

## October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Time stands still for no one. But for those of us living with cancer, time came to a screeching halt when the specter of COVID-19 became a crippling reality in March 2020, bringing the medical community and entire country to its knees. Living with cancer in the middle of a pandemic just adds another layer of uncertainty, holding back consultations, tests, treatments and other life-saving interventions. But if there's anything we know about cancer warriors, it's push us, and we push back harder.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and ICanServe Foundation continues its mission to raise awareness and support Filipino women at risk with a renewed sense of urgency. Transportation services and personal protective equipment are just some of the ways ICanServe responded to the pandemic so patient navigators could safely guide newly diagnosed women through their cancer odyssey and arm them with crucial information.

It is said that alone we can do little, but together we can do much. In these dark times, the impact of our community coming together and pushing back against the pandemic in concrete ways is more powerful than ever. Together, we share cancer resources and raise awareness online. Together, we find new ways to get you there and make those appointments. Together, we bid cancer goodbye for now and hopefully for good. So come—your ICanServe Family will walk with you every step of the way.

### GUIDELINES FOR EARLY DETECTION



Learn and perform a breast self-exam (BSE) monthly.



Do a monthly BSE. Have an annual clinical breast exam by a doctor, or trained health worker.



Continue monthly BSE. Schedule an annual clinical breast exam. Have a mammogram every year.

**EARLY BREAST CANCER DETECTION IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION**

A member of:



### ICANSERVE Mission Statement

The ICANSERVE Foundation provides hope and help to women with breast cancer. It promotes and conducts early breast cancer detection programs in local communities providing sustained access to accurate diagnosis, timely treatments and patient navigation.

### Board Members

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## Bakuna at Breast Cancer

Dr. Anna Lisa T. Ong-Lim, Infectious and Tropical Disease expert and professor at the University of the Philippines Manila College of Medicine-Philippine General Hospital, assured breast cancer patients currently undergoing treatment that it was safe to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

In an online forum, “Bakuna at Breast Cancer: Everything You Need to Know” that streamed live on the ICANSERVE Facebook page on May 29, Ong-Lim said, “We want to target people who have the highest risk of getting sick with severe COVID or dying from COVID. These are people with chronic heart disease, chronic lung disease, kidney disease, diabetics, people with hypertension, people who are obese, cancer survivors, cancer

patients. Because cancer patients are immunocompromised—their immune systems are really not at their peak—they would be really susceptible to COVID if they ever get the infection.

So they are really prime targets for protection.”

TV host Daphne Oseña-Paez, an ICANSERVE volunteer, emceed the event in which participants aired their concerns about adverse reactions to the vaccine. Dr. Ong-Lim fielded the questions saying, “From the

observations so far, there hasn’t been a higher rate of adverse reactions among the cancer community compared to the rest of the population who have been vaccinated... If you’re on active treatment, on radiotherapy, on chemotherapy, you actually qualify. Consult with your clinician. Get your clearance. But the concern is not safety. It’s really how well you respond to it and that’s still better than not being vaccinated,” Ong-Lim is herself a breast cancer survivor and a member of ICanServe.



## WE CAN SERVE: All Aboard

The ICanServe Foundation held its annual board of directors’ meeting virtually on April 10, 2021. The organization remains steadfastly dedicated to its mission to continue to raise awareness and empower women with information.





# PATIENT POWER SUMMIT

ICanServe Foundation's 3rd Patient Power Summit saw the online gathering of 118 patient advocates representing 34 patient groups. The 2-day event, held on September 4 and 11, allowed patient leaders from cancer organizations and foundations the opportunity to learn from experts about marketing, fundraising, mental health, and where to seek financial aid for breast cancer diagnosis and treatment.

A session moderated by Cancer Coalition Philippines (CCP) president Paul Perez with Melina Avila of Living Hope Survivors Club in Tagum City, Marivic Bugasto of Minda's Buddies in Baguio City,

Melissa de Leon-Joseph of Stage Zero by Project Pink in Muntinlupa City, and Karen Lluch of Thrive CDO Breast Cancer Awareness Advocacy Group, revealed their shared experiences as founders or active core members of their respective support groups.

Experts who generously gave time and dropped knowledge to help patient leaders—or 'sheroes'—were multi-talented advertising and film creative Marlon Rivera, marketing and communications guru Matec Villanueva of Ateneo de Manila University; Lia Infante and Ani Mata-Valtersson of InTouch Philippines (which runs a crisis hotline as well as counseling services);

## THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ATTENDED PATIENT POWER SUMMIT 2021!

- Amang Cancer Curesaders
- Aruga Foundation, Inc.
- Bacolod Kadughan Foundation for Breast Cancer, Inc.
- Bosom Buddies
- Bosom Care: The Bacolod Breast Cancer Support Group
- Buhay Ka! Isabela Cancer Support Group
- Cancer Fighter Support Group of PGH
- CANSSA - Cagayan De Oro City
- Corridor of Hope St. Luke's Global City
- EMBREACE - TMC Breast Cancer Support Group
- Faithful Journey
- Hearts of Hope
- Hope Unlimited
- ICanshare Antipolo
- Kaboobs
- Knitted Knockers MNL
- La Trinidad Ribbons of Hope
- Living Hope Cancer Survivors Club
- Marikina Breast Friends
- Mindanao Breast Cancer Support and Empowerment Association
- Minda's Buddies
- PGH Cancer Survivors Organization
- Philippine Foundation for Breast Cancer Inc.
- RT Beauties
- Stage Zero by Project Pink
- Survive Strong
- Taguig City Pink Crusaders
- The Carewell Community Foundation
- The Pinky Town Warriors
- Thrive CDO Breast Cancer Awareness Advocacy Group
- USTH CANSHARE
- Warrior in Me Cancer Support





PHOTO: Patient Power Summit host and ICanServe Board Member Bibeth Orteza with surprise guest Hidilyn Diaz, 2020 Olympic Gold Medalist

and Romeo Marcaida of the Patient Services Unit of the Philippine Cancer Society.

Participants also spent time in virtual breakout rooms to discuss ways to help one another, as well as to meet other fellow 'sheroes'. CCP vice president Menchie Auste helped synthesize the results of group discussions on the second day. The last day reached a climax with inspirational words from Olympic gold medalist Hidilyn Diaz who told the participants, "Huwag kayong susuko. Ang buhay niyo, ang ginagawa ninyo ay inspirasyon sa ibang tao." (Don't give up. Your life, what you do, are an inspiration to other people).

ICanServe founding president Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala ended the two-day summit encouraging continued collaboration among the participants. "It's a historical moment in the cancer space, as we witness the evolution of a new frontier we call the patient movement. We're all founders, pioneers, and first or second generation volunteers. We have to be navigators for each other, as we shape a future, free of cancer... May today ignite our total commitment to end breast cancer."



# ATING DIBDIBIN OKTOBER SCHEDULE

All forums will stream live on the ICanServe FB page

<b>Oct. 2   4pm-6pm</b>	<b>Oct. 6   2pm</b>	<b>Oct. 14   1pm-4pm</b>	<b>Oct. 16-17   1pm</b>	<b>Oct. 18   1pm</b>
<b>Cancer Chat</b>  ICANSERVE Cebu Chapter, Cebu Fuente Rotary, Philippine Society of Medical Oncology, Philippine Radiation Oncology Society, Philippine College of Surgeons Central Eastern Visayas Chapter	<b>Usapang Dibdiban</b>  City Government of Tagum City, Living Hope Cancer Survivor's Club	<b>Ating Dibdibin Breast Cancer Awareness Webinar</b>  Muntinlupa City, City Health Office, Gender & Development	<b>Pink Perspectives</b>  ICANSERVE Cebu, Rotary Club of Cebu Fuente, Rotaract Clubs of Cebu Fuente, Cebu Doctors Medical School, Asian Medical Students' Association - Accentuating Lives through Service & Advocacy Student Council, Community Outreach Resource & Education, Community Based (CB), University of San Carlos (USC), University of the Visayas (UV)	<b>Breast Cancer Awareness Month</b>  Malabon City
<b>Oct. 21   1pm</b>	<b>Oct. 22   1pm-3pm</b>	<b>Oct. 25   1pm-4pm</b>	<b>Oct. 26   2pm-4pm</b>	<b>Oct. 30   1pm</b>
<b>Dibdibang Usapan</b>  Minda's Buddies, Baguio and Dept. of Information and Communications - Benguet Provincial Office	<b>Ating dibdib, alagaan ng Makabagong San Juan</b>  San Juan City	<b>OKtober... Check Yourself: Breast Cancer Awareness</b>  Valenzuela City	<b>OKtober... Check Yourself</b>  Quezon City Medical Society, Philippine Medical Association, Saint Michael's College of Laguna, Zonta Club of Laguna, Ever Bilena, Core Theory Multimedia	<b>OKtober... Check Yourself: A Breast Cancer Awareness Webinar</b>  Taguig City

