



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

JAN 18 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

No. 2021- 0008

SUBJECT: Guidelines in Public Access to Price Information of All Health Services and Goods in Health Facilities in the Philippines

I. RATIONALE

As of 2018, out-of-pocket payments remain to be the top source of health expenditure at 53.9 percent (Philippine Statistics Authority, Philippine National Health Accounts), despite a 98% coverage rate of the projected population (PhilHealth, 2018). Left with the burden of shouldering the healthcare cost not covered by private or social health insurance, and aggravated by the lack of access to cost information for utilizing health services and goods, the patients are pushed farther into catastrophic health spending. Thus, to empower the public in making informed decisions when choosing health care providers and health products, thereby promoting fair pricing, a mechanism for monitoring price transparency must be established.

The national government responded to the patients' need for greater price transparency through the issuance of RA 11223, also known as, "The Universal Health Care (UHC) Act." Section 28.16 of its Implementing Rules and Regulations states that, "Healthcare providers and facilities shall be required to make readily accessible to the public and patients and submit to DOH and PhilHealth, all pertinent, relevant, and up-to-date information regarding the prices of health services being offered." To enforce this provision, Department Circular (DC) No. 2019-0558, titled, "Public Access to the Price Information by all Healthcare Providers" dated November 17, 2019, was issued by the Health Facilities and Services Regulatory Bureau (HFSRB), which required all hospitals and other health facilities, both government and private, to make accessible to the public and all patients a price list of their health services, including but not limited to, cost of amenities, cost of health services and procedures, laboratory fees, and professional fees. The availability of the price list to the public and patients became a licensing requirement for the issuance of Department of Health - License to Operate (DOH-LTO) or Department of Health - Certificate of Accreditation (DOH-COA).

However, several concerns were raised on the implementation of the said DC. Thus, this Order shall provide clarifications on the guidelines to effectively implement the provisions mandated by the UHC Act regarding access of patients to price information of all healthcare providers. All hospitals and other health facilities shall comply with the guidelines set forth in this Order, as part of DOH licensing requirements.

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JAN 25 2021
CORAZON S. DELA CRUZ
KMITS - RECORDS SECTION
Department of Health

II. OBJECTIVES

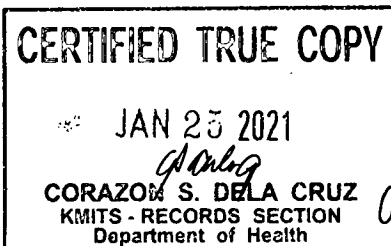
This Order aims to set guidelines in ensuring that the price list of all health services and goods being offered in hospitals and other health facilities are accessible and available to the public.

III. SCOPE

This Order shall apply to all hospitals and other health facilities, whether government-owned or privately-owned.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Applicant – the natural or juridical person who is applying for a License to Operate or Certificate of Accreditation of a hospital or any other health facility.
2. Department of Health Authorizations (DOH Authorizations) – a formal authority issued by DOH, such as, but not limited to DOH-LTO, DOH-COA and DOH - Permit to Construct (DOH-PTC).
3. Department of Health-Certificate of Accreditation (DOH-COA) – refers to the formal authorization issued by DOH to an individual, partnership, corporation or association to operate a health facility. It refers to compliance to standards set for a particular purpose such as, but not limited to, HIV testing, drug testing, water analysis, and performance of kidney transplant. These standards cover input/structural, process and outcome/output standards.
4. Department of Health-License to Operate (DOH-LTO) – a formal authority issued by DOH to an individual, agency, partnership or corporation to operate a hospital or other health facility.
5. Goods – refers to health products which are primarily used for medical, surgical, therapeutic, and diagnostic purposes, which shall include but not limited to drugs, medicines, and medical supplies.
6. Health Facility – refers to institution, whether stationary or mobile, land based or otherwise, that provides healthcare and other health-related establishment which provides diagnostics, therapeutic, rehabilitative, palliative and/or related health care services except medical radiation facilities and hospital pharmacies.
7. Health Services – any service performed by health care professionals, or by others under their direction, aimed at contributing to improved health or to the diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of people with health issues. *ubl*

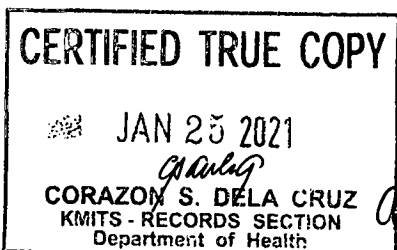


V. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. All health facilities shall ensure that an updated price list of all their health services and goods are readily accessible to the public and patients at all times.
2. The price list of all health services shall be itemized comprehensively and all fees indicated clearly, including outsourced services, if applicable.
3. All health facilities shall ensure complete transparency of all prices and fees and that there are no hidden charges. It shall be consistent with the actual charges being billed to the patient.
4. All health facilities shall be monitored by the Health Facilities and Services Regulatory Bureau (HFSRB) or Center for Health Development Regulatory Licensing and Enforcement Divisions (CHD-RLEDs) to ensure continuous compliance to this Order.

