

"RHEUM for Christmas Celebration"

By Imee Esquibel, MD



December is a season of joy. We can already feel that Christmas is just around the corner. Everyone seems busy with a lot of preparations. However, for our family and friends who are suffering from any sickness

JOY



especially an autoimmune disease, they may see it as any ordinary day with all the chronic pains and much more symptoms they experience and suffer. Thus, during this time of the year they need some time off and have a break to enjoy and have

some fun. So last December 8, 2019 we celebrated a Christmas party for patients inflicted with autoimmune disease at *Hotel Alejandro Roofdeck*, around 12 noon. There was a total of 44 attendees, 25 of which are patients with the following breakdown: lupus (9), rheumatoid arthritis (7), psoriatic arthritis (6), scleroderma (1), henoch schonlein purpura (1) and multiple sclerosis (1). Together with their family and friends they shared some of their precious time in attending the said event. Despite the recent typhoon "TISOY" that struck the western and northern part of Samar, some patients expressed their sadness for not being able to attend and would try next year.

"MEET AND GREET"

The party started with an opening prayer led by *Mr. Karlo Montero*, a good friend who graciously hosted the event. Then lunch was served where the patients had



their time to interact and meet others who shared their experiences and stories. Also during lunch, videos shared by Rheumatology Educational Trust Foundation Inc (RETFI) presented overviews on various autoimmune diseases including rheumatoid arthritis (RA), systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), psoriatic arthritis (PsA), and ankylosing spondylitis (AS).



To formally start the program, I gave a short opening message and sincerely thank all of them who took the effort to attend despite the rainy weather and for them to enjoy the rest of the party. It was followed by an intermission number by singing “Feliz Navidad” and “We Wish you a Merry Christmas” led by *Mr. Karlo Montero* and *Mr. Julius Uyanguren*. A few raffle items were drawn for the patients. And a few games were played. The first was “*SIOPAO, SIOMAI, SUMAN*” where a total of 8 players were chosen and specific actions were made of every word. The winner were the last 2 contestants *Ms. Eva Katangkatang* and *Mrs. Emma Cabanacan*. Both of them received prizes for their win.



psoriatic
ARTHRITIS
WARRIORS!

FAMILY

rheumatoid
arthritis

We also played "Pinoy Henyo" which was participated by the patients divided into 2 teams each with 6 members. All enjoyed the simple yet exciting game.



The last game was "PIK PAK BOOM" which 20 participants enthusiastically enjoyed. The championship round was played by *Fritzie Mandia (SLE)*, 13 year old who won over *Glacy Mae Catipon (PsA)*, 16 year old senior high student.



Lupus
Warrior

I am a
SCLERODERMA WARRIOR.
I fight an
UGLY WAR
inside my body
EVERY SINGLE DAY.
I may not win
this battle,
but I will
NOT
go down without a
FIGHT!
-Heidi Rader-



The party ended with some more raffles and a photo op with the patients and with their family and friends. It was indeed a fun-filled afternoon with all the attendees present and eager to participate with the activities. Some of them voiced out on the next Christmas party which they are already looking forward to.



"Sometimes
you get to choose your battles
& sometimes
the battle
chooses you."



I would like to acknowledge and thank those who helped in making the 1st Patient's Christmas Party a success.

Ms. Belen Fernandez, my secretary who helped in organizing and facilitating the party.

Mr. Karlo Montero and **Mr. Julius Uyanguren**

To my *pharma friends* who contributed in their own little ways for the door prizes and raffle items

To **RETFI** who gave me permission in using the educational videos about the different autoimmune diseases.

To my *family* especially my *husband* who supported me since day one of this preparation.

Lastly to my **patients and their families** who took their time to be part of the celebration.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE!!





Attendees:

| <u>Patient</u> | <u>Companion</u> | <u>Address</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Tarrayo, Lalaine (SLE) | Sanlie Tarrayo | Calbayog Samar |
| 2. Agner Virgilio (PsA) | Anita Virgilio | Palo Leyte |
| 3. Eva Katangkatang (PsA) | Matet Katangkatang | Jaro Leyte |
| 4. Shirley Tangpuz (RA) | neighbor | Tanauan Leyte |
| 5. Daylinda Erinco (RA) | Esmeralda Palconit | Tacloban City |
| 6. Floro Atok (PsA) | Trinidad Atok | Tacloban City |
| 7. Glacy Mae Catipon (PsA) | Lizandra Catipon/ Edgardo Catipon | Tolosa Leyte |
| 8. Ma. Elizabeth Peñaranda (SLE) | Grace Montes | Tacloban City |
| 9. Marie Charlotte Cabigon (MS) | - | Tacloban City |
| 10. Hannah Cecilio (HSP) | - | Tacloban City |
| 11. Fritzie Mandia (SLE) | mother and twin sister | Tacloban City |
| 12. Ann Diana Princess Holoyohoy (SLE) | Daisy Holoyohoy | Julita Leyte |
| 13. Mary Grace Holasca (SLE) | Jason Holasca | Barugo Leyte |
| 14. May Adrielle Aton (SLE) | Grace Aton | Eastern Samar |
| 15. Amy de Paz (RA) | - | Tacloban City |
| 16. Julie Ann Cabojoc (dcSsc) | brother in law | Sta. Fe Leyte |
| 17. Emma Cabanacan (RA) | - | Tacloban City |
| 18. Jayson Custodio (PsA) | - | Dulag Leyte |
| 19. Nadine Nicart (RA) | Jane Louwella Nicart | Eastern Samar |
| 20. Jasmine Joy Perante (SLE) | Nimfa Perante | Tacloban City |
| 21. Danyssa Bea Descartin (SLE) | Khyryssa Belle Descartin | Tacloban City |
| 22. Gemma Sabungan (RA) | Ma. Leonora Peliño | Tacloban City |
| 23. Lucita Morante (RA) | Ramon Morante | Tacloban City |
| 24. Retchen Rama (SLE) | Xian Kristoff Enicina | Tacloban City |
| 25. Roche Ecal (PsA) | Lae Cedric Ecal | Tacloban City |