

CHD–Calabarzon Region Holds PIR in Baguio City

To assess the newborn screening (NBS) operations in the Calabarzon Region, the Center for Health Development (CHD)–Region 4-A conducted a Program Implementation Review (PIR) of its Newborn Screening Program at Burnham Suites, Baguio City, April 3–5.

Besides the annual review, the PIR also aimed to intensify implementation and increase the number of babies screened in this part of Southern Tagalog. The activity served as an opportunity to identify solutions as well as formulate strategies to increase NBS coverage, discuss developments, and formulate the 2013 action plan that will fast-track, enhance, and resolve issues and concerns in achieving the 85% target coverage of the program.

NBS coordinators from the different provinces and cities of Region 4-A attended the event, including NBS coordinators from the DOH Provincial Health Team Offices. Wenalyn Viaña and Joanna Abigail Terrado of the NSC-NIH in Manila attended as resource speakers. Representatives from General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital (GEAMH) of Trece Martirez City, Cavite, were also present.



Above: Participants of CHD–Region IV-A strike a pose in front of Burnham Suites, Baguio City, the venue of its 2013 PIR.

Each province and city presented its 2011 and 2012 accomplishment reports, and afterward, the participants gave their comments and suggestions to the presenters. Several noteworthy practices were shared. An example is that of Calamba City, which shared its practice of allotting free filter cards to their patients. They said that this is the reason why the city has a wide coverage when it comes to NBS. The filter cards are sponsored by the city government.

Another model practice is that of the GEAMH, where almost all of the hospital personnel—from the doctors to the security guards—are oriented with NBS. There were also many instances, they said, when pregnant mothers in the ward would share the importance of NBS with their fellow patients, thereby also making them as NBS advocates.

Before the gathering ended, each area representative presented its action plans, and the participants gave comments and suggestions for improvements. *JQuerido/ MHermoso*

More stories on NSC-NIH on page 8...



Reunion of Saved Babies, Negros Style

A celebration of life!

The Newborn Screening Center (NSC)–Visayas gathered 40 patients and their family members for the annual Reunion of Saved Babies at the Conference Room of Negros Occidental Provincial Capitol, March 26.

Governor Alfredo Marañon, Jr., graced the event with his inspirational message, while also present were members of the Provincial Health Office headed by Dr. Ernell Tumimbang and Jenny Saron. Meanwhile, Dr. Eufemia Octaviano, former Chairperson of the ORC Board of Nursing, gave a lecture on Responsible Parenting. In attendance, too, are the NBS coordinators of CHD–Region 6, Dr. Renilyn Reyes and Ma. Lizandra Sante.



Above: Parents, saved babies and the newborn screening team celebrated the Reunion of Saved Babies on March 26 in Negros Occidental.

The Reunion of Saved Babies is organized by NSC yearly per region. The event is where patients and their families meet the newborn screening team and other children and families who shared their condition. For the NSC, it is a chance to evaluate the condition of patients and determine how far the program has gone in fulfilling its mission of saving babies from mental retardation and other deleterious complications.

“It is a chance to evaluate the condition of patients and determine how far the program has gone in fulfilling its mission...”



DMI-Butuan Includes NBS in Medical Mission

It was truly a week of healing.

The Daughters of Mary Immaculate (DMI) celebrated the Holy Week with a medical mission intended for the parishioners of the Holy Redeemer Parish in Butuan City, March 27.

Headed by Clarita Alarin and participated by other organizations, the annual medical mission activity was a success.

One of the services offered in the medical mission was the newborn screening sponsorship, where 24 pregnant women received newborn screening certificates. The certificates of sponsorship entitled the recipients' babies to undergo newborn screening at any of the hospitals or birthing facility in Butuan City.

Prior to the distribution of certificates, a newborn screening orientation was given to pregnant mothers by the staff of Newborn Screening Center–Mindanao. Also in attendance and in support of the activity were Nanette Fat-Montilla, NBS Nurse Coordinator, and Dr. Glynn Andoy, Regional Medical Coordinator for Caraga Region. *P Bermudez*



NSC-M Visits 100+ NSFs in 2 Months

To keep on top of newborn screening issues and concerns and connect with newborn screening facilities (NSFs) in southern Philippines, Newborn Screening Center–Mindanao (NSC-M) visited a total of 119 NSFs in March and April.

