



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

SEP 13 2023

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

No. 2023- 0015

SUBJECT: Adoption of the 8-Point Action Agenda as the Medium-Term Strategy of the Health Sector for 2023-2028

I. RATIONALE

Various health sector reforms have been implemented in the country, such as adopting decentralized health governance in 1991, introducing Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) as the social health insurance program in 1995, and passing Republic Act (RA) No. 11223, also known as the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act in 2019, among others. The UHC Act contains comprehensive and progressive reforms to ensure every Filipino's access to affordable, quality, and comprehensive health services.

Despite past healthcare reforms, the health sector has not fully achieved the targets set in the National Objectives for Health (NOH) 2017-2022. This gap is evident in various health indicators, including maternal mortality ratio, infant mortality rate, tuberculosis incidence, and prevalence of stunting among children.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic placed an enormous burden on the health sector, exposing gaps and weaknesses including inadequate infrastructure, underdeveloped primary care, and overworked healthcare workers. Through collective efforts, progress was made, leading to the eventual lifting of the state of public health emergency on July 21, 2023 through Proclamation No. 297. Nevertheless, COVID-19 continues to be a significant concern for certain subpopulations, necessitating an ongoing public health response, while also remaining vigilant against potential future pandemics.

Meanwhile, the Mandanas-Garcia ruling and Executive Order No. 138 series of 2021, entitled, "*Full Devolution of Certain Functions of the Executive Branch to Local Governments, Creation of a Committee on Devolution, and for Other Purposes*" provided opportunities for increased financing for programs and services at the local level.

Acknowledging these challenges and in response to the President's directive from the State of the Nation Address (SONA), the Department of Health (DOH) developed an 8-Point Action Agenda, a call for "*Sa Healthy Pilipinas, Bawat Buhay Mahalaga!*" Aligned with the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, and building on the accomplishments of past health sector strategies, this comprehensive agenda reflects the Department's steadfast commitment to achieving the goals of UHC.

The 8-Point Action Agenda was developed with inputs from stakeholders across various sectors in recognition of the importance of other determinants of health. It places every Filipino at the center of healthcare reforms, emphasizes

community involvement in health promotion, and recognizes the vital role of healthcare workers in our health sector. It is designed with emphasis on action to fast-track health sector improvements, focusing on the tangible outcomes for every Filipino, every community, and every healthcare worker and health institution.

II. OBJECTIVES

This Order aims to:

- A. Set the overall policy direction for the health sector to guide planning and prioritization for the period of 2023-2028; *and*
- B. Identify key strategic objectives under the 8-Point Action Agenda.

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; other National Government Agencies; local government units (LGUs); development partners; civil society organizations; academic institutions; health professional societies and organizations; and all other stakeholders relevant to the implementation of the 8-Point Action Agenda.

In the case of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the adoption of this Order shall be in accordance with RA No. 11054 or the 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. **Health Care Provider Network** - 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 No. 2020-0019: Guidelines on the Service Delivery Design of Health Care Provider Networks).

- C. **Lifestage** - refers to a phase in a person's lifespan from infancy to advanced age that presents with specific health needs and concerns (AO 2022-0018 Development and Utilization of the Omnibus Health Guidelines per Lifestage).
- D. **Organizational Development** - refers to a purposeful and systematic approach to enhancing sustained organizational performance by involving its people. It is both a field of scientific study and a practical discipline aimed at understanding and managing systematic changes within organizations.
- E. **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).
- F. **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).
- G. **Right-sizing** - refers to the act of converting an organization or institution to an optimal size and structure. In the context of public institutions, it is a reform mechanism that seeks to enhance the capacity of public institutions to perform its mandates and provide better public service, while ensuring optimal and efficient use of resources.

V. POLICY FRAMEWORK

A. Vision for the Health Sector

Filipinos are among the healthiest people in Asia by 2040.

B. Health Sector Goals

1. Better health outcomes

This means an enhanced overall health status of the population, marked by reduced health inequities, improved health metrics, life expectancy and quality of life.

2. Stronger health systems

This pertains to a health system with strengthened infrastructure, capacity, and resilience, that proactively anticipates and responds to health needs and crises, with an emphasis on patient satisfaction and positive overall experiences.

3. Access to all levels of care

This means that Filipinos are assured of comprehensive access to culturally-sensitive and gender-responsive health services at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. These services encompass preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative, and palliative care, without the burden of financial hardship.

C. 8-Point Action Agenda

The following lists the eight (8) action agenda items and their corresponding strategic objectives, organized under three (3) major categories: 1) *Para sa Bawat Pilipino*; 2) *Para sa Bawat Komunidad*; and, 3) *Para sa Bawat Health Worker at Institusyon*.

Para sa Bawat Pilipino (For Every Filipino):

Ensuring that every Filipino achieves the highest level of health by providing safe, high-quality, and patient-centered services, utilizing modern technology for efficient service delivery

1. ***Bawat Pilipino, ramdam ang kalusugan*** (Every Filipino experiences health and well-being)

Strategic Objective: Mainstream and strengthen the primary health care approach, ensuring that every Filipino has access to comprehensive health services without experiencing financial hardship.

