



Camarines Norte signifies intent as UHC Integration Site

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Daet, Camarines Norte - In an event dubbed as Camarines Norte Health Summit held last March 03, 2023, the province of Camarines Norte signified its intent to become a UHC Integration Site (UHC-IS). Through the initiative of Gov. Ricarte "Dong" R. Padilla and in coordination with PhilHealth and Department of Health-Bicol Center for Health Development, the summit was conducted to meet the governor's ultimate goal of "Kalusugan Para sa Lahat, sa Cam Norte Nararapat".



DOH Bicol CHD RD Vera

In attendance were PhilHealth executive and regional officers, DOH-CHD 5 regional director, local chief executives, provincial and municipal health officers, medical directors of health institutions and media partners. On the side of PhilHealth, Executive Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer, Atty. Eli Dino D. Santos, Area Vice-President for Area I & II Walter Bacareza, and Vice-President for the Bicol Region Henry Almanon represented the state health insurer.

Local Chief Executives (LCEs) Hon. Nelson Delos Santos of San Lorenzo Ruiz, Hon. Severino Francisco of Labo, Hon. Ma. Jhoanna Ong of San Vicente, Hon. Bernardina Borja of Sta. Elena and Hon. Adrian Davoco



Camarines Norte Governor Padilla

of Basud were also present to manifest their support.

The Universal Health Care (UHC) Act is a health sector reform for steering equitable access to quality and affordable healthcare services where every Filipino is protected against financial risks. The Law also expands access to preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative, and palliative health services by automatically enrolling all Filipinos in the National Health Insurance Program.

In partnership with the office of Sen. Robin Padilla, the Health Summit was conceptualized by Gov. Padilla to address the need to improve the health services. He stressed the importance of the province's collaboration with PhilHealth and DOH and the critical role of Local Government Units (LGU) to provide their constituents with access to primary health care services. *"For and in behalf of the people of Camarines Norte, I would like to thank DOH and PhilHealth. Kami po ay naniniwala na with our partnership, ang health care na pwedeng matamo ng isang mayamang Pilipino ay possible ding maramdaman ng mahihirap nating mga kababayan at yan po ay nasa ating mga kamay,"* he said.

The province of Camarines Norte is home to 700 thousand residents of 12 municipalities with a total of 282 barangays. Collectively, 118 health practitioners

and 68 facilities were accredited by PhilHealth in 2022 which includes three government facilities: CamarinesW Norte Provincial Hospital, Labo District Hospital and Capalonga Medicare and Community Hospital.



PhilHealth EVP and COO Atty. Eli Santos

“PhilHealth plays a critical role in implementing the UHC law. This is the reason why we will continue to strengthen our PhilHealth Konsulta Package or Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama, a transitory benefit towards the achievement of a comprehensive outpatient benefit package. I am sure that today’s convergence will bring us closer to achieving that goal with our Kababayans benefitting from this noble endeavor,” said PhilHealth COO Santos.

In line with the aspirations of the UHC to integrate local health system into province/city-wide health systems (P/CWHS), the integration will address the fragmentation of the health systems and promote cooperation among local government units in addressing health issues and delivering seamless healthcare services. This gargantuan task of integrating into P/ CWHS entails the grouping of providers and facilities into primary care provider networks and linking them to secondary and tertiary care facilities as networks.

Director Vera of the DOH-CHD5 articulated that with Camarines Norte expressing its intent to become a UHC integration site, the province will be supported by the Department of Health and PhilHealth to demonstrate integration approaches and mechanisms as prescribed by law. *“We commend the province for this initiative because this act alone inches the province closer to achieving equitable health care for its citizens. Let us all work together towards a healthy Camarines Norte, a healthy Bicolandia and ultimately a healthy Pilipinas”* he said.

AVP Bacareza emphasized how fortunate Camarines Norte is for having Gov. Padilla and

uttered *“Bhirang-bihira sa Local Chief Executive na meron (na) heart para sa health care”*. He then discussed the Combat Plan, a series of strategies geared towards improving turnaround-time of payment to facilities, No Balance Billing (NBB) implementation and benefit availment. He added that focus should be placed on the setting up of primary care facilities and encouraged LCEs and health institutions to secure accreditation as contracted Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama (Konsulta) provider. Moreover, the executive commended the regional office for being the most efficient in terms collection and claims processing.

As an outpatient package that provides primary health care services like consultation, laboratories, drugs, and medicines that are free, the PhilHealth Konsulta is a transitory phase in moving forward towards comprehensive primary care benefit package. For 2022, a total of 12 Konsulta providers were accredited in the entire province.



(L-R) PhilHealth Region V RVP Almanon, Camarines Norte PHO Francisco, DOH Bicol CHD RD Vera, Camarines Norte Governor Padilla, PhilHealth COO Santos, and AVP Bacareza

Regional Vice President Almanon facilitated the open forum to further discuss concerns on the Konsulta implementation, creation of health care provider network, integration of local health systems into province/city-wide health systems, capacity building of LGU health care facilities and human resource and guidelines on the use of the global budget and special health fund.

The governor received a plaque of recognition as UHC champion from PhilHealth prior to the ceremonial signing of memorandum of agreement as UHC integration site. Once finalized, Camarines Norte will join the provinces of Sorsogon, Masbate and Catanduanes as the fourth UHC integration site in the region.