



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

SEP 02 2022

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 2022- 0038

SUBJECT: Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028

I. RATIONALE

The country has implemented various health sector reforms such as the adoption of a decentralized health governance in 1991, introduction of a social health insurance program or PhilHealth in 1995, and the passage of Republic Act (RA) No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act in 2019, among others. The UHC Act contains comprehensive and progressive reforms to ensure that every Filipino is healthy, is protected from health hazards and risks, and has access to affordable, quality, and readily available health service that is suitable to their needs.

With the mentioned sectoral reform efforts, health outcomes in the Philippines have improved, though not enough to attain the 2022 targets set in the National Objectives for Health 2017-2022. This is evident across the representative health outcome indicators, namely: maternal mortality ratio, infant mortality rate, tuberculosis incidence, and stunting among children.

The COVID-19 pandemic further magnified existing gaps in the health sector. These include unsupportive settings for healthy behaviors; inadequate structures and systems for public health emergencies; an underdeveloped and constrained primary care system; limited capacity to manage institutions; and a generally underpaid, overstretched, and mentally-stressed workforce. The pandemic response and recovery efforts however, provided more impetus for national government agencies and local government units to fast-track the implementation of several UHC-related initiatives, including the integration of local health systems at the province and city-wide level. Further, Executive Order 138 series of 2021 or the "Full Devolution of Certain Functions of the Executive Branch to Local Governments, Creation of a Committee on Devolution, and for Other Purposes" provides opportunities to sustain UHC implementation through additional financing of health programs and services on the ground.

In order to have a more impactful change on our health outcomes, the health sector needs to acknowledge and prioritize factors beyond healthcare. Although health service provision is essential, it only contributes approximately 20% to health outcomes, while other determinants of health are the primary drivers at 80%: socioeconomic factors contribute 40%, the physical environment 10%, and health behavior the remaining 30% (see Annex C).

The Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028 defines the country's vision, policy direction, and strategic objectives needed to accelerate the achievement of UHC and to further build the health system's resilience against future pandemics and health emergencies. The framework emphasizes the importance of addressing health determinants through healthy public policies and settings, in order to achieve

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high-impact improvements on health outcomes. Furthermore, it aims to shift the health sector's priorities and mindsets to address long-standing gaps in health service delivery, information systems, medicines and equipment, human resources for health, financing, regulation, and governance.

II. OBJECTIVES

This Administrative Order (AO) aims to:

- A. Provide the overall policy direction for the health sector, including the Department of Health (DOH) offices, its attached agencies, public and private health care facilities, local government units (LGUs), other National Government Agencies (NGAs), development partners, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders, to inform planning and prioritization from 2023-2028; and,
- B. Identify the key strategic thrusts necessitating support from relevant stakeholders, i.e. technical assistance, health services and other financial and non-financial resources.

III. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Order shall apply to DOH Central Office Bureaus, Services, and Attached Agencies; DOH Centers for Health Development (CHDs); DOH hospitals; Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers (DATRCs); all public and private health care facilities; health care providers and support staff; NGAs; LGUs; development partners; civil society organizations; academic institutions; health professional societies and organizations; and all other institutions relevant to the implementation of the Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028.

In the case of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the adoption of this Order shall be in accordance with RA No. 11054 (Bangsamoro Organic Act) and the subsequent laws and issuances to be issued by the Bangsamoro government.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- A. **Determinants of Health** - refer to factors that have a significant influence, whether positive or negative, on an individual or population's health, which can include biological, physical, psychological, social, cultural, political, and economic factors, among others (DOH-DILG JAO No. 2021-0002 National Policy Framework on the Promotion and Recognition of Healthy Communities).
- B. **Human Resources for Health (HRH)** - refers to medical, allied health professionals, and health care providers who are essential to the performance of health systems. They include workers in the different domains of the health systems, including preventive, curative, rehabilitative, and palliative care services (DO 2022-0451: Operational Guidelines in the Implementation of Select Human Resource for Health Composite Programs and Projects under the National Health Workforce Support System).



For purposes of this AO, this term shall be used interchangeably with “health care workers” and “health workforce”.

