

Muntinlupa City Wins DOH-NCR's NBS Video-Making Contest



Representatives from the winning health offices from local government units—Muntinlupa, Las Piñas, and Valenzuela City Health Offices—receive their trophies and join the officers and staff of DOH-NCRO, NSRC, and NSC-NIH.

In 2014, the Department of Health–National Capital Regional Office (DOH-NCRO) commissioned a song/jingle for the newborn screening (NBS) to extend the reach of the program. The jingle was such a hit that it is being played in almost all NBS gatherings including the national convention.

Owing to the success of the contest, DOH-NCRO recently opened a video-making competition among Metro Manila local government units that sought to intensify the campaign by

making a music video based on the jingle/song.

Muntinlupa City Health Office emerged as the winner, winning PHP 40,000, while Las Piñas City Health Office and Valenzuela City Health Office bagged second and third prizes, PHP 30,000 and PHP 20,000, respectively.

The awarding ceremonies were held at City State Tower Hotel, Manila, on June 30, 2016.

NSC Staff Attend NBS Supplemental Training for Hemoglobinopathies

Laboratory managers and team captain for hemoglobinopathies from Newborn Screening Centers (NSCs) attended a supplemental training for VARIANT NBS Hemoglobin System conducted by Lifeline Diagnostics Supplies, Inc., together with Bio-Rad Laboratories, at Luxent Hotel, Quezon City, on May 31–June 2, 2016.

The training covered HPLC chromatogram interpretation and instrument troubleshooting and also involved a visit to the NSC–National Institutes of Health (NIH) laboratory. Variant NBS hemoglobin system is a walk-away automated system that can detect most clinically significant hemoglobin disorders. This sophisticated system detects possible alpha and beta thalassemia and the presence of hemoglobin S, F, C, D, E and other abnormal hemoglobin. *MEscoreal*

Engr. Ric Silva served as main facilitator during the three-day Variant NBS Hemoglobin System Training.

IN FOCUS

Dr. Pablo O. Torre Sr. Memorial Hospital: High Coverage, Low Unsatisfactory Sample Rate

On June 21, 2016, the newborn screening (NBS) program monitoring team of the Department of Health–Regional Office 6 and Newborn Screening Center (NSC)–Visayas conducted facility visits to newborn screening facilities in Bacolod City. The facilities were chosen because they either had produced high-volume deliveries annually or were new to the program.

In that series of visits, one of the facilities stood out because of its exemplary implementation of the program. Dr. Pablo O. Torre Sr. Memorial Hospital, one of Bacolod City's premier private, tertiary-level hospitals, screened a total of 1,369 newborns, registering 100% coverage of all its inborn deliveries. Even with its big number of samples, the facility was able to maintain low unsatisfactory sample rate, both in terms of the quality of blood specimen collected and the quality of the data provided with their filter cards.

Dr. Pablo O. Torre Sr. Memorial Hospital's exemplary performance is credited to its dynamic and highly dedicated NBS team composed of all the resident physicians in training from the Department of Pediatrics. What was unique about their NBS team was that all aspects of program implementation—including purchasing NBS kits, collecting NBS samples, releasing NBS results, recalling positive cases, and patient counseling—are carried out by the residents.

All residents, beginning from their first year of residency, are

NSC-Visayas Beefs Up Promotion of ENBS in Northern Samar

In its continued efforts to promote Expanded Newborn Screening (ENBS) in the Visayas region, particularly in the provinces of Eastern Visayas, Newborn Screening Center (NSC)–Visayas conducted the 4th NBS Program Updates and Orientation on ENBS in Catarman on June 9, 2016.

At present, Northern Samar has only two facilities that offer expanded NBS: Catarman Doctors Hospital, Inc., and RHU–San Roque.

Various healthcare professionals from different newborn screening facilities in the province attended the lectures that focused on the basics of expanded NBS. At present, Northern Samar has only two facilities that offer expanded NBS.

The activity also equipped NBS Coordinators with knowledge and information necessary for advocating to parents the importance and benefits of expanded NBS.

In addition, the activity rolled out relevant updates on the changes in protocol—from the ordering of NBS kits to release of patient results. The importance of collecting and sending quality NBS samples was also reiterated to the participants. *YCMDemegillo*

already exposed to the program such that by the time they reach their 3rd and 4th year of residency, they are already very much well-acquainted with the program.

