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SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

P. S. R. No. 1464

Introduced by SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SYSTEM OF AVAILMENT OF BENEFIT PACKAGES BY PATIENTS OR BENEFICIARIES, PARTICULARLY THE HEMODIALYSIS PACKAGE, UNDER THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM OF THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION (PHILHEALTH)

WHEREAS, the Philippine Constitution provides that *"The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."*¹

WHEREAS, pursuant to such constitutional guarantee, Republic Act (RA) No. 7875 or the *National Health Insurance Act of 1995* was enacted whereby a national health insurance program was institutionalized and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation was established, with the following general objectives, among others: *"a) provide all citizens of the Philippines with the mechanism to gain financial access to health services; b) create the National Health Insurance Program, hereinafter referred to as the Program, to serve as the means to help the people pay for health care services; c) prioritize and accelerate the provision of health services to all Filipinos, especially that segment of the population who cannot afford such services;"*²

WHEREAS, in 2004, RA No. 9241 introduced amendments to RA 7875 and defined the National Health Insurance Program as the compulsory health insurance program of the government that shall provide **universal** health insurance coverage and ensure affordable, acceptable, available and accessible health care services for all citizens of the Philippines;³

WHEREAS, in 2013, RA No. 10606, further amending RA 7875, strengthened the universality principle of the National Health Insurance Program and provides for the **mandatory** coverage of all Filipinos under PHILHEALTH, to wit: *"All citizens of the Philippines shall be covered by the National Health Insurance Program. In accordance with the principles of universality and compulsory coverage enunciated in Section 2(b) and 2(l) hereof, implementation of the Program shall ensure sustainability of coverage and continuous enhancement of the quality of service: Provided, That the Program shall*

¹ Section 11, Article XIII, Philippine Constitution

² Section 3, Republic Act 7875 (1995), as amended

³ Section 1, Republic Act (RA) No. 9241, amending RA Sec. 4 (v), RA No. 7875

*be compulsory in all provinces, cities and municipalities nationwide, notwithstanding the existence of LGU-based health insurance programs: x x x*⁴

WHEREAS, it was reported that kidney disease, an affliction or complication usually associated with diabetes, hypertension and glomerulonephritis, is considered the 7th leading cause of death in the country⁵;

WHEREAS, the growing prevalence of chronic kidney disease among Filipinos is quite alarming as it was reported that around "23,000 Filipinos underwent dialysis due to kidney failure in 2013, or nearly four times higher than the 4,000 cases recorded in 2004, or a 10 to 15 percent increase a year"⁶;

WHEREAS, to address the upward prevalence rate of chronic kidney disease among Filipinos, PHILHEALTH initiated coverage package on hemodialysis treatment for patients with kidney ailments, which coverage was recently increased to 90 hemodialysis sessions per year (from 45 sessions/year) at P2,500.00 per session⁷;

WHEREAS, despite the universality and compulsory nature of PHILHEALTH's coverage, we have received reports that the public, particularly those belonging to the marginalized sector stricken with kidney disease, may not be even aware of the availability of PHILHEALTH benefit packages, particularly hemodialysis treatment package, because those in need of hemodialysis failed to avail of the package or were even discouraged from availing of the said package as they still painstakingly and continuously obtain funds for their hemodialysis treatment from relatives, friends, neighbors and other benefactors;

WHEREAS, it is submitted that PHILHEALTH should have an effective information dissemination to the public on its coverage or benefit packages, particularly on hemodialysis, that are available to patients or beneficiaries, and an efficient system on the availment thereof by Filipino patients;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the system of availment of benefit packages, particularly the hemodialysis package, by patients or beneficiaries under the National Health Insurance Program of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH).


CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

⁴ Section 4, (RA No. 10606, amending Section 6 of RA No. 7875

⁵ <http://www.manilatimes.net/kidney-disease-phs-7th-leading-cause-of-death/77716/>

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ http://www.philhealth.gov.ph/news/2015/extends_dialysis.html