

# NOSP @ 2025: History and Legacy

Youko T. Sakurai, MD<sup>1</sup>, Franz Marie Cruz, MD<sup>2,3,4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Ospital ng Makati, Taguig City, Philippines

<sup>2</sup> Peregrine Eye and Laser Institute, Makati City, Philippines

<sup>3</sup> Eye Institute, St. Luke's Medical Center, Quezon City, Philippines

<sup>4</sup> Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, College of Medicine – Philippine General Hospital, University of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines

Correspondence: Franz Marie Cruz, MD

Office Address: Peregrine Eye and Laser Institute, 347 Sen. G. Puyat Ave. Brgy. Bel-Air, Makati City, Philippines

Telephone number: +63-288900115

Email address: [focruz@up.edu.ph](mailto:focruz@up.edu.ph)

Disclosures: The authors report no conflicts of interest.

What began as an informal dinner among ophthalmologists with a shared interest in neuro-ophthalmology on August 9, 2000 at Kimpura Restaurant in Greenhills, San Juan City turned out to be a landmark occasion: the founding of the Neuro-Ophthalmology Club of the Philippines (NOCP), now known as the Neuro-Ophthalmology Society of the Philippines (NOSP).<sup>1</sup>

The gathering was led by Dr. Froilan Inocencio, who was elected as the Club's first president (2000–2002). Among the founding members were Dr. Tim Jimenez(†)—acknowledged as the country's first formally trained neuro-ophthalmologist—together with Dr. Jesus Tamesis Jr., Dr. Raul Cruz, Dr. Sidney Cheng, Dr. Richard Kho, Dr. Analyn Suntay, Dr. Lito Insilay(†), Dr. Wilfredo Mirasol, Dr. Helen Uichanco, Dr. Robert Uy, Dr. Romeo Fajardo(†), and Dr. Lizbeth Vicencio-Regner, who at that time was the only neuro-ophthalmologist in the Visayas.<sup>1</sup> That evening, they envisioned a society committed to advancing the care of Filipino patients with neuro-ophthalmic disorders by promoting research, education and service in the practice of neuro-ophthalmology—marking the very first vision of the NOCP (Kho RC, personal communication, August 15, 2025).

In its early years, NOCP held quarterly meetings where members and trainees presented difficult cases and diagnostic dilemmas (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> These

sessions soon became a defining feature of NOCP, sharpening clinical acumen and helping residents and recent graduates prepare for their in-service and specialty board examinations.



**Figure 1.** Neuro-ophthalmology rounds with ophthalmology trainees at Clinica Tamesis, Quezon City.

In the early 2000s, Dr. Inocencio laid the foundation by formalizing these inter-hospital rounds in neuro-ophthalmology, establishing the culture of academic exchange that endures to this day. He was succeeded by Dr. Raul Cruz (2003–2005) who sustained these initiatives while strengthening institutional ties. Dr. Jesus Tamesis Jr. (2005–2007) spearheaded the establishment of the NOCP fellowship program in 2003, which offered 6- to 12-month training opportunities for local

graduates (Kho RC, personal communication, August 15, 2025). He was also invited to become a founding council member of the Asian Neuro-Ophthalmology Society (ASNOS), and his forward-looking vision for international collaboration came full circle years later when he successfully bid for the 10<sup>th</sup> ASNOS Congress, which NOSP proudly hosted in Manila in 2019.

From those early case conferences, the Society grew in stature and was eventually recognized as an official subspecialty organization under the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology (PAO). Its regular participation in annual PAO meetings and Lifelong Education Access Program (LEAP) soon became tradition. In addition, NOCP organized its own instructional courses and symposia that consistently attracted a large audience locally (**Figure 2**). International linkages further enriched these activities, beginning with Dr. Anthony Arnold — who has lectured in the Philippines multiple times and was bestowed an honorary membership of the Society (Kho RC, personal communication, August 15, 2025) [**Figure 3**].



**Figure 2.** NOSP members during an instructional course on botulinum toxin injection held in Bonifacio Global City in 2015.



