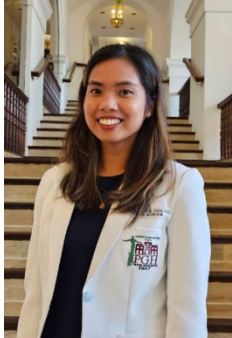


Masci Scholar Personal Testimony



Rochelle Ivy A. Cion, MD

3rd year Resident, Department of Medicine, UP /PGH

Placement Site: National Cancer Center, Kawisha Campus, Chiba, Japan

Placement Date: August 2025

Receiving a scholarship to undertake an elective at the Japanese National Cancer Center in Kashiwa, Chiba in August 2025 was a deeply meaningful milestone in my training. This opportunity allowed me to immerse myself in a highly specialized environment focused on gastric malignancies, broadening both my clinical knowledge and my appreciation for multidisciplinary cancer care.

Being exposed to a center renowned for its expertise provided me with invaluable insights that I would not ordinarily encounter in my home country. One of the most impactful aspects of this experience was learning the intricacies of endoscopic submucosal dissection (ESD). Observing the precision, planning, and technical mastery required for this procedure highlighted its role in minimally invasive management of early gastric cancers.

ESD is not commonly performed in the Philippines, so witnessing it firsthand expanded my understanding of how early detection and advanced endoscopic techniques can significantly alter patient outcomes. It also reinforced the importance of



Dr. Cion with colleagues and mentors at National Cancer Center Japan's Kawisha Campus in Chiba where she completed a two-week observership in the field of gastroenterology with a focus on GI malignancies in August 2025.

training and resource allocation in bringing such innovations to different healthcare systems.

I was equally impressed by the systematic nationwide screening practices for esophageal and gastric malignancies in Japan. The structured approach to early detection demonstrated how public health initiatives can work hand-in-hand with clinical excellence. Seeing how screening programs lead to identification of early-stage disease emphasized the value of preventive strategies and population-level interventions. This experience encouraged me to reflect on how similar frameworks might be adapted to improve outcomes in my own setting.

Another notable practice I observed was the prophylactic use of percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) insertion prior to radiation therapy. Anticipating treatment-related mucositis and its impact on oral intake, clinicians proactively ensured that patients maintained adequate nutrition. This forward-thinking approach illustrated the importance of supportive care and holistic planning in oncology, where anticipating complications is just as critical as treating the malignancy itself.

Overall, I am profoundly thankful for this experience. The scholarship not only expanded my clinical knowledge, but also shaped my perspective on comprehensive cancer care, preventive medicine, and multidisciplinary collaboration. I returned from this elective inspired, motivated, and committed to applying these lessons to improve patient care in my home country. The exposure to advanced techniques, structured screening programs, and proactive supportive care strategies has left a lasting impression on my professional development, and I remain deeply grateful for the opportunity.



Dr. Cion with team members at National Cancer Center Japan's Kawisha Campus in Chiba.