## PARTNERS IN ACTION

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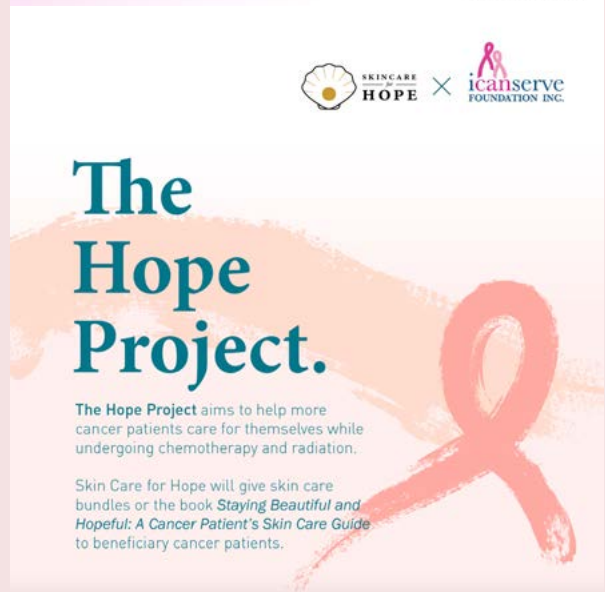
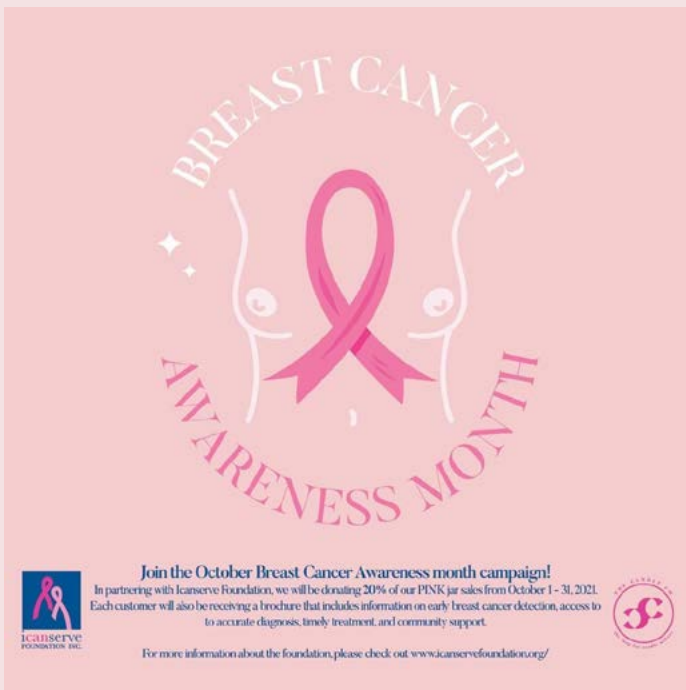
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# PARTNERS IN ACTION



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Zumba



## DOH, ICANSERVE, PHA and Novartis join efforts to disseminate education videos

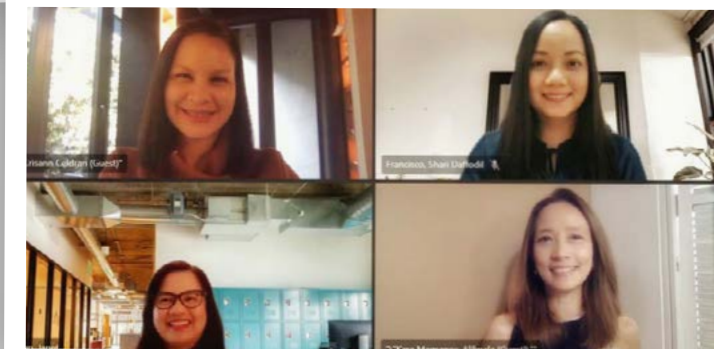
For Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October, the Department of Health (DOH), patient advocacy group ICanServe Foundation, Philippine Hospital Association, and Novartis have joined forces to promote awareness of breast cancer through the dissemination of a series of patient education videos.

“Kamay Gabay, Sariling Salat sa Suso” is a series of 4-minute animated Breast Self-Examination (BSE) tutorial videos in Cebuano and Tagalog. It aims to teach Filipino women how and when to do a BSE to facilitate early detection and treatment of breast cancer.

“Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Filipino women, and the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the country, next to lung and liver cancer. Breast self-examination or BSE is a simple but effective way for women to detect any noticeable changes in their breast. Early detection of changes in the breast and prompt medical consultation will increase the likelihood of successful treatment,” said Dr. Beverly Lorraine Ho, Director of the DOH Health Promotion Bureau.

Earlier in the year, Novartis and ICanServe forged a partnership to develop and distribute the video. In celebration of International Women’s Day, the animated educational video was launched on March 8, 2021.

TOP: Novartis video screen guard; BOTTOM (from top left, clockwise): Crisann Celdran, ICanServe Chairman; Dr. Shari Francisco, Novartis Oncology Medical Director; Kara Alikpala, ICanServe Founding President; and Ms. Janet Yap, Novartis Oncology General Manager.



## Philippines to Host SEABCS 2022

The 5th South East Asia Breast Cancer Symposium (SEABCS), hosted by the Indonesian Breast Cancer Foundation, was held on July 31 - August 1, 2021. It was the first virtual SEABCS with the theme "Putting Patients at the Heart of Breast Cancer Control" attended by over a thousand clinicians, care partners, advocates and cancer survivors representing twenty-two countries. Held annually, the SEABCS aims to

engage regional women's health advocates to improve capacity for breast cancer awareness and education on early detection, optimum treatment and better quality of life for patients. ICanServe Founding President Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala shared her tips on how to get a policy or law to pass and likewise invited the participants to attend next year's symposium. The Philippines has been designated as the 2022 host.

### Give the GIFT of HOPE

This year's ornament and theme is the TREE OF LIFE, a universal symbol of growth, togetherness and strength. It is a reminder that we can weather the toughest of storms together.

Each hand-painted ornament comes in a gift box that says a contribution was made on behalf of the recipient to support ICanServe's early breast cancer detection campaigns. The versatile gift box can be reused and regifted for any occasion throughout the year.

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