

This year I have returned to the Philippines after nearly 10 years of tenure at Harvard Medical School. It is not often that we are confronted by a life-changing decision, a fork in the path that brings about significant uncertainty. For some people the decision at this intersection is one that is wrought in indecisiveness and inaction. Often we wait for someone else to act or take initiative and follow that person's lead. What happens when no one acts or takes too long to act as is often the case? One of the greatest hurdles to success is this inaction, complacently waiting for someone else to step forward. The decisions at these points are our responsibility. It is our responsibility to take charge and develop a sense of accountability for the quality and timeliness of our goal. We have the obligation to take action and deliver results.

Beginning with this issue, I have taken over the reign of our esteemed and storied Journal. The Philippine Journal of Ophthalmology (PJO) was first published in 1969 with Romeo V. Fajardo as the editor-in-chief. The inaugural editorial board consisted of the pioneers of Philippine Ophthalmology – Liborio L. Mangubat, Salvador R. Salceda, Ramon T. Batungbacal, Vitaliano B. Bernardino, Ulysses M. Carbajal, Romeo B. Espiritu, Marcos R. Fojas, Gloria D. Lim, Jose M. Marin and Cosme I. Naval – all illustrious names that have shaped the practice of Philippine Ophthalmology through the years.

This issue contains original Philippine eye research, works that include the trends in the causes of blindness over time in Philippine tertiary eye referral centers, phacoemulsification in diabetic individuals, femtosecond laser refractive surgery, comparisons of methods of optical biometry and ultraportable visual field measurements. These scientific articles represent a spectrum of research efforts conducted in the Philippines. There are multiple ongoing epidemiologic studies, clinical research on novel and innovative ophthalmic technology and development of mobile health platforms. Robust epidemiologic research is the basic foundation of pertinent health policies that bring the greatest benefit to the Philippine population with its own unique cultural and geographic features. Philippine Ophthalmology has always been one of the first to adapt innovative technology with the Philippines being one of the earlier countries to adopt femtosecond laser surgery and ultrawide field retinal imaging. Lastly, there is an emerging shift towards mobile health and telemedicine globally. This shift has been particularly suitable for the Philippines which is geographically separated by over 7,100 islands. I am particularly proud of this issue's scientific publications as they highlight the research initiatives that continue to shape Philippine Ophthalmology.

With this issue, several innovations have been incorporated into the publication of the Journal. The publication process is now completely electronic from the submissions to the editorial review. As part of the Journal efforts to emphasize publishing integrity, manuscripts are evaluated using a plagiarism software that matches text from other documents. A comprehensive guide for authors has been created for submission beginning in 2017. The Journal continues to be indexed in the Western Pacific Region Index Medicus (WPRIM). The editorial board has been expanded to include associate editors from Asia, North America and Europe while maintaining the clearly Filipino heritage. In the coming years, I look forward to continuing to steer our beloved Journal to provide a venue for exchange of ideas and information among ophthalmologists and other physicians.

The pillars of Philippine Ophthalmology established the Journal nearly 50 years ago. The Journal has chronicled nearly half a century of Philippine Ophthalmology and will continue to do so for years to come.