- C. **Primary Care** - refers to initial-contact, accessible, continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated care that is available and accessible at the time of need including a range of services for all presenting conditions, and the ability to coordinate referrals to other health care providers in the health care delivery system, when necessary (AO 2020-0024: Primary Care Policy Framework and Sectoral Strategies).
- D. **Primary Health Care** - refers to a whole-of-society approach that aims to ensure the highest possible level of health and well-being through equitable delivery of quality health services (AO 2020-0024).
- E. **Right-sizing** - refers to the act of converting an organization or institution to an optimal size. It may entail reducing or increasing the workforce to an appropriate size, among other interventions.

Right-sizing in government is a reform mechanism that seeks to enhance its institutional capacity to perform its mandate and provide better services, while ensuring optimal and efficient use of resources (State of the Nation Address 2022).

V. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028 shall ensure the implementation of the UHC Act, and shall be anchored on the following guiding principles, which reflect the corresponding priority shifts and critical mindsets:

- A. **Whole-of-Government and Whole-of-Society Approach**
From a narrow focus on health services as the only means to improve health outcomes, to intersectoral collaboration for health.
- B. **Investments in Health**
From chronic underinvestments in health, to sufficient and sustained investments in public health.
- C. **Efficiency and Responsiveness**
From having inefficient and uncoordinated health care management, to ensuring the right care at the appropriate level.
- D. **Institutional Strengthening**
From not having organizational strengthening as a deliberate agenda, to building management institutions for health as a priority.
- E. **Protection and Well-being of Health Care Workers**
From inadequate provision of health care worker compensation and benefits, to prioritizing investments in health care worker protection, compensation, and development.

VI. POLICY FRAMEWORK

A. Vision for the Health Sector

Filipinos are among the healthiest people in Asia by 2040.

B. DOH Mission

To promote healthy settings, and steer the development of an effective, resilient, equitable, and people-centered health system for Universal Health Care.

C. DOH Core Values

The DOH shall at all times, embody the following core values in carrying out its mandate:

1. *Professionalism*

Performs its functions in accordance with the highest ethical standards, principles of accountability, and full responsibility.

2. *Reliability*

Provides relevant support, at the appropriate time.

3. *Integrity*

Upholds the truth and pursues honesty in performing its functions.

4. *Compassion*

Respects human dignity by working with sympathy and benevolence for the people in need.

5. *Excellence*

Continuously strives to deliver the best public service.

D. Health Sector Goals

1. Better and equitable health outcomes;
2. Responsive health system; and
3. Improved financial risk protection.

E. Strategic Thrusts

To deliver its goals, the health sector shall anchor its priorities and interventions to the following strategic thrusts. These strategic thrusts were identified to yield high-impact improvements on health outcomes, and to address long-standing gaps in the health system.

Implementation of the first three strategic thrusts shall be supported by the fourth strategic thrust that follows:

1. Enable Filipinos to be healthy

Improving health and achieving health equity require broad approaches that address the behavioral, social, and environmental or structural factors that influence health.

Strategic Objectives:

- 1.1. Citizens are health-literate and have good health-seeking behavior.
- 1.2. Communities, workplaces, and schools are supportive of health behaviors.

2. Protect Filipinos from health risks

The health system shall be prepared and have the capacity for recovery and adaptation to future disasters and pandemics.

Strategic Objectives:

- 2.1. Disease outbreaks are prevented and/or managed.
- 2.2. Medicines and technologies are assured to be of quality, safe, accessible, and affordable.
- 2.3. Health facilities and services are safe and of quality.

3. Care for Filipinos' health and wellness

Greater attention shall be given to health system design, financing mechanisms, and the processes of care in accordance with the reforms espoused by the UHC Act to deliver people-centered care for health and wellness.

Strategic Objectives:

- 3.1. Networks of primary care and specialist care providers are adequate, accessible and well-distributed throughout the country.
- 3.2. Quality health services are appropriately and fairly financed.

4. Strengthen health institutions and workforce

Government health institutions shall be strengthened in order to foster leadership in health, upgrade organizational capacities with changing needs, and facilitate the system-wide changes that are necessary to deliver the essential interventions under the first three strategic thrusts.

As the backbone of the health system, the health sector shall ensure that our health care workers are adequate, engaged, and protected throughout our delivery of the first three strategic thrusts.

