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Carleen Sedilla, Regional Medical Officer of DepEd National Capital Region Dr. Connie Gepanayao, and School and Governance & Operations Division Chief Dr. Maria Teresa Namoro at the turnover ceremony of the newly refurbished medical and dental clinic



SM Foundation equips the clinic with medical facilities, allowing them to boost their service to the community.



A staff of DepEd-QC receives free check-up inside the new clinic.



The clinic has ample tables and chairs to help accommodate patients simultaneously while maintaining comfort and privacy.



A well-designed floor plan optimizes healthcare workflows by providing dedicated spaces for planning and crucial meetings.

Meanwhile, Dr. Connie Gepanayao, Regional Medical Officer of DepEd National Capital Region said that the close relationship between the SM group and the SDO, facilitated by the proximity of their locations, has played a pivotal role in this collaboration.

“A healthy student is a happy student,” Dr. Gepanayao also said, optimistic that the clinic will also help make wellness an integral part of daily life and serve as a hub for community building, fostering connections among teachers, students, and their families, and strengthening the educational community as a whole.



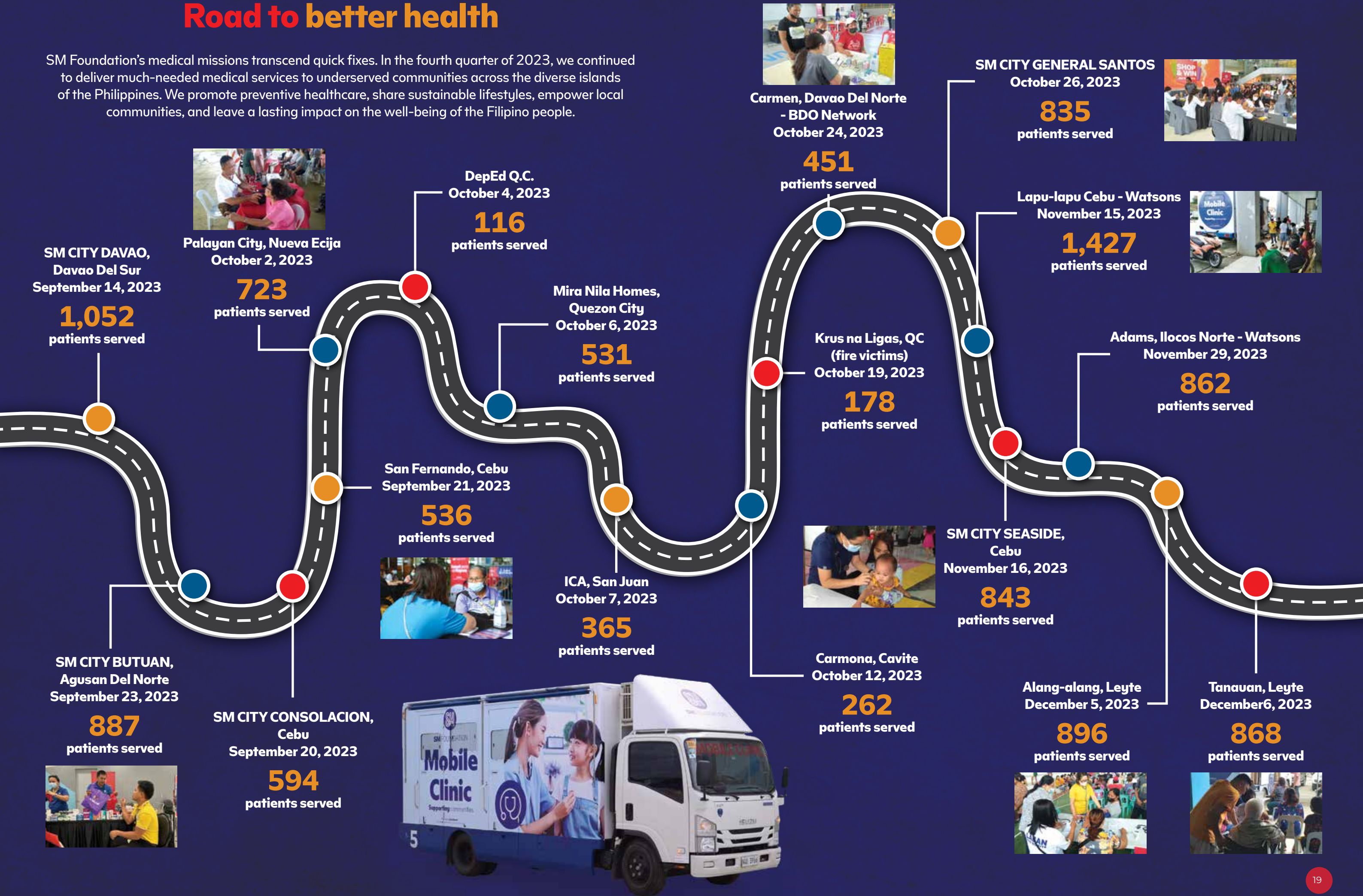
SM Foundation and DepEd equip the new medical and dental clinic with medicines and medical equipment to provide immediate care to teachers, staff, and students.



Team members of the DepEd-QC School Health Section Medical and Dental Services inside the new clinic.

Road to better health

SM Foundation’s medical missions transcend quick fixes. In the fourth quarter of 2023, we continued to deliver much-needed medical services to underserved communities across the diverse islands of the Philippines. We promote preventive healthcare, share sustainable lifestyles, empower local communities, and leave a lasting impact on the well-being of the Filipino people.





Launchpad for changemakers

SM Foundation's Education Programs rounded up 2023 by propelling students and communities towards a brighter future

The School Building Program proudly turned over President Manuel Roxas Memorial Integrated School in Roxas City, San Antonio Elementary School in Batangas, and Laguna Resettlement Community School, creating a conducive learning environment for future changemakers.

Graduation caps and dreams glistened high up in the sky through the Scholarship Program. Starting with nationwide get-togethers and activities that kept student life vibrant and balanced, the SM Group capped 2023 by celebrating the graduation of 397 college scholars.





Convergence of knowledge and opportunity in agriculture

SM Foundation's Livelihood and Outreach Programs pave paths on the ground to champion agripreneurship and ensure swift relief when challenges hit the country

Through the program, public and private institutions joined forces and bring together agricultural experts and fellow farmers to share the latest in agripreneurship—from farming techniques and soil management to business management.

With market tours, harvest festivals, and institutional selling

opportunities, farmers are reaping bountiful harvests, boosting their incomes, and providing communities with healthier produce.

Spreading cheers throughout the country, SM Foundation and SM Supermalls worked together to give 'Christmas cheers' to communities we happily serve.



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