

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Sixteenth Congress

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2305



Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution recognizes the importance of adopting 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 especially to the needs of the under-privileged and women among other marginalized sectors.

Along these lines, the establishment of women's health care centers that will focus on the prevention and treatment of breast and cervical cancers is a matter that must be addressed by the State as these diseases are now considered the leading causes of deaths among Filipino women.

In Asia, the Philippines has the highest incidence rate of breast cancer and is considered to have the ninth highest incidence rate in the world today. On the other hand, cervical cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among Filipino women and in the world.

According to the Department of Health cervical and breast cancers are both killer diseases when not detected early and poses burden on patient, families, communities, sectors of the society and the national development of the country.

This measure seeks to provide Filipino women hightened information about these dreaded diseases and provide them with more accessible and affordable specialized care for breast and cervical cancers through prevention, early detection, screening and treatment programs.

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

Al Tan

ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE
CENTERS IN EVERY REGION NATIONWIDE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of women and instill health consciousness among them.

SEC. 2. *Establishment of Women's Health Care Centers.* - A women health care center, known in this Act as "Center", shall be established in every region of the country to spearhead the fight against cervical and breast cancers. It shall be a new department in existing regional hospitals of the National Government. Should there be no regional hospital in a region, the Center shall be attached to any provincial hospital in the region which is most accessible to the highest number of constituents. For the National Capital Region, a Center shall be established at the Philippine General Hospital.

SEC. 3. *Equipment and Personnel.* - The Centers shall be provided with such equipment, tools, implements, devices, apparatus, and personnel as may be necessary for them to carry out multiple programs such as Cervical and Breast Cancer Screening Program, Cervical and Breast Cancer Early Detection Program, Cervical and Breast Imaging, Cervical and Breast Diagnostic and Surgery, Cervical and Breast Cancer Chemotherapy, and Cervical and Breast Cancer Awareness Information, and Cervical Cancer Vaccination.

SECTION 4. *Information and Awareness Campaign.* - The Department of Health (DOH) shall, in coordination with local government units, local health offices, the Philippine Information Agency and other government agencies, shall spearhead a sustained and extensive information and awareness campaign within their respective region to raise the level of awareness of the region's constituents especially the women sector on the ills, causes and symptoms of the diseases for their early detection and prevention.

It shall coordinate with regional and local education officials to ensure that female high school students in both public and private schools are taught the pertinent information about the diseases and are trained to habitually self-examine themselves as a part of the regular secondary curriculum.

SECTION 5. *Establishment of Women's Health Fund* - There is hereby established a women's health fund which shall provide financial assistance for the medical care, diagnostic and treatment services for breast and cervical cancer, and cervical cancer vaccines for indigent patients.

The fund shall be comprised of money appropriated by Congress of the Philippines and those allocated by the national government and all other sums designated for deposit in the fund from any source, public or private. The fund shall be administered by the DOH.

SECTION. 6. *Covered Services.* - The Secretary of the DOH shall organize an appropriate committee to promulgate the rules and regulations for the administration of the fund.

Responsibilities of the committee include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Establishing a list of covered services approved for payment through the fund which shall include diagnostic and treatment services for breast and cervical cancer or a condition suggestive of such cancer. An ancillary diagnostic study may be authorized only when it is determined by the DOH to be directly related to the confirmation of a diagnosis of cancer or is necessary for treatment planning;

2. Setting a limitation on days of service covered by the fund. The DOH shall authorize the number of days for reimbursement based on the medical condition of the patient and the procedure to be performed; and

3. Reviewing requests and providing authorization for payment of diagnostic or treatment services covered by the fund.

SECTION 7. *Patient Eligibility.* - To be eligible for assistance in payment of services under the fund, the following conditions shall be met:

1. The patient is not eligible for nor covered by medical insurance other than the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (hereinafter referred to as PhilHealth); and

2. The patient's income must be at or below the National Poverty Threshold or Poverty Line based on the data provided by the National Statistical Coordination Board; and

3. The patient has a condition clinically indicative of breast or cervical cancer that requires diagnostic services to confirm the preliminary diagnosis and only those services determined to be medically necessary for that diagnostic confirmation may be authorized by the committee for payment from the fund; or

4. The patient has received diagnostic confirmation through a positive pathology report and is requesting payment of treatment services by the fund.

SECTION. 8. *Application Process.* - The DOH shall develop authorization request forms and make the forms available to the provider upon request. An application for inpatient diagnostic services shall be accompanied by a written, signed statement from the attending physician which includes the medical basis for required inpatient services and explains why the services may not be performed on an outpatient basis.

SECTION 9. *Reimbursement Process.* - The fund is the payor of last resort. Payment for procedures shall be made at the current rate established by PhilHealth. A claim for authorized services rendered shall be processed in accordance with rules promulgated by the DOH.

SECTION 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Secretary of the DOH shall issue such guidelines, orders, or rules and regulations as may be necessary for the establishment of a Center in every regional hospital of the national government and in every provincial hospital to be designated by the DOH for being the most accessible to

the highest number of constituents in a region where there is no existing regional hospital, including the PGH for the NCR; for the acquisition of the necessary equipment, tools, implements, devices, and apparatus, the hiring of necessary equipment, tools, implements, devices, and apparatus, the hiring of personnel and fix reasonable fees for the services of the Centers and to carry out provisions and purposes of this Act.

SECTION 11. *Operationalization and Appropriations.* - To fully implement the provisions of this Act, the Secretary of Health shall immediately include in the Department's program the operationalization of the Centers, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 12. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,