Strategic Objectives:

- 4.1. All government health institutions are "right-sized" and efficient.
- 4.2. Health care workers are adequate, committed, fairly compensated, and given opportunities for professional development in healthy working environments.

VII. IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

- A. All DOH offices, units, hospitals, DATRCs, and attached agencies shall align their policies, programs, and activities to the Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028, and advocate these to all stakeholders and partners.
- B. Government agencies/entities with funds and activities related to health, such as but not limited to, the Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System, hospitals under the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police, LGU hospitals, hospitals of state universities and colleges, Philippine General Hospital, Department of Education, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Migrant Workers, LGUs, and the private sector, are strongly encouraged to align their policies, programs, and funds for health with the Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028.


- C. The DOH shall use the Performance Governance System (PGS) as its main governance framework. It shall be supported by other management systems such as the Quality Management System and the Strategic Performance Management System to ensure the implementation of this Order.
- D. This Order shall be supplemented by the National Objectives for Health, Health Sector Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, DOH Strategy Map and Scorecard, Health Stakeholders Scorecard, Health Executive Agenda for Legislation, Medium-Term Research Agenda, Evaluation Agenda, Annual Operational Policy Agenda, and other relevant issuances, which shall provide further details on the objectives, targets, interventions, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders. For the initial list of strategic interventions identified under the Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028, please refer to Annex B. This initial list will be subject to periodic updating in collaboration with other partners and stakeholders.
- E. Performance Scorecards shall also be updated to ensure accountability of LGUs, development partners, and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028.
- F. The functional management arrangements shall be defined in terms of specific offices and teams having clear mandates, performance targets, and support systems within well-defined time frames. Department Order No. 2022-0423 entitled, Interim Functional Management Structure of the Department of Health, and Department Personnel Order No. 2022-2656 entitled, Designation of Undersecretaries and Assistant Secretaries as Team Leaders of the DOH Interim Functional Management Structure, shall be reviewed and updated to include specific team assignments for the implementation of the Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028.
- G. The necessary budgetary resources to support priority health investments for the Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028 shall be determined, and funds shall be allocated for these priorities.

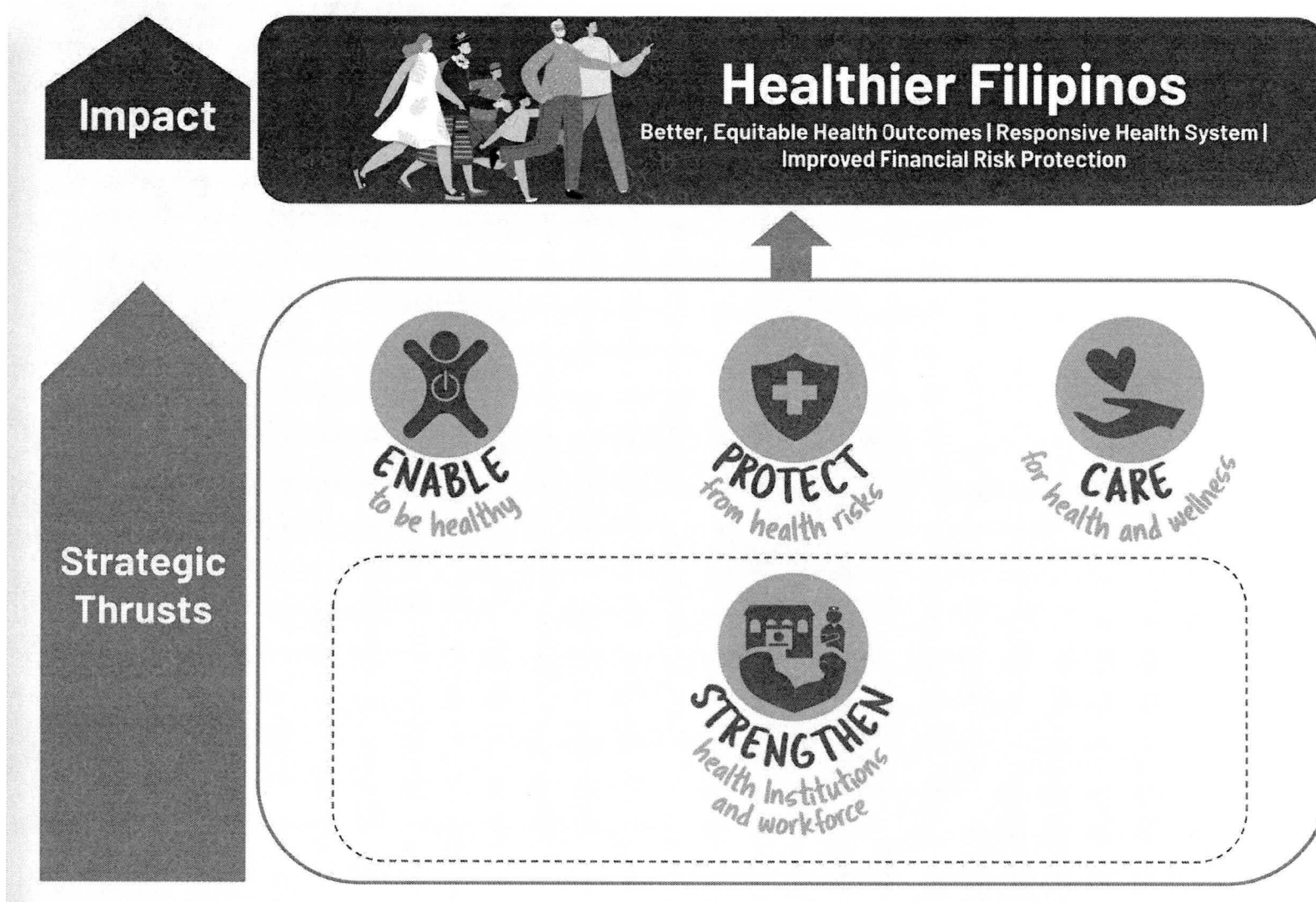
VIII. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any part or provision of this Order is rendered invalid by any court of law or competent authority, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain valid and effective.

