

A Journey of Incredible Learning and Personal Growth

Dr. Orlando Ocampo, Head of PGH's COVID Response Task Force, Coordinator for Emergency and Ambulatory Services, and Head of the Emergency Room Management Action Team, Shares What He Gained from the Learning Exchange to NYC Health + Hospitals



Dr. Orlando Ocampo

I wish I could sum up what I experienced during this trip in two sentences, but honestly, it's truly impossible to fully capture everything I gained from this incredible experience.

My rotation in emergency preparedness and managing special pathogens at NYC Health + Hospitals was an eye-opening journey that greatly expanded my understanding of infectious disease control and crisis management within a large, complex city healthcare system. Working with one of the largest and most diverse public hospital networks in the U.S. provided me with priceless insights into how teamwork, coordination, and flexibility are essential when responding to public health emergencies.

Throughout this rotation, I learned about the protocols and strategies used to handle outbreaks of diseases like Ebola, COVID-19, and other emerging pathogens. I gained practical knowledge in infection prevention, quarantine procedures, resource management, and crisis communication. Observing how NYC Health + Hospitals coordinated efforts across multiple departments and collaborated closely with public health agencies really drove home how vital preparedness and teamwork are in managing health crises.

One of the most important lessons I took away was the need for quick, organized responses; clear communication; and thorough training for healthcare workers during emergencies. I also saw firsthand how community engagement and education play a critical role in preventing the spread of infectious diseases — something I'm very eager to bring back and adapt to the Philippines.

This experience has truly changed how I view healthcare, especially in resource-limited settings. I plan to use what I've learned to advocate for stronger emergency preparedness programs, develop protocols for managing special pathogens, and organize training sessions for healthcare workers in my community. Ultimately, I aim to create a playbook tailored to the Philippines that can serve as a guide for our response to future outbreaks. I believe these steps can help us

respond faster, save more lives, and better protect our vulnerable populations.

In summary, my rotation at NYC Health + Hospitals has been a journey of incredible learning and personal growth. It has equipped me with vital skills and insights that I am eager to bring back to the Philippines — contributing to our public health resilience and ensuring we are better prepared for emerging health threats.