

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2245



Introduced by Representative Jose Manuel F. Alba

AN ACT
MANDATING THE INCLUSION OF PROFESSIONAL OR DOCTOR'S FEES
IN THE FINAL HOSPITALIZATION BILL OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
HOSPITALS TO INDIGENT PATIENTS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Indigent patients and their families are highly susceptible to financial difficulties, particularly health-related expenses given their very limited financial opportunities. The State must then ensure that access to medical services by indigent patients in hospitals, whether public or private, does not result in any additional burden to them. The final billing issued by health care institutions and medical professionals should thus be transparent, reflecting clearly and accurately all costs and charges, including professional fees, the indigent patient must pay. This avoids putting indigent patients in situations where they are caught unprepared on the true cost of health services they have availed of.

The Department of Health (DOH), as the primary agency mandated to regulate health care institutions and professionals, must take an active role in protecting the rights of the indigent patients to equitable health and medical services. The DOH must ensure that the billing hospitals and medical professionals give to indigent patients are transparent and accurate.

Considering the foregoing, the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jose M. Alba', written in a cursive style.

JOSE MANUEL F. ALBA
Representative, 1st District, Bukidnon

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title* – This Act shall be known as the "One Hospital Bill Act."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy* – It is the policy of the State to support and promote the Right to Health by ensuring that the availment of medical services in public and private medical hospitals does not create additional burden to the detriment of the indigent patients and their families relative to payment of hospital bills. Pursuant thereto, patients shall be entitled to a fully transparent hospital bill from any health care facility and/or professional free of hidden fees and charges.

SECTION 3. *Coverage* – All public and private hospitals, clinics, health care institutions, and health care professionals shall be covered by the provisions of this Act.

All indigent patients, whether paying in cash or through Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), Guarantee Letters, Subsidies, and all other payment facilities, services, and/or arrangements are likewise covered under this Act.

Patients who are indigent are identified by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as individuals without visible sources of income or with income that is insufficient to support their families, based on specific criteria and issued with a Certificate of Indigency by the Barangay.

SECTION 4. *Mandatory Act* – All hospitals and/or health care professionals shall issue one final bill to indigent patient(s) regardless of the mode of payment(s) clearly indicating the Professional or Doctor's Fee(s) together with the costs of services rendered, procedures, medications, and other items for payment.

Further, all government agencies and institutions providing financial assistance to indigent patients for hospital expenses shall include coverage for the Professional or Doctor's Fee(s), which must be incorporated in the final hospital bill.

It shall be declared illegal and a violation to issue a separate bill for the Professional or Doctor's Fee(s) or other fees or charges not indicated in the final hospital bill.

SECTION 5. *Penal Clause* – Any public and private hospital, clinic, establishment, doctor, physician, and other health care professional individual who will issue a separate billing for Professional or Doctor's Fee(s) to patients shall be fined: First Offense – One Hundred Thousand pesos (Php 100,000.00); Second Offense – Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 200,000.00); and Third Offense – Cancellation of Professional License or License to Operate.

SECTION 6. *Role of the Department of Health* – The Department of Health and its agencies are mandated to receive and act on complaints arising from violations of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* – All implementing rules and regulations necessary to enforce this Act must be issued and shall take effect not later than (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause* – If any part, section, or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,