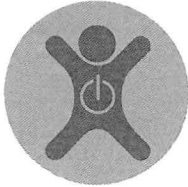
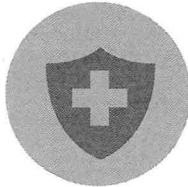


IX. EFFECTIVITY

This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication to the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation, with three (3) copies to be filed with the U.P. Law Center pursuant to Section 3, Chapter 3, Book VII of Executive Order No. 292, Series of 1987 through this Department's records officer or its equivalent functionary.


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Officer-in-Charge
Department of Health



Annex B: Initial list of Strategic Interventions under Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028

 <p>Enable to be Healthy</p>	 <p>Protect from Health Risks</p>	 <p>Care for Health and Wellness</p>	 <p>Strengthen Health Institutions and Workforce</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 1.1: Citizens are health-literate, and have good health-seeking behavior.</p> <p><u><i>Strategic Interventions</i></u> 1.1.1 Implement social and behavioral change interventions</p> <p>Strategic Objective 1.2: Communities, workplaces, and schools are supportive of healthy behaviors.</p> <p><u><i>Strategic Interventions:</i></u> 1.2.1 Implement the Healthy Settings Program (Communities, Workplaces, Learning Institutions)</p> <p>1.2.2 Develop healthy public policies across the social determinants of health</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 2.1: Disease outbreaks are prevented and/or managed.</p> <p><u><i>Strategic Intervention:</i></u> 2.1.1 Strengthen health system structures</p> <p>Strategic Objective 2.2: Medicines and technologies are assured to be of quality, safe, accessible, and affordable.</p> <p><u><i>Strategic Interventions:</i></u> 2.2.1 Facilitate regulatory pathways and risk-based regulation</p> <p>2.2.2 Establish mechanisms for self-sufficiency during emergencies</p> <p>2.2.3 Exempt tax for essential drugs and medicines</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 3.1: Networks of primary care and specialist care providers are adequate, accessible and well-distributed throughout the country.</p> <p><u><i>Strategic Interventions:</i></u> 3.1.1 Register every Filipino to a Primary Care Provider.</p> <p>3.1.2 Establish HCPNs and PCPNs in UHC Integration Sites.</p> <p>3.1.3 Build and upgrade health facilities</p> <p>3.1.4 Implement specific mechanisms to reach the poor (e.g. telemedicine, mobile clinics).</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 4.1: All government health institutions are “right-sized” and efficient.</p> <p><u><i>Strategic Interventions:</i></u> 4.1.1 Upgrade capacity of health institutions</p> <p>4.1.2 Foster leadership in health</p> <p>4.1.3 Leverage good performance.</p> <p>Strategic Objective 4.2: Health care workers are adequate, committed, fairly compensated, and given opportunities for professional development in healthy working environments.</p> <p><u><i>Strategic Intervention:</i></u> 4.2.1 Implement the National HRH Master Plan</p>