**Figure 3.** Dr. Anthony Arnold (USA) with members of the NOSP during the Lifelong Educational Access Program of the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology at The Medical City – Ortigas in 2017.

Dr. Sidney Cheng (2008) expanded NOCP's academic footprint by firmly establishing its presence within PAO programs. During the term of Dr. Richard C. Kho in 2009–2010, the Society advanced further with the initiation of the Philippine National Registry for Ethambutol-related Toxic Optic Neuropathy, and the creation of NOCP's first official website. NOCP also held joint symposia with the Philippine Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, another subspecialty society under the PAO (Kho RC, personal communication, August 15, 2025). Long before Zoom became commonplace, Dr. Lee Allen Cloma (2011–2012) organized NOCP's first online lecture delivered by Dr. Karl Golnik through the International Council of Ophthalmology, further strengthening the Society's ties with international bodies.

In 2013, due to the growth of the Club's membership, Dr. Glenn Guevarra (2013–2014) presided over the transition of NOCP to NOSP and the drafting of NOSP's by-laws (**Figure 4**). Dr. Edgardo Ulysses Dorotheo (2015–2016) expanded the public health advocacies of the Society, notably anti-smoking campaigns. Dr. Analyn Suntay-Guerrero (2017–2018) organized a very successful postgraduate course, "*ABC's to kNOw*," which showcased the expertise of local talents from diverse training backgrounds (**Figure 5**). During her term, NOSP also organized lay fora in various health institutions to mark World TB Day. Dr. Karen Reyes (2019–2020) elevated NOSP to the international arena by leading the preparations for the 10<sup>th</sup> ASNOS Congress in Manila in 2019, a historic first for the Philippines as it welcomed a global assembly of neuro-ophthalmologists. From 2021–2022, during the height of COVID-19 restrictions on mass gatherings, Dr. Miriam Louella Fermin (2021–2022) initiated webinars through the Distant Learning Program of PAO which featured international speakers such as Dr. Pedro Fonseca and Dr. Mitchell Lawlor. During her term, NOSP also held virtual interhospital grand rounds and interactive online games, ensuring continuity of academic exchange and collaboration during a time of extraordinary challenges. Under Dr. Vina Ballado's leadership (2023–2024), NOSP worked on aligning the neuro-ophthalmology curricula for residency and fellowship training programs with the requirements of the Professional Regulation Commission.



**Figure 4.** Meeting held at Clinica Tamesis in 2013 where the by-laws of the newly-renamed NOSP were finalized.



**Figure 5.** NOSP members at the 2017 postgraduate course entitled “ABC’s to kN0w” held in Makati City.

Over two and a half decades, NOSP has welcomed distinguished neuro-ophthalmologists and neurologists from around the world as international faculty in the annual meetings of the PAO, LEAP activities, postgraduate courses, and other educational seminars. Esteemed experts such as Dr. Andrew Lee, Dr. Karl Golnik, Dr. John Keltner, Dr. Neil Miller, Prof. Goh Kong Yong, Dr. Carmen Chan, Dr. Celia Chen, Dr. Prem Subramanian, Dr. Dean Cestari, Dr. Dan Milea, Dr. Ambika Selvakumar, Dr. An-Gour Wang, Dr. Muhammad Sidik, Dr. Clement Tan, and Dr. Richard Hertle, among others, have shared their global expertise and perspectives, greatly enriching the training and practice of Filipino ophthalmologists (**Figure 6**).

NOSP is also an active member of ASNOS, with Dr. Tamesis serving as the first representative, later succeeded by Dr. Reyes. Over the years, NOSP members regularly participated in ASNOS congresses in neighboring countries, helping bring international best practices back to the Philippines and strengthening regional collaborations (**Figure 7**). On December 3–4, 2019, NOSP had the honor of hosting the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the ASNOS at

Golden Phoenix Hotel in Manila. The event drew a large local and international audience and was graced by distinguished international faculty like Dr. Anthony Arnold, Dr. Neil Miller, Dr. Andrew Lee, Dr. Carmen Chan, Prof. Graham Holder, Dr. Satoshi Kashii, Dr. Ramesh Kekunnaya, Dr. Dan Milea, Dr. An-Gour Wang, Dr. Ryan Collantes, and Dr. Muhammad Sidik (**Figure 8**).



