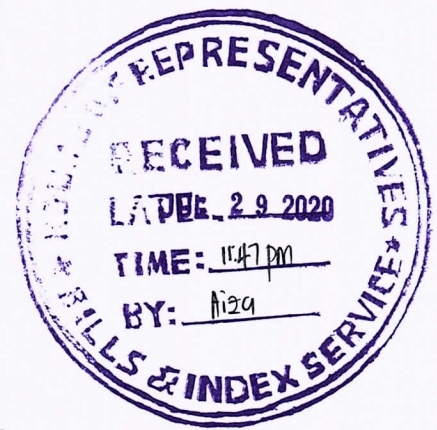


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7210



Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution makes it the State's responsibility to "protect and promote the right to health of the people" and to "instill health consciousness among them. Acting upon this, in 2018, Republic Act No 11036 ("Mental Health Act") was passed, which, in Section 3 thereof, bound the State to the following objectives:

SECTION 3. *Objectives.* — The objectives of this Act are as follows:

- (a) Strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health by, among others, formulating, developing, and implementing national policies, strategies, programs, and regulations relating to mental health;
- (b) Develop and establish a comprehensive, integrated, effective, and efficient national mental health care system responsive to the psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial needs of the Filipino people;
- (c) Protect the rights and freedoms of persons with psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial health needs;
- (d) Strengthen information systems, evidence and research for mental health;
- (e) Integrate mental health care in the basic health services; and
- (f) Integrate strategies promoting mental health in educational institutions, the workplace, and in communities.

It is in furtherance of these policies and commitments that this Bill is proposed. This Bill firstly aims to establish a mental health emergency hotline. The hotline shall be operational 24/7, with call centers established in every region, so that any and all callers can, and will be, immediately assisted. Secondly, it seeks to put into place barangay mental health workers and city/municipal mental health professionals. The barangay mental health workers, in particular, shall (1) maintain close contact with those most in need

1 of mental health services and (2) take charge of building community awareness
2 of, thereby boosting the accessibility of, the government's mental health services.

3
4 It is for the foregoing premises that the approval of this Bill is earnestly
5 sought.



Alfred C. Delos Santos

Representative, Ang Probinsyano Partylist

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**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MORE ACCESSIBLE MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICE THROUGH THE CREATION OF MENTAL HEALTH
CONSULTATION DESKS AND GOVERNMENT-RUN MENTAL HEALTH
HOTLINE**

*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 “Accessible Mental
Health Services Act.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the state to protect
and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness
among them. It is likewise the policy of the State to ensure that mental health is
prioritized as an equally important component of overall health of a person. To
his end, the State shall endeavor to make mental health services more accessible
by bringing it as close to every Filipino family in the barangay level. The State
shall also provide avenues to Filipinos who need immediate medical assistance
with regard to their mental health conditions.

SECTION 3. *Definition.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall
mean:

a) “*Mental health* refers” to a state of well-being in which the individual
realizes one’s own abilities and potentials, copes adequately with the normal
stresses of life, displays resilience in the face of extreme life events, works
productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a positive contribution to the
community;

b) “*Mental health condition*” refers to a neurologic or psychiatric condition
characterized by the existence of a recognizable, clinically-significant

1 disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotional regulation, or behavior that
2 reflect a genetic or acquired dysfunction in the neurobiological, psychosocial, or
3 developmental processes underlying mental functioning. The determination of
4 neurologic and psychiatric conditions shall be based on scientifically-accepted
5 medical nomenclature and best available scientific and medical evidence;
6

7 c) "*Mental health professional*" refers to a medical doctor, psychologist,
8 nurse, social worker, or any other appropriately-trained and qualified person
9 with specific skills relevant to the provision of mental health services;
10

11 d) "*Mental health services*" refer to psychological, psychiatric or neurologic
12 activities and programs along the whole range of the mental health support
13 services including promotion, prevention, treatment and aftercare, which are
14 provided by mental health facilities and mental health professionals;
15

