

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



House Bill No. 2400

Introduced by Representative ROMMEL RICO T. ANGARA

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE ANNUAL MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR FILIPINOS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Among the most important mandate of the Philippine Constitution is that which aims to protect and promote the right to health of the Filipino people. This is also evidenced by the declaration of the Philippines, as a state party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which recognizes the Right to Health as a fundamental human right. In line with the foregoing, it can thus be inferred that the State has the duty to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which will make essential goods, health and other social services easily accessible and readily available to all people at affordable cost.

Studies show that most Filipinos who suffered with COVID-19 and died had various pre-existing conditions and comorbidities. These include coronary heart diseases, diabetes, and respiratory problems which could have been adequately addressed if they were screened early. Even prior to the pandemic, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) already noted that among the top ten leading causes of death from 2015-2019 include heart diseases, pneumonia, diabetes, and hypertensive diseases.

The Department of Health (DOH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) attributed this to the "poor health-seeking behavior" of Filipinos. In fact, according to a 2018 study by Dayrit, Lagrada, et al. published by the WHO, "care-seeking behavior among Filipinos is largely dictated by the ability to pay (household income) and, because of financial constraints especially among the poor, care-seeking is often delayed. [...] Until the condition becomes serious, the patient may opt for self-care or take alternative remedies, including traditional healing."

As we continuously aim to achieve a healthier population through the Universal Health Care as provided under Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care Act, this representation sees the need to provide Filipinos access to preventive care. This is

with the vision that this is made possible without adding financial burden to our fellow Filipinos. Through the passage of this bill, Filipinos – who are automatically members of the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) by virtue of R.A. No. 11223 – would be able to access free annual medical check-ups which shall include blood sugar and cholesterol tests. As the saying goes, “Prevention is better than cure.” This program, which shall be created and managed by PhilHealth, will not only help Filipinos assess their well-being and address their most immediate health concerns but also hopefully address the growing cost of healthcare in the country.

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


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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE ANNUAL MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR FILIPINOS

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Free Annual Medical Check-Up Act”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes its duty to protect and promote the right to health of the people. Pursuant to its duty, the State shall provide the services needed to ensure the health and wellness of every Filipino. Aside from enhancing programs that focus on curative medicine, there should be emphasis on improving the country’s health care system in terms of preventive interventions and strengthening the health-seeking behavior of citizens. In line with this, Filipinos shall be entitled to an annual medical check-up, through the programs of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), that is free of charge in any government hospital and institution.

SEC. 3. Coverage. –

- A. Population Coverage. – Every Filipino citizen shall be covered by the free annual medical check-up under this Act pursuant to Sec. 5 of R.A. No. 11223 or the “Universal Health Care Act.
- B. Medical Check-Up Coverage. – PhilHealth, in consultation with the Department of Health (DOH), shall establish a program to provide Filipinos with free annual medical check-up including, but not limited to, blood sugar and cholesterol tests: *Provided*, That, prior to the availment of laboratory and/or diagnostic exams, the patient must first be screened by a PhilHealth-accredited primary care provider as stated under Sec. 6(d) of R.A. 11223 in order to evaluate the patient and identify which laboratory and/or diagnostic exams should be administered: *Provided, further*, That the availment of the laboratory and/or diagnostic exams shall be through PhilHealth-accredited health care institutions (HCIs): *Provided*,

1 *furthermore*, That, upon approval of the PhilHealth Board, the laboratory
2 and/or diagnostic exam shall be expanded subject to the availability of
3 PhilHealth funds and the current and emerging health necessities of
4 Filipinos.

5 **SEC. 4. *Schedule of Free Medical Check-Up.*** – The duration of availing the
6 free medical check-up shall be for the whole calendar year. PhilHealth shall establish
7 a system to secure that every Filipino will be accommodated and get the services that
8 they are entitled to.

9 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – PhilHealth shall be
10 primarily responsible in implementing the provisions of this Act. PhilHealth, in
11 consultation with DOH, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and
12 regulations within thirty (30) days upon effectivity of this Act.

13 **SEC. 6. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall
14 be charged against the total revenue of PhilHealth, composed of premium contributions
15 from direct contributors and premium subsidies of the government for the indirect
16 contributors, of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

17 **SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is declared
18 invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to
19 be in full force and effect.

20 **SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – All other laws, decrees, orders, other issuances,
21 rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
22 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

25 *Approved,*