For the month of March, NSC-M toured 82 NSFs in Davao City, Davao del Norte, Kidapawan City, Cotabato City, and Davao del Sur, while in April, NSC-M touched based with 37 in Zamboanga City and Zamboanga del Sur.

NSC-M addressed issues and problems in the NSFs visited. It was also in the lookout for NSFs that have successfully implemented newborn screening and whose successes were worthy of sharing to other NSFs.

In the coming months, NSC-M plans to drop by NSFs in South Cotabato, Saranggani, Lanao del Norte, and Maguindanao. *SGuilaran*

CHD–Region 11 Holds NBS Training in Davao

The Center for Health Development (CHD)–Region 11 conducted its first newborn screening (NBS) training for 2013 at the Apo View Hotel, Davao City, March 21–22.

Aimed to equip health personnel with the knowledge, skills, and attitude in advocating and implementing newborn screening effectively, the NBS training catered to 35 untrained NBS personnel composed of physicians, medical technologists, nurses, midwives of RHUs, hospitals, and lying-ins in the region.

The two-day event started off with the overview of the NBS in the Philippines by Ma. Clarose Mascardo, CHD–Region 11 NBS Regional Coordinator. Dr. Conchita Abarquez, a geneticist and the head of NSC-Mindanao, presented the impact of newborn screening on the NBS panel of disorders. This was followed by Angela Villareal, CHD–Region 11 NBS Nurse Coordinator, who discussed the implementation of NBS in the health facility and the NSF Protocol.

For the participants, the first day involved working on an action plan for implementing NBS in their facilities. The second day consisted of a visit to Southern Philippines Medical Center for actual sample collection, group discussion, and sharing of insights. The presentation of action plans culminated the activity. *SGuilaran*



CAR Improves Quality of NBS Samples

The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) posted a pleasing 0.75% unsatisfactory rate in the quality of samples submitted for newborn screening for the first quarter of 2013.

CAR was able to send a total of 6,659 newborn screening samples to the laboratory, only 50 of which were considered as unsatisfactory.

In addition, as of December 2012, the region achieved the highest newborn screening coverage in the Philippines with 67.4% coverage.

The Center for Health Development–CAR was in constant pursuit of providing quality newborn screening services by decreasing the rate of unsatisfactory samples being sent by its newborn screening facilities to the newborn screening laboratory. It also spearheaded trainings on the proper newborn screening program implementation and on quality screening services.

Table 1 below shows the top 10 newborn screening facilities in CAR with the most number of total samples sent with their corresponding unsatisfactory rates. *NDelaCruz*

Table 1. Top 10 newborn screening facilities in CAR (generated from Neometrics).

Hospital	Newborn Screening Samples	Unsatisfactory Samples	Percent
Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center	1,908	5	0.26%
Benguet General Hospital	912	7	0.77%
Abra Provincial Hospital	741	0	0.00%
Kalinga Provincial Hospital	507	1	0.20%
Pines City Doctors' Hospital	356	1	0.28%
Ifugao Provincial Hospital	212	3	1.42%
St. Louis University Hospital of the Sacred Heart	201	1	0.50%
Far North Luzon General Hospital & Training Center	197	0	0.00%
Bontoc General Hospital	192	4	2.08%
Luis Hora Memorial Regional Hospital	175	0	0.00%



Photo by Dylan Walters as seen on www.flickr.com under the username The Dilly Lama



DOH Retained Hospitals Visit NSC-NIH Lab

To ensure the quality of blood samples and also see the Newborn Screening Center–National Institutes of Health (NSC-NIH), specifically the laboratory, the NSC-NIH received 13 DOH retained hospitals in Metro Manila in a series of meetings in April and May.

The meetings were initiated as a result of the successful conduct of LGU Assemblies and several Exposure Trips by CHD-MM last year.

