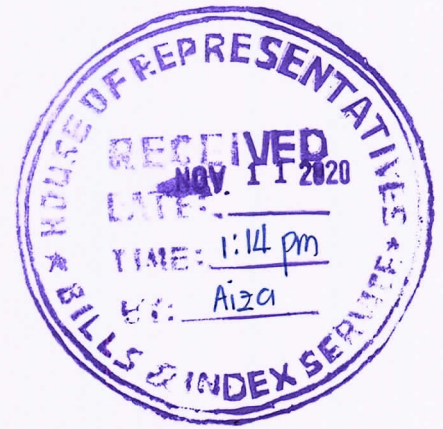


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8002



Introduced by **Representative Manuel Luis T. Lopez**

AN ACT
MANDATING ALL CHILD PATIENTS, SEVEN YEARS OLD AND BELOW, TO HAVE A
COMPANION WHILE IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

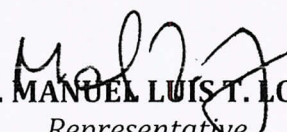
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The proposed measure reaffirms the State's policy to ensure that children receive protection and care as is necessary for their well-being, especially when undergoing medical treatment. It declares mandatory for all child patients who are seven years old and below to have one (1) companion in hospital and medical clinics, regardless of medical condition or treatment and whether they are being treated for inpatient or outpatient care. For abandoned or neglected child patients, the concerned local social welfare and development office shall assign a duly licensed social worker shall act as his or her companion.

This bill recognizes that the right of the child to access health care services should be complemented with their right to be protected, care for, and loved. While medical professionals focus on providing the best healthcare for child patients, a companion will ensure that the child patient receives comfort, hope, and reassurance in times of fear, uncertainty, and even confusion.

In order to take into account special circumstances of a child patient contracting a notifiable disease or requiring special medical treatment, hospital and medical clinics are likewise required to formulate special rules to accommodate at least one (1) companion for the child patient.

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


HON. MANUEL LUIS T. LOPEZ
Representative
1st District, City of Manila

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AN ACT

**MANDATING ALL CHILD PATIENTS, SEVEN YEARS OLD AND BELOW, TO HAVE A
COMPANION WHILE IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Child Patient Companion*
2 *Act of 2020*”.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared policy of the State to ensure
5 that children receive protection and care as is necessary for their well-being, taking into
6 account the rights and duties of their parents, legal guardians, or other individuals
7 legally responsible for them. Moreover, no child shall be deprived of his or her right of
8 access to health care services.

9
10 **SEC. 3. Mandatory Child Patient Companion.** – It is hereby declared mandatory
11 for any child-patient to have and be allowed at least one (1) companion in hospital and
12 medical clinics, regardless of medical condition or treatment, and whether such child-
13 patient is being treated for in-patient or out-patient care. For the purpose of this Act, a
14 child-patient is defined as one who is seven years old and below.

15
16 **SEC. 4. Primary Duty of Parents or Legal Guardians.** – It shall be the duty and
17 responsibility of the child-patient’s parent/s or legal guardian, in cases where one is
18 appointed by the court or in cases wherein the child no longer has a parent, to
19 accompany the child-patient or arrange and ensure that such child is accompanied by a
20 relative of legal age or any responsible caretaker of legal age. *Provided, that,* in the case
21 of an abandoned or neglected child, the concerned local social welfare and development
22 office shall provide and assign a duly licensed social worker to act as the companion of
23 the child patient. For this purpose, a child-patient is deemed to be abandoned or
24 neglected who, without any parent/s, legal guardian, relative/s of legal age, caretaker or
25 companion, comes or is brought to a hospital or medical clinic.

1 **SEC. 5. – Responsibility in case of abandoned or neglected child-patient.** It
2 shall be the initial duty and responsibility of the hospital or medical clinic to gather all
3 information about a child-patient deemed abandoned or neglected. Any information
4 gathered shall immediately, which in no case shall exceed 24 hours from the child-
5 patient's admission, shall be relayed to the local social welfare and development office,
6 which shall then first immediately provide and assign a duly licensed social worker to
7 act as the companion of the child patient. After, it can use all information gathered
8 about the concerned child-patient to determine and/or locate the child's parents or
9 legal guardian, and if found/located/contacted, inform them of the child's status and
10 explain the mandate of this Act.

11
12 **SEC. 6. – Exemptions.** In special situations wherein the health and safety of
13 child-patient, companion, and or other patients can be compromised, or in instances
14 where companions are generally not allowed, such as but not limited to operating
15 rooms, intensive care units, nursery areas and such other similar areas, the hospital or
16 medical clinic may prevent entry of such companion.

17
18 **SEC. 7. – Penalties.** Any person or entity who commits any act/s in violation of
19 the provisions of this Act shall be subject to a fine ranging from Php10,000.00 to
20 Php1,000,000.00, separate and without prejudice to any administrative penalty in the
21 case of persons in the government, as maybe provided in the Implementing Rules and
22 Regulations of this Act.

23
24 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The Department of Health, in
25 consultation with the Department of Social Welfare and Development and hospitals and
26 medical clinics, shall formulate the such Rules and Regulations for the proper
27 implementation of this Act, within a period no longer than six (6) months from
28 effectivity hereof.

29
30 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If for any reason, any part or provision of this Act
31 is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected
32 thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

33
34 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, rules, or orders inconsistent with the
35 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

36
37 **SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
38 completion of its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general
39 circulation.

40
41 Approved,