



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development

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REPRESENTATIVE ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.

Chairperson
Committee on Health
House of Representatives
Quezon City

Dear **Representative Tan**:

The Department of Social Welfare and Development supports House Bill Nos 349, 584, 844, 1040, 1698, 3796 and 4101 which aim to provide quality mental health care to Filipinos.

To contribute to the bills' enhancement, we recommend the following:

1. Consolidate the bills into one.
2. Under **Definition of Terms**:
 - a. Add Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) defined as *'any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and/or prevent or treat mental disorder'* by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings.
 - b. Use the term "substance abuse and dependence" since alcoholism and other addictions are also considered as mental illnesses based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders V (DSM-V).
3. Under **Rights of Persons with Mental Health Needs**:
 - a. Include their right to be portrayed in non-discriminatory and non-derogatory ways in both media and film.
 - b. On confidentiality of Information about Persons with Mental Health Needs: Please consider the possible release of the information to DSWD licensed social workers especially for cases of patients whose children are placed under the custody of the Department for alternative family care.

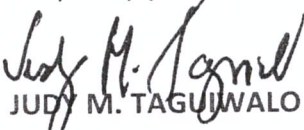
4. Under **Duties and Responsibilities of Government Agencies:**

- a. For the Department of Health (DOH): Include the accreditation of mental health facilities and the establishment of a database of persons with mental health needs for policy and program development.
- b. For the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED): Ensure that immediate psychosocial services are made available in schools, state universities and private educational institutions.

5. Under the **Composition of the Philippine Mental Health Council:** Specify that the representatives from the government, private health sector, academe/research and professional organization should be involved in mental health issues.
6. Take into account the special needs of vulnerable groups (children, women, senior citizens, indigenous peoples) in crafting the framework to address mental health issues.
7. For **Sec. 22 (HBN 4101)** – to review the establishment of a Bureau of Mental Health Development in relation to the existing Philippine Council for Mental Health (PCMH). The Council as an attached agency can already cover the implementation of the National Mental Health Delivery System.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


JUDY M. TAGUIWALO
Secretary