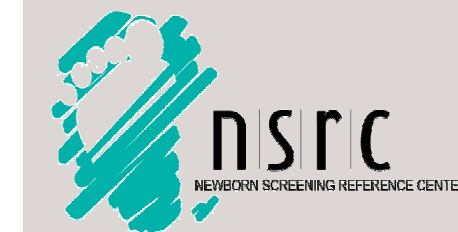
During these meetings, the overview and the NBS flow of operations were



Above: Representatives from different hospitals walked through the NBS process during the series of meetings organized by CHD-MM in April and May.

presented to the attendees. Presentations on the status of each hospital with regard to transit time and on unfit and unsatisfactory samples were also shown. Furthermore, the hospitals shared with one another their strategies and good practices to achieve the goal of the NBS.

CHD-MM stressed that it recognizes the DOH hospitals as vital partners in the successful implementation of RA 9288, the Newborn Screening Act of 2004, and said that it looks forward to more activities in the future. *CAIincastre*



National Newborn Screening Awarding Ceremonies

Presidential Proclamation No. 540 declares the first week of October as the Newborn Screening Week. This is aimed at fostering greater awareness among parents, health practitioners and the general public of the importance of Newborn Screening in the country. A major activity during the Newborn Screening Awareness Week Celebration this year is the National Newborn Screening Awarding Ceremony.

Since 2003, national biennial awarding ceremonies have been held in Manila to give recognition to the accomplishments, innovations, and dedication of the Newborn Screening Facilities (NSFs), individuals, organizations, national government agencies, and local government units in saving babies from mental retardation and death.

Starting 2013, the national awarding ceremony shall be held in strategic areas of the country to accommodate the increasing number of awardees and to encourage attendance of awardees from various localities of the country to the said event.

General Guidelines

The National Newborn Screening Awarding Ceremony will remain a national activity although held in various zones as locally delineated by the geographic coverage of each Newborn Screening Center (NSC), namely:

- Newborn Screening Center – Central Luzon (NSC-CL) – Covering Regions 1 (Ilocos Region), 2 (Cagayan Valley), 3 (Central Luzon) and Cordillera Administrative Region
- Newborn Screening Center – National Institutes of Health (NSC-NIH) – Covering Regions Metro Manila, 4A (CALABARZON), 4B (MIMAROPA) and 5 (Bicol Region)
- Newborn Screening Center – Visayas (NSC-Vis) – Covering Regions 6 (Western Visayas), 7 (Central Visayas), and 8 (Eastern Visayas)
- Newborn Screening Center – Mindanao (NSC-Min) – Covering Regions 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula), 10 (Northern Mindanao), 11 (Davao Region), 12 (SOCCSKSARGEN), Caraga, and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

Being a national activity, the mechanics/guidelines, program for the awarding and list of outstanding and exemplary awards shall come from the Department of Health (DOH) and the Newborn Screening Reference Center (NSRC).

The NSCs, in collaboration with the Centers for Health Development (CHDs) in their areas of coverage, shall take the lead in conducting the awarding ceremonies.

DOH will release a memorandum on specific guidelines in the conduct of the ceremony.

All Set for Expanded . . . From Page 1

- Option 1: Six (6) disorders (CH, CAH, GAL, PKU, G6PD, and MSUD) at P 550.
- Option 2: The full complement of the disorders at P 1,500

The cost of newborn screening, which is now at P 550, is presently included in the newborn care package for members of PhilHealth. There are ongoing discussions with PhilHealth management to increase the subsidy for the expanded newborn screening. *VMendoza*

Announcements

DMMC Is New NSC in Southern Luzon

There's a new center in town. A Newborn Screening Center (NSC), that is.

After passing multiple stages of the selection process, Daniel O. Mercado Medical Center (DMMC), a tertiary hospital in Tanauan City, has been selected by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Newborn Screening Reference Center (NSRC) as the host institution for NSC in Southern Luzon.

Starting September 2013, DMMC will run newborn screening samples from Region 4-A.

Five facilities applied to become an NSC in Southern Luzon—four private institutions and one government facility. All of these facilities, as a requirement, were strategically and geographically accessible.

Preliminary visits were also conducted to check if the facilities comply with the requirements including space and capital. Shortlisted applicants went through validation visits next. During the validation visits, commitment, capability, and capacity were assessed and role in the program was clarified. The validation visits were conducted by National Center for Prevention and Control and NSRC. After the validation visits, the new NSC was chosen, and this year, DMMC emerged successful.

