

Fifteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2927

Introduced by Rep. Godofredo V. Arquiza and Rep. David L. Kho

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to create a National Center for Geriatric Health for the senior citizens and the elderly.

Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that:

“The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavour 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 endeavour to provide free medical care to paupers”

It is the mandatory duty of the State to protect and promote the right to health of every Filipino by making quality and adequate health care available and accessible to everybody, especially the poor Senior Citizens and the elderly.

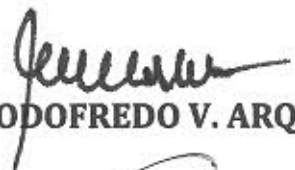
This bill aims to create a National Geriatric Health Centre and Gerontology Research Institute, having the nature of a corporate body, which will respond to the various demands of all Filipinos throughout the land.

This Health Centre and Gerontology Research Institute will focus on the medical needs of Senior citizens and the Elderly and will be the first of its kind in the Philippines. While we have a National Children's Hospital, however we don't have any Geriatric Health Centre or Gerontology Research Institute in the country. This will ensure the social, psychological

and biological aspects of aging people, as well as improve studies on the diseases of our elderly.

This bill likewise encourages the active involvement of the private sector as well as a few Congressmen and Senators who would like to help in the fulfillment of this mission.

In view of the foregoing considerations, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



GODOFREDO V. ARQUIZA



DAVID L. KHO

Fifteenth Congress
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HOUSE BILL NO. 2927

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AN ACT CREATING NATIONAL GERIATRIC HEALTH CENTRE
AND GERONTOLOGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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

Section 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “National Geriatric Health Centre and Gerontology Research Institute of 2010.”

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that:

“The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavour 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 endeavour to provide free medical care to paupers”

Section 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, these terms are defined as follows:

(a) “Senior citizen” or “elderly” shall mean any resident citizen of the Philippines at least sixty (60) years old or older as defined in Republic Act No. 9257, otherwise known as the “Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003.”

(b) “Geriatric Health Service” shall mean medical services provided by a Geriatrician;

(c) “Geriatrician” – is a Medical Doctor who has passed the necessary training and examination and specializes in the field of Geriatrics;

(d) Geriatrics – is the branch of medical science devoted to the study of the biological and physical changes and diseases of older adults; It aims to promote health and prevent and treat diseases and disabilities of older adults;

(e) Integrated Delivery of Geriatric Health Services” is a hospital and community based medical and psycho-social services provided to senior citizens by a multi-disciplinary team;

(f) Palliative Services is a specialized care for people who are living with an advanced disease;

(g) Palliative Care is any form of medical care or treatment that concentrates on reducing the severity of the symptoms of disease. The goal is to prevent and relieve suffering and improve the quality of life for people facing serious or complex illness;

(h) Tertiary hospital is a hospital that has a full complement of services including general medicine, surgery and psychiatry.

SECTION 4. Creation of the National Geriatric Health Centre and Gerontology Research Institute – There is hereby created a corporate body, for the primary benefit of Senior citizens or the Elderly to be known as the National Geriatric Health Centre and Gerontology Research Institute, herein referred to as NGHC, which is hereby categorized as a government owned and controlled corporation.

SECTION 5. Board of Trustees – The NGHC shall be administered by a Board of Trustees composed of of the following:

- a) Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) – as Chairperson of the Board;
- b) Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) – as Assistant Chairperson of the Board;
- c) Senators from the Senate;

- d) Congressmen from the House of Representatives; and
- e) Three philanthropists from the private sector.
- f.) The number of Board of Trustees must not exceed fifteen (15) members.

SECTION 6. Purposes and Objectives. – The purposes and objectives of the NGHC are to provide the following:

- (a) Hospital-based services – there shall be medical facilities and equipment necessary to provide chronic, long term and palliative services with its wards to be divided into the following: Dementia, Long Term Care, Palliative Care, Respite Care and other units as may be deemed necessary;
- (b) Community based services – to develop and implement community based program in partnership with local government units, conduct research and external resource outsourcing to implement community based integrated geriatric health services and conduct training necessary for the social functioning of the senior citizens and their families, utilizing the multi-disciplinary team approaches;
- (c) Education – to provide field of specialization in Geriatrics and Gerontology, conduct post graduate training and short term courses for medical doctors and medical allied professionals subject to the Joint Guidelines to be issued by the Department of Health (DOH), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technological Employment and Skills Education Development Authority (TESDA);
- (d) Program Development, Research, Medical/Technical Assistance and Quality Assurance – to develop cutting edge research and program to combat diseases of old age in promoting active and healthy care, provide necessary consultancy advice, technical assistance and standard setting/registration to Geriatric ward in every Tertiary Hospital, Nursing Homes, Retirement Homes, and Residential Center catering to the health and social functioning needs of senior citizens, subject to the Joint Guidelines mentioned in the immediately preceding paragraph; and

(e) to establish Geriatric Wards manned by medical personnel with expertise and/or training in Geriatrics – in every government and private tertiary hospital, subject to the Guidelines that shall be issued by the Department of Health.

