

'19 JUL 23 P5:07

SENATE
S. B. No. 698

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Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

AN ACT
AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO SET AND APPROVE THE
BED CAPACITY AND THE SERVICE CAPABILITY OF ALL DOH HOSPITALS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Health services must be distributed equitably to the whole population in terms of modern equipment, upgraded facilities and medical professionals to ensure access and availability of hospital services to the Filipinos. As provided in Section 11, Article XIII of the Constitution, "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 people at affordable cost." It is imperative that public health care must be affordable, effective and convenient. In fact, Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act – which this Representation was one of the authors in the Senate – led to all Filipinos having quality access to healthcare as they are now covered by the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) regardless of their financial stature. We have also pushed legislations for both treatment and prevention of illnesses.

Unfortunately, with the increase in population, it is common for residents from far-flung provinces to travel for medical treatment purposes because of limited health services in their areas. The influx of patients leads to longer waiting time due to lack of available space in the hospital thus delaying the treatment. The patient needs to carry additional burden of sustaining the travel expenses which should be intended for his medical, surgical or therapeutic interventions.

According to data gathered by the Philippine Statistics Authority released in 2018, in 2016 six (6) out of ten (10) deaths are not medically attended. Out of the 582,183 registered deaths, 342,705 (59.2%) were unattended and 236,904 (40.5%) were medically attended. Furthermore, in the 2013 National Demographic and

Health Survey, only one (1) in every nine (9) Filipinos visited a health facility or sought advice/treatment (30 days preceding the survey). The quality and coverage of public health services deteriorated particularly in the poor provinces. The maldistribution of hospital beds as well as limited and dilapidated facilities resulted in inaccessibility and inadequacy of hospital delivery system.

The 70 DOH retained public hospitals, of which 53 are general hospitals, 14 specialty hospitals, 2 infirmaries and 1 psychiatric facility complement the devolved district, provincial and private hospitals in providing health care services. In 2016, the average bed occupancy rate of all DOH Hospitals is 136%. Moreover, 61% of these hospitals have bed occupancy higher than the authorized bed capacity.

Presently, a DOH hospital can only increase its bed capacity and upgrade its service capability through legislation. The average duration of legislation process for this purpose is ranging from eight months to three years. The mismatch in bed occupancy compounded by lack of sufficient manpower and health services hinders the quality health care for patients and, if not very far, inadequate to sustain the growing health needs of the populace.

Cognizant of the above considerations, there is a need to expedite the process for providing quality health services to the Filipino people. This bill seeks to authorize the Department of Health to administratively determine and approve the bed capacity and service capability of all DOH hospitals as necessary. The DOH has the capacity and expertise to assess gaps in service delivery. By putting these government hospitals under the jurisdiction of the DOH, which manages these hospitals in the first place, shall increase the efficiency in the delivery of health services to sustain the increasing demands of patients.


In upholding the constitutional mandate to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 Section 1. *Purpose, Scope, and Coverage.* – This Act shall streamline the
2 process of approving changes in the authorized bed capacity and service capability
3 of all Department of Health (DOH) hospitals.

4 Sec. 2. *Authority to Approve.* – Authority is hereby granted to the DOH to
5 adjust and approve the authorized bed capacity and service capability. Thereafter,
6 the DOH shall, through an administrative order, determine the bed capacity and
7 service capability of DOH hospitals, subject to specific guidelines that it shall issue
8 and promulgate.

9 Sec. 3. *Conversion, Upgrading and Modernization of DOH Hospitals.* – The
10 DOH shall upgrade and modernize the existing equipment and facilities of DOH
11 hospitals to ensure that it shall be responsive to the health needs of the people
12 commensurate to the bed capacity and service capability.

13 Sec. 4. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement and carry out
14 the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual budget of the DOH.

15 Sec. 5. *Annual Report to Congress.* – The DOH shall provide Congress,
16 through the House Committee on Health and the Senate Committee on Health and
17 Demography, an annual report of hospitals with approved bed capacity and
18 service capability, along with the necessary funding requirements.

1 Sec. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)*. – The DOH shall come up
2 with the IRR, within ninety (90) days after the law's effectivity.

3 Sec. 7. *Separability Clause*. – If any portion or provision of this Act is
4 subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are
5 not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

6 Sec. 8. *Repealing Clause*. – All other laws, acts, presidential decrees,
7 executive orders, presidential proclamations, issuances, rules and regulations, or
8 parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions of this
9 Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

10 Sec. 9. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
11 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,