**Figure 6.** NOSP members with foreign guest faculty at the annual meetings of the PAO: (A) Dr. Neil Miller and Prof. Goh Kong Yong in 2014; (B) Dr. Prem Subramanian in 2018, and (C) Dr. Muhammad Sidik and Prof. Clement Tan in 2023.



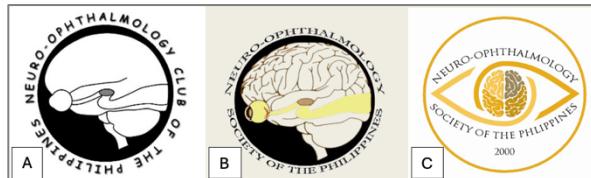
**Figure 7.** NOSP delegates at the 6<sup>th</sup> ASNOS Congress in Kobe, Japan in 2011.



**Figure 8.** NOSP members with international faculty at the welcome reception dinner of the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Asian Neuro-Ophthalmology Society in 2019.

The NOSP currently comprises 41 active members, trained either locally or abroad in countries such as Japan, United States, Singapore, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The Neuro-Ophthalmology Consortium, established by Dr. Tamesis and Dr. Raul Cruz, has produced 15 graduates. The recently established training program at the Philippine General Hospital has trained five graduates, while Ospital ng Makati has produced two graduates to date. While the majority of its members are ophthalmologists, NOSP has also welcomed a neurology-trained neuro-ophthalmologist, reflecting its inclusivity and recognition of the field's multidisciplinary nature.

The very first logo of NOCP, designed by Dr. Dorotheo in 2009, depicted a black-and-white sagittal view of the afferent visual pathway (**Figure 9A**). When NOCP was later renamed to NOSP in 2013, Dr. Erwin Palisoc and Dr. Lourdes Ang collaborated to update the logo, adding a yellow highlight to trace the visual pathway from the eye and incorporating brain convolutions (**Figure 9B**). The current logo of the NOSP was designed in 2019 by Dr. Janice Jordan-Yu under the instruction of the incumbent president, Dr. Reyes (**Figure 9C**).



**Figure 9.** Evolution of the NOSP logos: (A) the original NOCP logo, (B) the modified NOSP logo, and (C) the NOSP logo today.

This year, NOSP celebrates its Silver Jubilee with the theme "NOSP 25@2025: Beyond Vision." At the helm is Dr. Franz Marie Cruz (2025–2026), whose leadership reflects both continuity of the Society's long tradition of educational initiatives while embracing a vigorous, positive outlook of the future, driven by the dynamic younger generation.

As part of the anniversary celebration, NOSP organized a series of webinars for its members, livestreamed on YouTube for the wider PAO community. These featured distinguished international experts: Prof. Umapathi Thirugnanam on nystagmus, Mr. Richard Burdon on the use of botulinum toxin, Prof. Susan Molan on idiopathic intracranial hypertension, and Dr. Toshiaki Goseki on sagging-eye syndrome.

The flagship event was the postgraduate course, "Bridging Theory and Practice in Neuro-Ophthalmology," held on September 27 2025 at the Makati Medical Center Auditorium (**Figure 10**). With eminent faculty Dr. Noel Chan and Prof. Umapathi Thirugnanam, the course underscored NOSP's enduring commitment to academic excellence—ensuring that knowledge is not only shared but also translated into tangible improvements in patient care.

From a modest dinner at Kimpura 25 years ago to recognition as a respected subspecialty society both locally and internationally today, NOSP's journey has been one of passionate commitment for education and intergenerational collegiality. True to its theme of going "Beyond Vision", the Society's story continues toward a future where Filipino neuro-ophthalmology thrives and remains ever relevant.



**Figure 10.** The members of the NOSP with guest lecturers Dr. Noel Chan and Prof. Umapathi Thirugnanam at the 25<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary postgraduate course held last September 27, 2025.

## REFERENCES

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