SECTION 7. Powers – For the attainment and furtherance of the above-cited purposes and objectives, the NGHC, as a body corporate acting through its Board of Trustees, shall have all the powers pertaining to a juridical person, and is authorized, among other things to:

- a. acquire, hold and own in any manner, property of whatever nature or description, and to dispose of such property, under any mode of encumbrance or conveyance;
- b. enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every kind and for any purpose with any person, firm, association or corporation, whether public, private, domestic or foreign;
- c. mortgage, lease, sell, transfer, convey or otherwise dispose of its properties;
- d. solicit and receive donations, endowments and funds in the form of contributions, whether in cash or in kind, from both the public and private sectors and from domestic and foreign sources;
- e. open such accounts in banks and other financial institutions, and to disburse such funds or invest the same as the Board of Trustees may direct or authorize to accomplish or advance the purposes or interests of the NGHC;
- f. invite foreign or local specialists and similar experts in various medical fields to train the personnel and residents of the NGHC;
- g. send the personnel of the NGHC to research on medical institutes for advance training or observation, and to attend international or regional conventions, conferences or seminars as the Board of Trustees may deem necessary, to accomplish the purposes and objectives of the NGHC;
- h. enter into such agreements and arrangements with other medical or similar institutions, domestic or foreign, as may be

deemed desirable by the Board of Trustees toward promoting the purposes and objectives of the NGHC;

i. adopt a set of by-laws and regulations, policies, guidelines and procedures consistent with law and the provisions of this Act to govern the administration and operation of the NGHC; and

j. do all such other acts and things as are or may be necessary for or incidental to the accomplishment of the purposes and objectives of the NGHC.

SECTION 8. Program for Indigents. – The Board of Trustees shall ensure that the NGHC shall adopt and enforce a program for indigents. The number of beds allocated for indigent patients shall not be less than twenty percent (20%) of the total number of hospital beds.

SECTION 9. Security of Tenure of Civil Service Officers and Employees of the NGHC – The provisions of Republic Act No. 6656 entitled “An Act to Protect the Security of Tenure of Civil Service Officers and Employees in the Implementation of Government Reorganization” existing civil service laws, rules and regulations and other applicable laws shall apply to all officers and employees of the NGHC except to the members of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 10. Tax Exemption and other Privileges – Being a non-profit, non-stock corporation organized primarily to provide delivery of integrated geriatric health services to promote healthy ageing in the Philippines and help combat the increasing incidence of degenerative diseases, frailty and disability and provide services for senior citizens with the threatening diseases in the Philippines –

(a) all donations, contributions, endowments and equipment and supplies imported by the NGHC for its actual use and benefit shall be exempt from tax of any nature or kind;

(b) the NGHC shall be exempt from payment of taxes, charges and fees being imposed by the government, its political subdivisions or instrumentalities, including local government units for equipment purchased for its use; and

(c) the NGHC may request and receive assistance from the different Agencies, Bureaus, Offices or Instrumentalities of the government, including the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) in the pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

SECTION 11. Government Subsidy and Contributions – The amount of Three Hundred Million Pesos (Php300,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated as contribution of the National Government for the initial operations and maintenance of the NGHC for the year 2010. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued operation and maintenance of the NGHC shall be duly provided for, appropriated and released from the National Budget. Such funds shall be administered by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 12. Auditing – The books of account of the NGHC shall be subject to periodic audit by an independent auditing firm to be commissioned by the Board of Trustees, provided that such audit shall be subject to review by the Commission on Audit.

SECTION 13. Annual Report – The NGHC shall render an Annual Report of its activities, accomplishments and recommendations to the President of the Philippines, the Committee on Health and Social Services in both Houses of Congress, Secretary of the Department of Health and the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

SECTION 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Secretary of Health shall within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations for the effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of this Act in consultation with the following agencies and offices:

- (a) Department of Social Welfare and Development;
- (b) Department of Health;
- (c) Commission on Higher Education;
- (d) Department of Finance.

SECTION 15. Effect of Dissolution – In the event the NGHC is dissolved for any reason, its property remaining at the time of such dissolution shall be placed under the Department of Health.

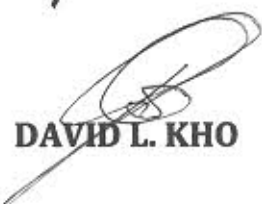
SECTION 16. *Separability Clause.* – If any section or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions shall not be affected.

SECTION 17. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,



GODOFREDO V. ARQUIZA



DAVID L. KHO