16 e) "*Mental health worker*" refers to a trained person, volunteer, or advocate
17 engaged in mental health promotion, providing support services under the
18 supervision of a mental health professional;
19

20 f) "*Psychiatric or neurologic emergency*" refers to a condition presenting a
21 serious and immediate threat to the health and well-being of a service user or
22 any other person affected by a mental health condition, or to the health and well-
23 being of others, requiring immediate medical intervention; and
24

25 g) "*Psychosocial problem*" refers to a condition that indicates the existence
26 of dysfunctions in a person's behavior, thoughts and feelings brought about by
27 sudden, extreme, prolonged or cumulative stressors in the physical or social
28 environment.
29

30 SECTION 4. *Creation and Operation of a Mental Health Emergency Hotline.*

31 – The Department of Health, with the assistance of the National
32 Telecommunications Commission (NTC) and Department of Information and
33 Communications Technology (DICT) shall establish a national mental health
34 emergency hotline aimed at providing telephone and cellphone numbers which
35 the public may call for immediate assistance and medical intervention regarding
36 psychiatric or neurological emergencies.
37

38 The hotline shall be manned by mental health workers, under the close
39 supervision of mental health professionals. It shall run twenty-four hours a day,
40 seven days a week, and shall be available to answer calls and send medical
41 response teams in the fastest possible time. The DOH shall, in consultation with
42 experts from the mental health profession, create the call structure, provision of
43 emergency psychological intervention through telephone, and others kinds of
44 assistance to be provided, aside from referring the case to the nearest
45 government hospital.
46

1 A centralized national call center shall be established and it shall refer
2 each mental health emergency to the nearest government hospital to the patient
3 for immediate action. They shall also alert the mental health worker or workers
4 posted in the barangay where the person needing immediate mental health
5 intervention in order for the former to be the first responder and assist the latter
6 and his or her family.

7
8 SECTION 5. *Better Access to Mental Health Information, Support, and*
9 *Potential Interventions through a Barangay Mental Health Worker and*
10 *City/Municipal Mental Health Professional.* – There shall be at least one (1) city
11 or municipal mental health professional posted in the city or municipal health
12 center. He or she shall provide mental health services to residents of the city or
13 municipality and supervise the barangay mental health workers assigned within
14 the LGU's territory.

15
16 He or she shall also lead the conduct of small discussion groups or forum
17 within the community about mental health with the goal of breaking the
18 misinformation and stigma around mental health and mental disorders. A report
19 on the progress of the said program shall be submitted to the regional offices of
20 DOH annually.

21
22 There shall be at least one (1) mental health worker in every barangay in
23 the Philippines. The barangay mental health worker shall complete the necessary
24 training as determined by the DOH.

25
26 The said barangay mental health worker shall be posted in the barangay
27 health clinics and shall serve as the community's first responder and field
28 personnel in all matters relating to mental health.

29
30 The following shall be the main duties of a barangay mental health worker:

31
32 a) regularly visit persons diagnosed as having a mental health condition
33 residing in their barangay;

34
35 b) assist persons with mental health conditions and their families in
36 accessing mental health services in government hospitals;

37
38 c) assist the mental health professional in the conduct of small discussion
39 groups or forum within the community about mental health;

40
41 d) assist persons who wish to consult with mental health professionals
42 and connect them with mental health professionals or institutions providing
43 mental health services; and

44
45 e) other tasks that the city or municipal mental health professional may
46 assign from time to time.

1
2 SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DOH, with the
3 assistance of the relevant government agencies, shall provide for the
4 implementing rules and regulations for this Act within six (6) months from its
5 effectivity.
6

7 SECTION 7. *Appropriations.* – The amount of twenty-five million pesos (PhP
8 25,000,000.00) shall be appropriated for the initial implementation of the
9 provisions of this Act. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the
10 continued implementation of the Act shall be regularly incorporated in the
11 annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).
12

13 SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is
14 held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts unaffected
15 shall remain in full force and effect.
16

17 SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential
18 decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and
19 regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
20 repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.
21

22 SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
23 after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general
24 circulation.
25

26 Approved,