

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 10934



Introduced by Representative CAMILLE A. VILLAR

AN ACT
EXPANDING PHILHEALTH COVERAGE TO INCLUDE BENEFIT PACKAGE
TO ALL MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Explanatory Note

Whereas, Article II, Section 15, of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides:

The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;

Whereas, Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution further provides:

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 the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers;

Whereas, finally, Republic Act No. 11036 or the Mental Health Act of 2018, established the Philippine Council for Mental Health, the highest policy-making body on mental health situation, and mandated the creation of a multi-sectoral strategic plan to address mental health status among Filipinos.

In the Philippines, 3.3% of the population or around 3.3 million Filipinos live with depression, and suicide mortality rate is 3.2 per 100,000 population.¹

In order to address this seeming mental health crises among our population, this bill shall expand the coverage of the benefit package to include all mental health disorders and regardless of age group. The benefit package shall cover emergency

¹ Mental Health Strategic Plan 2019-2023. Philippine Council for Mental Health. Accessed 7 Feb. 2023.
https://doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/health_programs/Mental-Health-Strategic-Plan.pdf

services, psychiatric and neurological services, and Mental Health Gap Action Program (mhGAP), and therapy sessions.

This bill will also address the rising costs of mental health treatment by mandating an appropriate increase in PhilHealth's benefit package taking into consideration the current costs in medical services.

Therefore, I join my colleagues in humbly calling for the passage of this bill.

Camille A. Villar
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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 “*Comprehensive Mental Health Benefit Act*”.

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State affirms the basic right of all Filipinos to mental health as well as the fundamental rights of the people who require health services.

The State commits itself in promoting the well-being of people by ensuring that: mental health is valued, promoted and protected; mental health conditions are treated and prevented; timely, affordable, high-quality, and culturally-appropriate mental health care is made available to the public; mental health services are free from coercion and accountable to the service users; and persons affected by mental health conditions are able to exercise the full range of human rights, and participate fully in society and at work, free from stigmatization and discrimination.

The State shall comply strictly with its obligations under the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and all other relevant international and regional human rights,

conventions and declarations. The applicability of Republic Act No. 7277, as amended, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta for Disabled Persons", to person with mental health conditions, as defined herein, is expressly recognized.

Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (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 disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotional regulation, or behavior that reflects a genetic or acquired dysfunction in the neurological, psychosocial, or developmental process underlying mental functioning. The determination of neurologic and psychiatric conditions shall be based on scientifically-accepted medical nomenclature and best available scientific and medical evidence;
- (c) *Mental Disorders* – refer to conditions that affect a person's thinking, feelings, mood, and behavior. These may be occasional or chronic.

Sec. 4. *Mental Health Benefit Package.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), in consultation with the Department of Health (DOH), along with key stakeholders such as professional societies and associations, patient organization, and administrators of health facilities, shall develop a benefit package for Filipinos with mental health illness. The benefit package shall cover all mental health disorders. It shall include mental health therapy sessions, emergency services, psychiatric and

neurological services, Mental Health Gap Action Program (mhGAP), and others to be provided in the implementing rules and regulations. A minor suffering from mental health disorders shall likewise be benefited by this mental health benefit package.

Towards this end, the Health Technology Assessment Council (HTAC) created by virtue of Republic Act No. 11223, or the "Universal Health Care Act", in consultation with the Philippine Council for Mental Health shall review the existing case rate packages of PhilHealth for mental or behavioral disorders and recommend an appropriate increase in the benefit package taking into consideration the current costs in medical services.

Sec. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The DOH and PhilHealth, in consultation with key stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 6. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged against the total revenue of PhilHealth, composed of premium contributions from direct contributors and premium subsidies of the government for the indirect contributors.

Sec. 7. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, issuances, rules and regulations, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,