This agenda item emphasizes the adoption of a primary health care approach, with a particular emphasis on how primary care integrates into the continuum of care within the Health Care Provider Network. It aims to enable every Filipino, regardless of creed, religion, race, belief, or socioeconomic status, to access comprehensive health and nutrition services without enduring financial hardships. This requires the development of robust health facilities and systems while enhancing the accessibility and affordability of health services.

2. ***Ligtas, dekalidad at mapagkalingang serbisyo*** (Safe, high-quality, and people-centered services)

Strategic Objective: Ensure the provision of high-quality, safe, and people-centered services, which include access to affordable medicines, across the lifestages.

This agenda underscores the importance of ensuring the provision of high-quality, safe, and people-centered health services and facilities across various lifestages. This encompasses not only guaranteeing access to affordable essential medicines and treatments but also prioritizing holistic care that takes into account individual health needs and rational use, while implementing agile regulatory pathways.

3. ***Teknolohiya para sa mabilis na serbisyo*** (Technology for efficient health service delivery)

Strategic Objective: Leverage digital health and technology for efficient and accessible health service delivery.

This agenda promotes the utilization of digital health and technology to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of health services. By leveraging technological advancements, the aim is to streamline processes, reduce wait times, and make health services more accessible to all, particularly those in remote or underserved areas. In addition, this approach involves utilizing

technology to harness timely and accurate data for making administrative and management decisions within the health sector, while ensuring robust data privacy to protect sensitive information and maintain public trust.

Para sa Bawat Komunidad (For Every Community):

Empowering communities and addressing determinants of health through health promotion, preparing them for crises, and fostering mental health and well-being, ensuring that each community thrives in the face of challenges

4. ***Handa sa Krisis*** (Ready for health crises and emergencies)

Strategic Objective: Ensure a responsive and resilient health system and communities that can effectively prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from public health emergencies and crises.

This agenda aims to establish and sustain a health system and communities that are capable of timely, effective and efficient preparedness and response to public health emergencies and disasters, and other means to ensure uninterrupted delivery of essential health services to avert preventable morbidities, mortalities, and other secondary health effects or outbreaks.

This is to ensure that the health system with its health infrastructure and resources is robust enough to withstand and manage unexpected challenges, safeguarding the health and well-being of the population, while also incorporating measures for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

5. ***Pag-iwas sa sakit*** (Disease prevention and health promotion)

Strategic Objective: Address determinants of health and improve healthy behaviors through the promotion of health-enabling settings, implementation of healthy public policies, and enhancement of health literacy.

This agenda focuses on enhancing healthy behaviors and practice by creating environments that support health, implementing policies that encourage wellness, and improving people's understanding of health to proactively prevent diseases and enhance the overall well-being of Filipinos. These measures may include, but are not limited to, preventive actions such as immunization, nutritional education, promotion of physical activity, implementation of smoke-free policies, establishment of workplace wellness programs, conduct of health literacy campaigns, ensuring access to safe water and sanitation, and actively addressing determinants of health through multisectoral collaboration.

6. ***Ginhawa ng isip at damdamin*** (Mental health and overall well-being)

Strategic Objective: Enhance Filipinos' well-being and ensure quality mental health services.

This agenda addresses mental health and well-being by enhancing services and support systems for mental health. The goal is to ensure that Filipinos have access to quality mental health services, reducing the stigma associated with mental health issues, and fostering an environment that promotes overall well-being and psychological support. This agenda also includes traditional

and alternative health care modalities for a more holistic and comprehensive approach.

Para sa Bawat Health Worker at Institusyon (For Every Health Worker and Institution):

Prioritizing health care workers' welfare and rights, and strengthening our health institutions against the threat of pandemics.

7. ***Kapakanan at karapatan ng health workers*** (Advancement and protection of health workers' rights and well-being)

Strategic Objective: Ensure an adequate, competent, and committed health workforce by providing fair compensation, decent work conditions, and opportunities for career development.

This focuses on the well-being and rights of health workers – both medical and allied health professionals, and technical, administrative, and support personnel – actively involved with health facilities and institutions. It aims to ensure that they are protected, receiving fair compensation, working under decent conditions, and have opportunities for professional growth. By taking care of the health workforce, the health system can maintain a motivated and competent workforce dedicated to providing quality care.

8. ***Proteksyon sa anumang pandemya*** (Protection against any pandemics)

Strategic Objective: Strengthen health systems and structures to prevent, manage, and recover from disease outbreaks and potential pandemics.

Building on lessons learned from past pandemics, this agenda focuses on strengthening health systems and structures to prevent, manage, and recover from disease outbreaks and potential pandemics. This agenda focuses on mainstreaming health security, enhancing disease and public health surveillance, epidemic response capabilities, structures and infrastructures across all levels of the healthcare system, including communities, primary care facilities, clinics, hospitals, laboratories, pharmacies, and other health institutions, to prevent and effectively address any pandemics that may arise in the future.