NEWBORN SCREENING SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC.
presents
11TH NEWBORN SCREENING CONVENTION

“Facing the Challenges of Expanded Newborn Screening”

October 3-4, 2013
Manila Hotel
One Rizal Park, 0913 Manila

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Pre-Registration
On or before Aug. 15, 2013
Doctors P 2,800
Non-Doctors P 2,000

Onsite Registration
Doctors P 3,800
Non-Doctors P 2,800

1) Deposit pre-registration fees to:
Account Name: **Newborn Screening Society of the Phil., Inc.**
Account Numbers:
Security Bank 0051-019939-201
Bank of Philippine Islands 4981-0110-96
Banco de Oro 002410114497

2) Email the pre-registration form with the clear scanned copy of the

3) Send text message to **(0921)3055094** when email, fax, or postal mail was made.

4) Claim your Official Receipt at the Secretariat Desk during the Convention.

Important Note
Hotel bookings should be done directly with the hotels.

Please visit www.newbornscreening.ph to download the registration form.

As new NSC, DMMC personnel will undergo extensive training at the NSC–National Institutes of Health starting May 2013. An accreditation visit is scheduled on August 2013 to review the NSC's laboratory capability and administrative components (i.e., follow-up of cases, accounting, etc.).

DOH, through the Bureau of Health Facility Services, opened the applications in 2012 for NSCs for the following areas: Region 4-A, Northern Luzon, Region 7, and Region 10. *VMendoza*

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CHD-Region 5 Holds First Integrated PIR

It was a gathering of minds when Center for Health Development (CHD)–Region 5, in collaboration with the Provincial Health Offices (PHOs), conducted the First Maternal and Child Joint Program Implementation Review (PIR) in Villa Caceres Hotel, Naga City, April 10–12.

The PIR aimed to assess and evaluate maternal and child health program implementation in the regional level and to strengthen the advocacy that eventually improve performance coverage.

During the event, program coordinators from the different PHOs of the region presented their 2012 accomplishments on Newborn Screening (NBS), Expanded Program of Immunization, and Family Planning.

NBS coordinators from the three DOH retained hospitals—namely, Bicol Medical Center in Naga City; Bicol Sanitarium in Cabusao, Camarines Sur; and Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital in Legazpi City—also participated in the program, where they shared exemplary practices to achieve and maintain the 98% performance coverage in the region.

Moreover, Joanna Abigail Terrado of Newborn Screening Center–National Institutes of Health in Manila, talked about updates on NBS. She highlighted the issues of unfit/unsatisfactory blood samples, age of collection and transit time, and some reiteration on administrative mechanics. An open forum followed thereafter.

Toward the end of the gathering, the 100-day work plan was presented. PHO coordinators and selected provincial/district hospitals together with the Provincial Health Team Offices brainstormed on the next steps in the next 100 days. It revealed that advocacy activities and monitoring were among the priorities.

CHD-Region 5 assured the attendees that it will continue to provide necessary technical assistance and funds for the monitoring programs and activities. *GVelasco*



Top: Virgilio S. Ludovice, MD, MPH, Chief-LHAPHS Division, provides insights on the importance of NBS and other health programs during the Maternal and Child Joint PIR. Bottom: Joanna Abigail Terrado of NSC-NIH-Manila presented the unfit/unsatisfactory blood samples.

NSRC
NEWBORN SCREENING REFERENCE CENTER

Newborn Screening Reference Center
National Institutes of Health
University of the Philippines Manila
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All Set for Expanded Screening Program

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Number of Babies Screened as of April 2013

COUNTER: 4,337,497

Initially, one NFC will be setup per region. The NFCs will coordinate with a team of specialists and subspecialists. Due to the shortage of some of the subspecialists, teleconsultations will be one of the features of this clinic.

Starting January 2014, the expanded panel will include hemoglobinopathies and additional metabolic disorders, namely, organic acid, fatty acid oxidation, and amino acid disorders. All these conditions can be treated at birth, avoiding complications of no treatment.

A more intensive advocacy to reach the general public will be launched on October 2013, targeting provincial and marginalized urban communities with a high rate of homebirth needs. A new set of campaign materials will be released, emphasizing the value of responsible parenthood.

Expanded newborn screening will be optional and will be offered to parents in all participating facilities with the following options: **Continued on page 6...**

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