VI. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

1. The price list shall include, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Price per type of accommodation, critical care units and emergency room;
 - b. Fees for medical and surgical procedures;
 - c. Price of laboratory tests;
 - d. Price of imaging diagnostic tests;
 - e. Professional fees; and
 - f. Price of drugs, medicines, and medical supplies
 - g. Bundle/package price of health services;
 - h. Corresponding PhilHealth case rate packages and Z-package rates, if applicable; and
 - i. Corresponding Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) rates, if applicable
2. The price and fees may be presented as ranges, if deemed appropriate.
3. The price list may be presented in any form, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Printed handout
 - b. Menu booklet
 - c. Interactive digital form (example: use of tablets and computers)
 - d. Posters or tarpaulins
5. The price list shall be readily available to the public in a conspicuous area, such as, but not limited to, the lobby, reception area, information kiosk and business office.
6. The price list shall be accessible to the public through the health facility's official website, if available, and shall be regularly updated.
7. The health facility shall update the price list at least annually, or as needed. The date when the price list was last updated shall be indicated.



Handwritten initials/signature

8. The patient or patient's guardian shall be informed of the price list upon admission or before provision of outpatient services or procedures. This includes information on the No Balance Billing policy for basic accommodation. There shall be a documented proof that the price list was presented and explained, and that it was understood and accepted by the patient or patient's guardian.
9. All health facilities shall submit information regarding its prices and charges for all goods and health services, including professional fees, once the guidelines have been developed by DOH and PhilHealth, and once the system is fully functional.
10. The availability of an updated price list, in accordance to this Order, shall be a requirement for initial and renewal of DOH-LTO or DOH-COA of the health facility.

VII. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

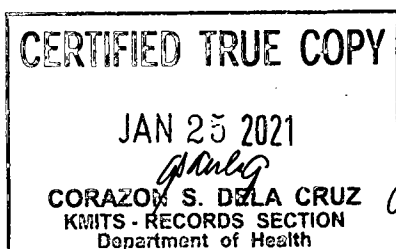
Pursuant to Section 3 of Executive Order No. 102 s. 1999 titled "Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the Department of Health", the DOH shall "formulate national policies and standards for health." Noncompliance to provisions stated in this Order shall be considered a violation. Violations of the guidelines stated herein, and related policies or laws, shall be the basis for suspension/revocation of the DOH authorizations issued to the hospital and other health facilities, as applicable.

Imposable penalties for violations hereof shall be in accordance with AO No. 2007-0022, titled "Violations Under the One-Stop Shop Licensure System for Hospitals", AO No. 2018-0016, titled "Revised Guidelines in the Implementation of the One-Stop Shop Licensing System", and other related and relevant issuances or guidelines.

Violations committed against provisions of other existing relevant laws, such as, but not limited to the RA 7394, also known as the "Consumer Act of the Philippines", shall be meted the corresponding penalty separately by the appropriate government agencies.

VIII. APPEAL

Any hospital or other health facility aggrieved by the decision of the Director IV of HFSRB/CHD Director, or in his/her absence or unavailability or when delegated, the Director III of HFSRB/CHD, within ten (10) days after receipt of the notice of decision file a notice of appeal to the Head of the Health Regulation Team (HRT). All pertinent documents and records of the applicant shall then be elevated by the HFSRB or CHD to the HRT. The decision of the Head of the HRT if still contested maybe brought on a final appeal to the Secretary of Health whose decision shall be final and executory. *uh*



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IX. TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

1. All health facilities applying for an initial DOH-LTO or DOH-COA shall immediately comply with the provisions of this Order.
2. All currently DOH-licensed or DOH-accredited health facilities shall be required to comply with all provisions of this Order sixty (60) days after effectivity of this Order.
3. The price list shall be part of the requirements for the renewal of DOH-LTO or DOH-COA for CY 2022 and onwards.

X. REPEALING CLAUSE

This rescinds AO No. 2008-0002, known as, "Posting of Schedule of Fees for Laboratory and Other Diagnostic Services of Hospitals and Other Health Facilities" and DC No. 2019-0558, known as, "Public Access to the Price Information by all Healthcare Providers."


Provisions from previous issuances that are inconsistent or contrary to this Order are hereby rescinded and modified accordingly.

XI. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

In the events that any provision or part of this Order is declared unconstitutional or null and void or rendered invalid by any court of law of competent authority, those provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain valid and effective.

XII. EFFECTIVITY

This order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in a newspaper of general circulation.


FRANCISCO T. BUQUE III, M.D., MSc
Secretary of Health