Dr. Antonia S. Gensoli, the hospital's Medical Director, orchestrated all of these efforts toward the highly successful implementation of the NBS program in the facility. *YCMDemegillo*



Dr. Pablo O. Torre Sr. Memorial Hospital building

Lanao del Sur Health Workers Get NBS Training

Bound by a common goal of achieving universal health care, the Newborn Screening Center (NSC)–Mindanao teamed up with Integrated Provincial Health Office–Lanao del Sur (IPHO-LDS) to conduct the Orientation and Training on Newborn Screening for Lanao Health Workers at Mamitua Saber Research and Training Center, Marawi State University, Marawi City, on May 19-20, 2016.

The IPHO-LDS newborn screening (NBS) team, headed by Dr. Alinader D. Minalang, gathered 47 health workers from 14 rural health units and 2 district hospitals as well as a participant from a private clinic to attend the said training.

The activity included lectures on all vital information on NBS on the first day and hands-on practicum on the second day. Moreover, 25 babies were screened by the participants under the supervision of trainers from NSC–Mindanao, Amerah Matuan and Aple Dowannie Tadlas.

Currently, Lanao del Sur has all 5 district hospitals and 30 of the 39 rural health units as NBS facilities. The training of additional health workers under these facilities aims to provide an improved health care service to the Lanao del Sur populace. *ADescaller*



Participants of the NBS orientation for Lanao del Sur receive a guided, hands-on training on newborn screening.

NEWS BRIEFS

ENBS Orientation in DOH-RO 13

To strengthen the implementation of Expanded Newborn Screening (ENBS) in Caraga Region, the Department of Health–Regional Office (DOH-RO) 13 conducted a series of program orientations to all government NBS facilities at Hotel Luciana, Butuan City, on May 2-6, 2016.

The activity gathered some 335 participants—75 nurses in the first batch, 56 doctors in the second, and 204 midwives and medical technologists in the third.

G6PD and CH Parents Forum in Regions 11, 13

In partnership with Southern Philippines Medical Center, Newborn Screening Center–Mindanao, and Department of Health–Regional Office 11 and 13, the NBS Continuity Clinics in Regions 11 and 13 conducted lay fora on glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency and congenital hypothyroidism (CH) on June 28 and July 5, 2016, respectively.

The activity sought to give the families of patients a better understanding of the disorders and for those with CH the importance of compliance with treatment and follow-up.

ENBS Orientation in DOH-RO 10

To address the needs of the program stakeholders in both private or government sectors, the Department of Health–Regional Office (DOH-RO) 10 conducted an Expanded Newborn Screening (ENBS) Orientation at Pearlmont Inn, Cagayan de Oro City, on June 16, 2016.

G6PD Forum in Zamboanga City

The Department of Health–Regional Office (DOH-RO) 9, in partnership with Newborn Screening Center (NSC)–Mindanao and Newborn Screening Continuity Clinic–Zamboanga City Medical Center, conducted the G6PD Forum for Caretakers of Confirmed Patients at Grand Astoria Hotel, Zamboanga City, on May 17, 2019.

Some 46 parents attended the activity, with a big group coming from Sindangan, Zamboanga del Norte, where a significant number of confirmed cases of G6PD were recorded.

NSC-SL Hosts G6PD Forum in Rizal Province



Left: Participants and organizers share a fun moment after the forum. Right: Dr. Maria Beatriz Gepte delivers her lecture to the participants.

The Newborn Screening Center–Southern Luzon (NSC-SL) reached out to parents of patients with confirmed Glucose-6-Phosphate-Dehydrogenase Deficiency (G6D) through the 2nd G6PD Parents' Forum held in Taytay, Rizal, on June 18, 2016.

Dr. Maria Beatriz P. Gepte, Head of the Department of Health Task Force for G6PD Deficiency, discussed the disorder to the

parents and guardians of the patients and allowed some discussions with the participants afterward.

The parents were grateful to Dr. Gepte and the organizers for the valuable information on caring for G6PD patients and for meeting other families of babies with the same disorder. *JTObelidor*

Region 1 Health Workers Get CMD Orientation

Sixty municipal and city health officers, resident physicians, newborn screening (NBS) coordinators, and nurses attended the Orientation on Common Metabolic Disorders (CMDs) at Hotel Salcedo de Vigan, Vigan City, on May 18-20, 2016.

Spearheaded by the NBS Team of Department of Health–Regional Office (DOH-RO) 1 in cooperation with

Newborn Screening Center–Central Luzon (NSC-CL) and NBS Continuity Clinic, the activity trained health service providers in the management of common metabolic disorders, on the Expanded NBS (ENBS), and on the importance of recall and follow-up of patients and on the roles of the Continuity Clinic.

