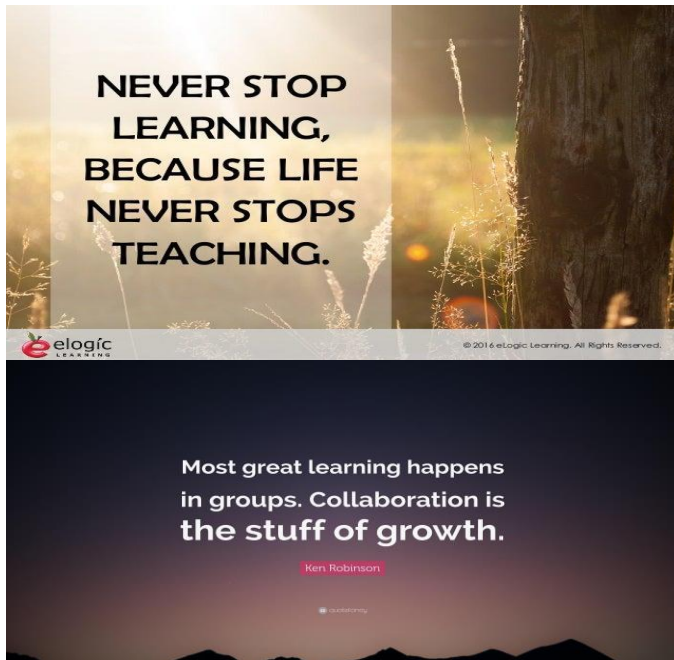


# Visiting Fellowship/Advanced Training in Scleroderma, Myositis, CTD-ILD, and CTD-PH in Nippon Medical School Hospital, Tokyo, Japan



From January to April 2023, Dr. Francis Martin Cuenco, an internist and rheumatologist from Rizal undertook his advanced training/visiting fellowship in Scleroderma, Myositis, and Connective Tissue Disease Associated Interstitial Lung Disease (CTD-ILD) and Connective Tissue Disease Associated Pulmonary Hypertension (CTD-PH) at Department of Allergy and Rheumatology of Nippon Medical School Hospital (NMSH) in Tokyo, Japan. He was under the supervision of Prof. Masataka Kuwana, MD PhD, and Associate Professor Takahisa Gono MD PhD during his stay at NMSH.

Prof. Masataka Kuwana is a professor of rheumatology, chairman of Department of Allergy and Rheumatology, and Director of Scleroderma and Myositis Center of Excellence at NMSH. Prof.

Kuwana serves as the editor-in-chief of Modern Rheumatology and Journal of Scleroderma and Related Disorders. Prof. Kuwana is a known expert on Scleroderma, Myositis, CTD-ILD, and CTD-PH. He has worked on landmark trials in the field including the SENSICIS, FocuSSCed, and AMBITION trials. Prof. Kuwana and his group were the first to discover anti-MDA5 in Myositis which is a myositis specific antibody associated with clinically amyopathic dermatomyositis and rapidly progressive interstitial lung disease.



Dr. Francis Martin Cuenco with Prof. Masataka Kuwana

Associate Prof. Takahisa Gono is also from NMSH and is also an expert on myositis and scleroderma. His works include the Japan CTD-ILD guideline in 2020 and several published studies using the Japanese Patients with Myositis-associated ILD (JAMI) cohort which is a multi-center cohort of 44 centers across Japan.



Dr. Francis Martin Cuenco with Associate Professor Takahisa Gono



Nippon Medical School Hospital (NMSH) in Bunkyo District Tokyo, Japan

During his time at NMSH, Dr. Cuenco had clinical preceptorship and outpatient clinics every week with Prof. Kuwana, A/Prof. Gono, and other rheumatology staff of the department of allergy and rheumatology. He also attended clinical conferences that happened 2x a week in the department and had the opportunity to also be part of the team during in-patient bedside rounds and discussions. There is a weekly discussion topic that was assigned for reporting, didactics, case discussions, or demo/return demo that was especially made for him in this visiting fellowship. He had also the opportunity for hands-on workshop and demos of nailfold capillaroscopy, 6-minute walk test, and musculoskeletal ultrasound. He also got to exchange ideas and interact with his Japanese colleagues/ rheumatologists. In here, there were note of some differences in healthcare system, clinical and hospital practice of Japan and Philippines.





6-Minute Walk Test in a patient with Scleroderma-ILD



Nailfold Capillaroscopy of a patient with Raynaud's Phenomenon

Dr. Cuenco also attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium on Interstitial Lung Disease in Rheumatic Diseases during his visiting fellowship. Prof. Kuwana was a faculty on this symposium organized by the World Scleroderma Foundation.



And as added opportunity, Dr. Cuenco was able to attend the 67<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting of the Japan College of Rheumatology (JCR) from April 24-26, 2023 at Fukuoka, Japan. Prof. Kuwana was part of the organizing committee of the 67<sup>th</sup> Annual JCR meeting.



From Left to Right: Dr. Shirai, Dr. Isomura, Dr. Cuenco, Dr. Pam, Dr. Yamamoto, and Dr. Yoshida at the 67<sup>th</sup> Annual JCR meeting (Dr. Cuenco with Japanese NMSH colleagues)

Dr. Francis Martin Cuenco would like to thank Prof. Masataka Kuwana, A/Prof. Takahisa Gono, and Dr. Yuichiro Shirai for all the learnings and giving him the opportunity for this visiting fellowship/training at Nippon Medical School Hospital (NMSH) Tokyo, Japan. He would also like to thank the International Exchange Center of NMSH and Ms. Wang Shu for the big help in making this training possible. Also, he would like to give a big thanks to Rheumatology Educational Trust Foundation, Inc. (RETFI) and Dr. Sandra Navarra for the support in this visiting fellowship.