

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
3rd Regular Session

House Bill No. **11444**



**INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES ERWIN T. TULFO
EDVIC G. YAP, ERIC GO YAP AND RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO**

AN ACT
**MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) TO ENSURE THE
AVAILABILITY OF MEDICINES AND PROCUREMENT OF MEDICAL
EQUIPMENT IN ALL PUBLIC HOSPITALS THROUGH THE UTILIZATION OF
THE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO INDIGENT AND FINANCIALLY
INCAPACITATED PATIENTS (MAIFIP) FUND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This Act, known as the "**Universal Medical Access and Equipment Act of 2025**", addresses the persistent challenge of inadequate access to essential medicines and diagnostic equipment in public hospitals across the Philippines. Recognizing that access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right, this bill mandates the Department of Health (DOH) to provide adequate medicines and procure essential medical equipment for all government hospitals, utilizing the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients (MAIFIP) Fund.

Currently, many public hospitals, particularly in underserved and remote areas, face significant shortages of essential medicines and lack basic diagnostic equipment such as X-ray machines, ultrasound machines, and ECG machines. These shortages often force patients, especially indigent and financially incapacitated individuals, to forgo necessary medical care, leading to delayed diagnoses, poorer health outcomes, and increased financial burden. This situation perpetuates health disparities and undermines the government's efforts to provide universal healthcare.

This bill is not merely about providing medicines and equipment; it is about strengthening the entire public healthcare system and ensuring that every Filipino, regardless of financial status or location, has access to quality medical care. By investing in essential medicines and diagnostic equipment, this bill aims to improve health outcomes, reduce healthcare disparities, and promote the overall well-being of the Filipino people. This bill is a crucial step towards achieving universal healthcare and fulfilling the State's commitment to protecting the right to health for all citizens.

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



HON. ERWIN T. TULFO



HON. EDVIC G. YAP



HON. ERIC GO YAP



HON. RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the "**Universal Medical Access and Equipment Act of 2025.**"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to promote and protect the right to health of every Filipino by ensuring universal access to essential medicines and quality healthcare services. In line with this, the State shall mandate the Department of Health (DOH) to provide adequate medicines and procure essential medical equipment for all government hospitals using the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients (MAIFIP) Fund.

SECTION 3. Definitions. - For the purposes of this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

- a. **Essential Medicines:** Refers to the list of medicines identified by the DOH as essential for the treatment of prevalent diseases and health conditions in the Philippines, as well as medicines included in the Philippine National Formulary.

- b. **Essential Medical Equipment:** Refers to X-ray machines, ultrasound machines, ECG machines, and other diagnostic equipment deemed necessary by the DOH for basic diagnostic services in public hospitals.
- c. **Public Hospitals:** Refers to all hospitals owned and operated by the national government, including, but not limited to, national hospitals, regional hospitals, provincial hospitals, city hospitals, and municipal hospitals.
- d. **MAIFIP Fund:** Refers to the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients Fund.

SECTION 4. *Availability of Essential Medicines.* - The DOH shall ensure the continuous and adequate supply of essential medicines in all public hospitals nationwide. This includes:

- a. **Procurement:** The DOH shall establish a streamlined procurement process for essential medicines, ensuring competitive pricing and timely delivery. Bulk purchasing and strategic partnerships with pharmaceutical companies shall be explored to maximize cost-effectiveness. Preference shall be given to locally manufactured medicines that meet quality standards.
- b. **Inventory Management:** Public hospitals shall implement efficient inventory management systems to prevent stockouts and wastage of medicines. The DOH shall provide technical assistance and training to hospital personnel on inventory management best practices.
- c. **Storage:** Public hospitals shall ensure proper storage of medicines, adhering to prescribed temperature and humidity requirements to maintain their efficacy and safety.
- d. **Dispensing:** The DOH shall develop guidelines for the efficient and equitable dispensing of medicines to patients in public hospitals, prioritizing indigent and financially incapacitated patients.

SECTION 5. *Provision of Essential Medical Equipment.* - The DOH shall ensure that all public hospitals are equipped with essential medical equipment, including, but not limited to:

- a. **For X-ray Machines:** Every public hospital shall have at least one functional X-ray machine capable of performing basic radiographic examinations.
- b. **Ultrasound Machines:** Every public hospital shall have at least one functional ultrasound machine capable of performing basic ultrasound examinations.
- c. **Electro Cardiogram Machines:** Every public hospital shall have at least one functional ECG machine capable of performing electrocardiograms.
- d. **Other Equipment:** The DOH shall conduct a needs assessment to determine the need for other essential medical equipment in public hospitals and prioritize their procurement based on the assessment results, taking into consideration the needs of indigent and financially incapacitated patients.

SECTION 6. *Funding.* - The funding for the procurement of essential medicines and medical equipment under this Act shall be sourced primarily from the MAIFIP Fund. The DOH shall:

- a. **MAIFIP Allocation:** At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the annual MAIFIP fund shall exclusively be utilized for the procurement of essential medicines and medical equipment as mandated by this Act. This allocation shall be prioritized and protected from other uses.
- b. **Annual Appropriations:** While the primary funding source is the MAIFIP, sufficient funds may also be included in the annual General Appropriations Act to supplement the MAIFIP allocation and ensure the long-term sustainability of the program.
- c. **Other Sources:** The DOH is authorized to explore other funding sources, including grants and donations, to further supplement the funds allocated under this Act, provided that such funds are aligned with the objectives of the MAIFIP and this Act.

SECTION 7. *MAIFIP Fund Management and Transparency.* - The DOH shall develop clear and transparent guidelines for the utilization of the MAIFIP fund for the purposes of this Act, ensuring accountability and preventing misuse of funds.

Implement a robust monitoring system to track the utilization of MAIFIP funds for the procurement of medicines and equipment and to assess the impact of this Act on access to healthcare for indigent and financially incapacitated patients. Publish regular reports on the utilization of the MAIFIP fund, including details on the procurement of medicines and equipment, the number of patients served, and the overall impact on public health.

SECTION 8. *Implementation and Monitoring.* - The DOH shall be the lead implementing agency for this Act. It shall develop implementing rules and regulations within sixty (60) days of the effectivity of this Act. Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this Act to ensure its effectiveness. Submit an annual report to Congress on the progress of the implementation of this Act, including data on the availability of medicines and equipment in public hospitals, the utilization of funds, the number of indigent and financially incapacitated patients served, and any challenges encountered.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, and rules and regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,