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**ABSTRACT**

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## **LAUNCHING TELEMEDICINE IN PRIMARY CARE FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES**

In the Philippines, socio-economic, geographic, and cultural barriers prevent many Filipinos from obtaining healthcare, resulting in their pursuit of care when health outcomes have already progressed. Healthcare access is especially challenging as a substantial number of healthcare providers pursue work in urban centers, abroad, or in non-medical careers for higher financial stability.

The ABC's for Global Health (ABCGH) Telemedicine Project addresses these issues in underserved Filipino barangays by connecting patients with remotely located doctors through telecommunication. ABCGH utilizes Doctorgram kits containing Bluetooth-compatible medical equipment such as a stethoscope, thermometer, pulse oximetry, EKG, and a mobile application enabling video connection.

By training barangay health workers on the usage of the telemedicine toolkit, we can effectively deliver primary care to patients, transcending geographical barriers by directly connecting doctors and patients for synchronous, virtual visits. Our pilot program will select three communities, the control being a community already receiving the standard monthly care visits by our medical mobile clinic.

The two intervention communities will be selected from each of our partner Philippine medical schools, and will receive standard care and additional Telemedicine training and services. Biometric information will be tracked such as blood pressure, blood sugar, weight, adherence to treatment, and frequency of medical visits.

Projected findings are increased health visits, better control of chronic diseases, improved health literacy amongst patients, and decreased numbers of hospitalizations and emergency visits. Longterm, we envision the mass production of Doctorgram kits and program expansion in underserved regions in the Philippines, and similar low and middle-income countries.

Our Doctorgram kits have completed production and we are currently launching our pilot program in Pampanga, Philippines. The two intervention communities will be selected by each of our partner medical schools in the Philippines, St. Luke's College of Medicine and Our Lady of Fatima University College of Medicine. ABCGH plans to expand our telemedicine program to partner with more medical schools and communities.

**COMMUNITY PARTNER**

**ABC'S FOR GLOBAL HEALTH**