



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL No. 3526

INTRODUCED BY HON. RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people as ingrained in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Hence, it is a must for the government to be able to provide equitable and efficient access to health services starting at the base level of the community, the barangay. However, there is a disparity regarding the distribution of healthcare facilities across the country, with barangay health centers (BHCs) being concentrated often in urban areas. This results in limited access to healthcare services for citizens residing in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas.

In fact, of the 42,011 barangays recorded by the Department of the Interior and Local Government as of March 2025, there are only 26,500 barangay health centers recorded by the Department of Health nationwide.¹ This means that 15,511 or 36.92% of barangays do not have BHCs. This significant gap is a reflection of how access to primary healthcare in the country remains highly inequitable. This may be due to several challenges including inefficiency in implementing universal health care, misprioritization of funding, and insufficient healthcare workers.

In the City of Taguig, all 38 barangays, including the EMBO barangays, have access to a BHC, reflecting the City’s continued commitment to making healthcare facilities accessible to all its constituents. The medical personnel, especially Barangay Health Workers stationed in these facilities, are formally employed, receive regular salary, and enjoy numerous benefits, including performance incentive bonuses, training, overtime pay, and hazard pay, among others. This serves as a clear example that accessible healthcare in the country is feasible.

This measure seeks to help build a world class primary health care system throughout the country by mandating every barangay in the Philippines to establish a Barangay Health Center in three (3) years’ time where it must be equipped with the following: (a) a health care center/station; (b) healthcare workers, doctors, and medical staff; (c) and medicine, diagnostic equipment, and other healthcare facilities. In addition, Barangay Health Center personnel shall be

¹ No. of Barangays https://www.dilg.gov.ph/PDF_File/factsfigures/dilg-facts-figures-2025429_8a3ebc0fee.pdf DILG, retrieved on May 14, 2025; No. of Barangay Health Centers <https://nhfr.doh.gov.ph/Home> DOH, as of May 13, 2025

made to conduct home visitations, to periodically determine the public health concerns in the community, monitor patients, provide medical care when needed, and to help disseminate health-related information.

In line with the policy adopted by its original proponent Senator Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano, this bill therefore serves as a counterpart measure. It is for the reason stated above that the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.



RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE BILL No. 3526

INTRODUCED BY HON. RICARDO S. CRUZ, JR.

AN ACT
MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HEALTH CENTERS IN ALL
BARANGAYS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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 “*Health Centers in All Barangays Act.*”

Sec. 2. *Statement of Policy.* – The State shall provide equitable and efficient access to health services starting at the base level of the community, the barangay. Healthcare that is based on practical, scientifically-sound, and socially acceptable methods and technology should be made universally accessible to individuals and families at the community level.

The State shall streamline healthcare services, decongest hospitals and lessen the workload of its healthcare workers, and address ongoing and long-term community health needs by building the capacity of the community health worker workforce and health facilities. The State also endeavors to educate the community members, including regarding effective strategies to promote healthy behaviors.

Sec. 3. *Barangay Health Centers.* – Towards this end, every barangay in the Philippines is hereby mandated to establish a Barangay Health Center.

The province, city or municipality concerned shall provide financial assistance for the establishment, maintenance and operation of the Barangay Health Centers within their respective localities.

The Sangguniang Barangay may call upon the public health sector and private volunteers, who are duly-licensed medical professionals, and utilize them to assist in the provision of primary healthcare and provide consultative services for medical needs of the members of the community.

Sec. 4. *Primary Health Program.* – Barangay Health Centers shall implement a Primary Healthcare program in accordance with guidelines to be set

by the Department of Health (DOH). Pursuant to this, the DOH shall:

(a) Formulate the criteria for the selection, qualification, and training of Barangay Health Workers and the standards for the implementation of the primary healthcare program in the barangay; and

(b) Coordinate activities of the barangay, national government agencies and local government units, and non-government organizations in order that their services may be fully utilized for the attainment of the program goals.

Sec. 5. Barangay Health Workers and Medical Equipment. – Each Barangay Health Center shall have at least one (1) doctor, at least one (1) nurse, at least one (1) dentist, and a sufficient number of medical assistants as may be determined by the guidelines set by the DOH based on the population of the barangay and its proximity to existing public health facilities. Priority shall be given to remote areas and cities or municipalities with limited number of health facilities.

As far as practicable, Barangay Health Center personnel shall conduct home visits, to periodically determine the public health concerns in the community as well as to provide medical care, and monitor patients.

The DOH shall regularly submit to the CHED and LGUs the number of Barangay Health Workers and vacancies throughout the country. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Local Government Units (LGUs) shall use this information to project the need for healthcare professionals and implement programs to address shortages, including the encouragement of the youth to pursue health-related courses.

The implementing agencies of this Act shall ensure that all barangays shall have a Barangay Health Center equipped with appropriate healthcare facilities within three (3) years from the implementation of this Act.

Sec. 6. Appropriations. – The Secretary of the DOH shall immediately include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act

Sec. 7. Report to Congress. – One (1) year after the implementation of this Act, the Secretary of the DOH jointly with the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government shall submit a written report to Congress detailing the actions taken to implement the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 8. Separability Clause. – If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts hereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

Sec. 9. Repealing Clause. – All laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with, or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

Sec. 10. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,