

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3354**



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE GERIATRIC HEALTH AND RESEARCH
INSTITUTE, DEFINING ITS OBJECTIVES, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The average life expectancy of Filipinos has increased over the years. This also means that we are expecting a booming population of ageing citizens in the future. Alongside wisdom, ageing also brings forth a gradual decrease in physical and mental capacity, and a growing risk of disease. In our commitment to provide adequate health care services for our people, we must augment our efforts in geriatrics or the branch of medicine or social science dealing with the health and care of the elderly.

This bill seeks to establish a Philippine Geriatric Health and Research Institute (PGHRI), a specialty hospital that will cater to the health needs of the elderly population, and maintain a research institute that would advance knowledge and information on geriatrics. The PGHRI shall provide a full range of health care services, including primary health care, wellness services, and behavioral health care for the elderly.

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


REP. PM VARGAS
Fifth District, Quezon City

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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 “*Philippine Geriatric Health and Research Institute Act.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of senior citizens to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health. It shall ensure that quality health services are available and accessible to them through the establishment of a specialized hospital that will cater to their medical needs.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (a) *Senior Citizen* - refers to any Filipino citizen who is at least sixty (60) years old;
- (b) *Geriatrics* – refers to the branch of medicine that deals with the biological and physical characteristics of aging, and the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and problems specific to senior citizens;
- (c) *Geriatric Health Services* - refers to the medical services or intervention provided to senior citizens by a multi-specialty team usually headed by a Geriatrician;
- (d) *Geriatrician* - refers to a medical doctor who is specially trained to

evaluate and manage the unique healthcare needs and treatment preferences of older people; and has passed the necessary training and examination to specialize in the field of geriatrics;

- (e) *Integrated Delivery of Geriatric Health Services* – refers to hospital and community- based medical and psychological services provided to senior citizens by a multi-disciplinary team; and
- (f) *Multi-Disciplinary Team* - refers to a team composed of health professionals with varied expertise to provide holistic care, which includes a range of interventions to address medical and psychological problems of senior citizens. The team is headed by a Geriatrician and includes surgeons, organ-system specialist, nurses and clinical pharmacists, rehabilitation therapists, nutritionists, dentists, social workers, caregivers, family members, and patients themselves.

SECTION 4. *The Philippine Geriatric Health and Research Institute (PGHRI).* – The National Center for Geriatric Health (NCGH) located in San Miguel, Manila, is hereby renamed to Philippine Geriatric Health and Research Institute (PGHRI) and institutionalized as an independent level 1, Fifty (50) bed capacity budgetary hospital under the direct control and supervision of the Department of Health (DOH) for the benefit of senior citizens and older persons. The Philippine Geriatric Health and Research Institute (PGHRI) shall have a separate line item under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) of the DOH.

SECTION 5. *Purpose and Objectives.* – The PGHRI shall have the following purpose and objectives:

- (a) Equip, maintain, administer, and operate an integrated medical institution which shall specialize in geriatric health services;
- (b) Promote medical and scientific research/database relative to the prevention, diagnosis, treatments, care, rehabilitation and relief of disease of older persons;
- (c) Provide education and training of physicians, nurses, officers, social workers, barangay health workers, and other medical and technical personnel in the practice and scientific implementation of health service to older persons; and
- (d) Coordinate the various efforts and activities of other government agencies and local government units for the purpose of achieving a more effective approach to the delivery of geriatric health.

SECTION 6. *Scope of Services.* – Consistent with its purpose and objectives, the PGHRI shall provide the following services:

- (a) Hospital-based services to ensure the availability of medical facilities and equipment necessary to provide long term and palliative services, with its wards divided into the following dementia, long-term care, palliative care, respite care, and other units as may be deemed necessary;
- (b) Community-based services and programs in partnership with local government units. Research and necessary training shall be conducted for the social functioning of senior citizens and their families, utilizing the multi-disciplinary team approaches; and external outsourcing of resources may be done as needed to implement community-based integrated geriatric health services;
- (c) Education programs to pursue excellence and the highest level of practice in the specialized field of geriatrics and other related fields; postgraduate training and short-term courses for medical doctors and allied medical professionals; and
- (d) Program development and research to develop cutting-edge research and programs to combat diseases of old age and to improve health care services for senior citizens.

SECTION 7. Referral System. – The PGHRI shall be the referral center for all Private and Government Facilities for specialized geriatric care.

SECTION 8. Administration. – The Department of Health, through the Health Facilities Development Bureau (HFDB), shall assume oversight of the PGHRI and promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

The DOH shall approve the organizational and staffing pattern of the PGHRI, subject to the evaluation by the Civil Service Commission and the Organizational Position Classification and Compensation Bureau of the Department of Budget and Management. The DOH may recognize said structure, modify staffing patterns, and create or abolish divisions, sections, or units in the PGHRI.

SECTION 9. Appointment and Disciplining Authority of the Secretary of Health. – The DOH Secretary shall have the authority to appoint, promote, transfer, remove, suspend, or otherwise discipline the officer of the PGHRI up to the level of Director, as well as to remove or dismiss all other officials and employees of PGHRI, subject to Civil Service laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 10. Appropriations. - The budget allocation for PGHRI shall be in accordance with its scope of work and mandate as stated herein. The amount of Three Hundred Million (Php 300,000,000) is hereby appropriated for the initial operation and maintenance of the PGHRI. Thereafter, the PGHRI shall submit its annual budget proposal to the DOH Central Office, duly approved by the Secretary of Health as well as by the Department of Budget and

Management, which will form part of the budget of the DOH as reflected in the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 11. *Program for Indigents.* – The DOH shall ensure that the PGHRI shall adopt and enforce an effective program for indigents. The number of beds allocated for the indigent patients shall not be less than forty percent (40%) of the total number of hospital beds.

SECTION 12. *Increase of Bed Capacity.* – The Medical Director may increase the bed capacity of PGHRI upon compliance with the guidelines of the Department of Health and the Department of Budget and Management concerning bed capacity.

SECTION 13. *Income Retention.* – The PGHRI shall be authorized to retain its earnings from its operations for the improvement of its service delivery.

SECTION 14. *Tax Exemption and Other Privileges.* – The provisions of any general or special law to the contrary notwithstanding, all donations, grants, contributions, gifts, endowments, received by the PGHRI pursuant hereto, shall be exempt from income, donor's, and all other kinds of taxes, shall be further considered as allowable deductions from the gross income of the donor, in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

The PGHRI is hereby declared exempt from all income and all other internal revenue taxes, tariffs and customs duties and all other kinds of taxes, fees, charges and assessments levied by the government and its political subdivisions, agencies and instrumentalities.

The PGHRI may request and receive assistance from the different agencies, bureaus, offices, or instrumentalities of the government, including the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation in pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

SECTION 15. *Annual Report.* – The PGHRI shall submit an annual report to the President of the Philippines, the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, and the House Committee on Health, on its activities, accomplishments and recommendations, to better improve the delivery of geriatric health services.

SECTION 16. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Health, in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 17. *Transitory Provisions.* – In accomplishing the acts of organization herein prescribed, the following transitory provisions shall be

compiled with:

- (a) The Medical Director of the PGHRI shall be a specialized geriatric practitioner and shall be appointed by the Secretary of Health
- (b) The existing personnel of the NCGH shall remain in their current positions until such time a revised and/or new organizational and staffing pattern is implemented.
- (c) The Health Facilities Development Bureau of the Department of Health shall ensure that no disruption of service will occur during transition.

SECTION 18. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the reminder of the Act or the provisions not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 19. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 20. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,