

Philippine Consulate, DFA help bring home paralyzed Filipina

Written by Philippine Consulate General - New York
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Consul Kerwin Tate (center) hands the \$10,000 check to Cathy Coniega as Philippine Government share for the medical repatriation of Mary Ann Coniega. At right is Mark Reyes, case manager of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York.

Assistance-to-Nationals (ATN) Officers from the Philippine Consulate General in New York delivered a check worth U.S.\$10,000 for the repatriation of Filipina Mary Ann Coniega on March 29, 2017.

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Coniega came to the United States in 2016 and had been working in the New York area, when she suffered a massive stroke on Jan. 28, 2017.

The stroke left her in a condition known as “locked in syndrome.”

Locked-in syndrome (LIS) is a condition in which a patient is aware but cannot move or communicate verbally due to complete paralysis of nearly all voluntary muscles in the body except for vertical eye movements and blinking.

ATN representatives from the Consulate were informed by Mount Sinai Hospital about Coniega’s situation.

The ATN section quickly informed the DFA of Coniega’s condition, and the necessity of bringing her home, since she has no family in the U.S.

The check was handed over to Cathy Coniega, Mary Ann’s sister, who flew in from the Philippines to assist her sister and work for her repatriation to the Philippines.

The Department of Foreign Affairs’ Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs (OUMWA) quickly authorized assistance to help pay for Coniega’s repatriation, in cooperation with Mount Sinai Hospital.

The family of Coniega expressed its appreciation to the Philippine Consulate, as well as the Department of Foreign Affairs for the assistance in getting her home.

Coniega was repatriated in the morning of March 31, 2017.