D. Humanistic Leadership and Good Governance

The DOH shall adopt humanistic leadership in the health sector supported by management systems that enable good governance. This leadership approach calls on all stakeholders to demonstrate genuine empathy, care, and support for others. The essence of this leadership style is its service-driven and people-oriented nature, which places a significant emphasis on recognizing and valuing the unique roles and contributions of each stakeholder to the overall betterment of the health system.

Good governance calls on all stakeholders to ensure that health commitments are judiciously pursued using strategy, performance, and quality management systems. This also implies clarity in roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. In

addition, good governance implies collaborations to tap the influence and power of other stakeholders through effective network building, engagement, among others.

VI. IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

- A. The Strategy Map for the 8-Point Action Agenda (Annex A) with the tagline, “*Sa Healthy Pilipinas, Bawat Buhay Mahalaga*”, articulates the vision, goals and strategy of the health sector for 2023-2028.
- B. All DOH offices, units, hospitals, DATRCs, and attached agencies shall align their policies, programs, and activities to the 8-Point Action Agenda. They shall advocate for these strategies among all stakeholders and partners.
- C. The DOH shall utilize the Performance Governance System (PGS) as its primary governance framework, supplemented by other management systems such as the Quality Management System, Strategic Performance Management System, and compliance to national policies such as the RA No. 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018, to ensure the effective implementation of this Order.
- D. The DOH shall also elevate performance monitoring systems at all levels of the health sector, supported by continuous quality improvement systems, and enforced through strengthening performance accountability and empowering leadership. Moreover, the DOH shall maximize the utilization of the abovementioned mandated systems for governance. An evaluation system for major interventions, including programs, shall also be institutionalized.
- E. This Order shall be supplemented by the NOH 2023-2028; DOH Strategy and Roadmaps; Health Sector Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning System; Annual Policy Agenda; Medium-Term Research Agenda; Technical Assistance Agenda; Health Executive Agenda for Legislation; Evaluation Agenda; Engagement Agenda; Health Care Financing Strategy 2023-2028; and other relevant issuances to provide further details on objectives, targets, interventions, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and the roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders. The NOH 2023-2028 shall provide the detailed list of strategic interventions for the 8-Point Action Agenda.
- F. The DOH shall institutionalize organizational development as a driver for change management and “right-sizing”. It shall be the basis for the determination of the functional management structure to fully support the implementation of the 8-Point Action Agenda. The functional management structure shall be developed in close consultation with internal and external DOH stakeholders.
- G. Meanwhile, other public health institutions, including local health offices and LGU-owned healthcare facilities, shall be encouraged and assisted to institutionalize organizational development within their institution aimed at re-orienting, redesigning, and re-tooling operations to effectively and efficiently deliver both existing and emerging mandates.

- H. Government agencies/entities and other health stakeholders are strongly encouraged to align their policies, programs, and funds for health with the 8-Point Action Agenda. These agencies/entities include the Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System, hospitals under the Department of National Defense, Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, LGU hospitals, hospitals of state universities and colleges, Philippine General Hospital, Department of the Interior and Local Government, 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 stakeholders in the private sector.
- I. All health stakeholders' commitments and contributions to the implementation of the strategy shall be indicated and monitored annually in scorecards, such as but not limited to:
1. DOH Secretary's Scorecard
 2. DOH-CO and CHD Office Performance Commitment and Review targets
 3. DOH Hospitals' Scorecard
 4. International Health Partners Scorecard;
 5. LGU Health Scorecard; and
 6. Individual Scorecards of PhilHealth, National Nutrition Council (NNC), Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care (PITAHC), Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC).
- J. The necessary budgetary resources to support priority health investments for the 8-Point Action Agenda shall be determined, and funds shall be allocated accordingly. All DOH offices shall align their Work and Financial Plans (WFPs), Project Procurement Management Plans (PPMP), and respective medium-term program investment plans with the 8-Point Action Agenda.
- K. LGUs are enjoined to align their respective Local Investment Plans for Health and Annual Operational Plans with the 8-Point Action Agenda with the assistance of CHDs. Further, CHDs shall commit to integrate the priority programs, activities and projects (PAPs) espoused in the 8-Point Action Agenda in their respective Regional-National Investment Programming (RNIP) through their Regional Development Councils (RDCs).

VII. REPEALING CLAUSE


This Order shall repeal Administrative Order No. 2022-0038, entitled "*Health Sector Strategy for 2023-2028*." All other issuances inconsistent with the provisions of this Order are hereby revised, modified or rescinded accordingly. All other provisions of existing issuances not affected by this Order shall remain valid and in effect.

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.

VIII. 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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Secretary of Health

Annex A: Strategy Map for the 8-Point Action Agenda for 2023-2028



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Annex B: References

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. (2023). Organisation development. Retrieved from <https://www.cipd.org/en/knowledge/factsheets/organisational-development-factsheet/>

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