	<p>2.2.4 Correct non-competitive trade practices in the pharmaceutical industry</p> <p>Strategic Objective 2.3: Health facilities and services are safe and of quality.</p> <p><u>Strategic Interventions:</u></p> <p>2.3.1 Build resilient and “Green” health facilities</p> <p>2.3.2 Secure and sustain needed Capital Assets</p> <p>2.3.3 Ensure quality through local and international third-party accreditation of health facilities.</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 3.2: Quality health services are appropriately and fairly financed.</p> <p><u>Strategic Intervention:</u></p> <p>3.2.1 Ensure responsive and accurate benefits development by PhilHealth.</p>	
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Definition of Terms:

Green and safe - a paradigm shift, away from traditional disaster response to one that proactively seeks to minimize the health impact of disasters and emergencies through climate adaptation and mitigation measures (including climate-proofing and reduction of the environmental footprint), and preparedness (Green and Safe Health Facilities Manual First Edition, DOH 2021).

Health Care Provider Network (HCPN) - refers to a group of primary to tertiary care providers, whether public, private or mixed, offering people-centered and comprehensive care in an integrated and coordinated manner with the primary care provider acting as the navigator and coordinator of health care within the network (AO 2020-0019).

HRH Master Plan - refers to an overarching document that guides the whole of society and the whole of government to meet the HRH component of the UHC goals (Human Resources for Health Philippine Masterplan 2020-2040).

Primary Care Provider Network (PCPN) - refers to a coordinated group of public, private, or mixed primary care providers, which serve as the foundation of a HCPN (AO 2021-0006).

UHC Integration Sites - refer to provinces, highly urbanized cities and independent component cities that have signified their commitment to the DOH to integrate their local health systems into province-wide or city-wide health systems (AO 2021-0006; DM 2020-0414: Official List of UHC Integration Sites as of 30 September 2020, and DM 2022-0238: Additional UHC Integration Sites as of April 26, 2022).

Annex C: List of References

National Laws

Republic Act No. 11223, An Act Instituting Universal Health Care for All Filipinos, Prescribing Reforms in the Health Care System, and Appropriating Funds Therefor,” or the “Universal Health Care Act”

Executive Order No. 138, Full Devolution Of Certain Functions Of The Executive Branch To Local Governments, Creation Of A Committee On Devolution, And For Other Purposes.

Department of Health Issuances and Manuals

Department of Health. (2019). Administrative Order 2020-0019 on the Guidelines on the Service Delivery Design of Health Care Provider Networks. <https://law.upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/DOH-AO-No-2020-0019.pdf>

Department of Health. (2020). Administrative Order 2020-0024 on the Primary Care Policy Framework and Sectoral Strategies. <https://doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/basic-page/ao2020-0024.pdf>

Department of Health. (2021). Administrative Order 2021-0006 on the Guidelines in Supporting Universal Health Care and the Local Health System Integration by the International Health Partners. <https://law.upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/DOH-Administrative-Order-No-2021-0006.pdf>

Department of Health. (2022). Department Order 2022-0451 on the Operational Guidelines in the Implementation of Select Human Resource for Health Composite Programs and Projects under the National Health Workforce Support System

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Department of Health and Department of the Interior and Local Government. Joint Administrative Order No. 2021-0002 National Policy Framework on the Promotion and Recognition of Healthy Communities.

Other References

Marcos, Ferdinand, Jr. President’s State of the Nation Address. July 25, 2022.

University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. (2014). *County Health Rankings Model*. <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/measures-data-sources/county-health-rankings-model>