Dr. Wilson Cua, a pediatric endocrinologist, talked about Congenital Hypothyroidism (CH) and Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (CAH), while Dr. Lydia Ramirez, a pediatric hematologist, discussed Glucose-6-phosphate Dehydrogenase (G6PD) Deficiency, and Hemoglobinopathies. Disorders like Phenylketonuria (PKU), Galactosemia (GAL), Maple Syrup Urine Disease (MSUD), and other groups of disorders included in ENBS panel were also discussed.

Roland Alcantara, explained the importance of ENBS and folic acid supplementation. Furthermore, Dr. Mary Grace Padilla, Follow-up Head for the NBS Continuity Clinic, gave a background on continuity clinic functions and the current situation of patients in the region. *ADoctorero*

Expanded NBS through the Lenses of HCPs

Over the years, the Newborn Screening Center–Central Luzon (NSC-CL), with the continuous support of newborn screening facilities (NSFs) under its jurisdiction, has constantly built and strengthened the knowledge and skills of healthcare professionals (HCPs) on newborn screening.

Recently, NSC-CL found a way to spread this awareness on newborn screening to the community by organizing the Annual Newborn Screening Photo Contest. The visual outputs from the competition convey how HCPs view the program and, at the same time, bridge the the communication gap between HCPs and their patients.

Continued on page 8 . . .



Entry from Region 2: Dr. Ronald P. Guzman Medical Center. Photographer's caption: Newborn babies are always at risk of having genetic and metabolic disorders. Since the introduction of Newborn Screening in the Philippines, numerous infants were saved from mental retardation and death because of the early detection and treatment of these congenital and metabolic disorders. With the increase in the number of conditions screened through the Expanded Newborn Screening, more children can be freed from a lifetime of suffering. Furthermore, through the augmentation of the covered diseases in this procedure, the probability of knowing the particular cause and cure for ill babies has greatly increased.

Entry from CAR: Abra Provincial Hospital. The presence of parents during the test signifies their eagerness, awareness and initiative to the program. The couple above is a teenage parent, at their very young age, they show their support and as an advocate of the Expanded Newborn Screening Program, wanting the best health for their child. The advocacy of Expanded Newborn Screening can be strengthened even more through joint force of parents with their simplest efforts of extending and sharing what they have learned about ENBS and will serve as our helping hand in bringing the program closer to the community. Together, let's save more babies.



Entry from Region 1: Karmelli Clinic and Hospital. Photographer's caption: "Set against a traditional Ilocano home, an Ilocano pregnant couple is being counseled by a Newborn Screening Nurse. Though still in the loving womb of his mother and under the protective hands of his father, the fate of this unborn child is already sealed, as this Ilocano couple has already decided for their child to undergo the Expanded Newborn Screening after being counseled and encouraged by the nurse. Religious as Ilocanos are, with their different beliefs and customs during and after pregnancy, knowledge is still the key toward having healthy newborns. Knowledge enhances skills, and with the appropriate values, this couple smile knowing that they have ensured the healthy fate of their child."



ANNOUNCEMENTS

It has been a slow uphill climb for newborn screening (NBS) in the Philippines. As we go through its milestones, we realize that it seemingly sprang out of a well-thought-out plan—taking off in 1996 with a group of 24 participating hospitals followed by the setting up of the first NBS laboratory in 1997, then by the creation of the DOH Task Force on NBS in 1999, and then by the passage of the NBS Act of 2004. And in 2015, Expanded NBS started.

We are now celebrating our 20th year, and we envision an NBS program that will be better in quality control measures and effectiveness in our follow-up program in the Continuity Clinics. We envision a program that will ultimately cover all newborn babies, making sure that no one is left behind.

We are inviting international experts as speakers for our 20th annual convention. NBS, after all, is a global health concern. The challenges that health workers face abroad are the same challenges that we encounter in our country.

I am hopeful that this year's convention will be interesting and educational to all its participants. Together, we are stronger when we all advocate NBS. Hurray to all of us!

Ephraim Neal Orteza, MD
 President, Newborn Screening Society of the Philippines, Inc.



REGISTRATION DETAILS	
Pre-Registration (on or before August 31, 2016)	
Doctors	PHP 3,000
Non-Doctors/Trainees	PHP 2,500
Onsite Registration	
Doctors	PHP 4,000
Non-Doctors/Trainees	PHP 3,000

*Registration fees do NOT include accommodation.

1) Deposit pre-registration fees to Newborn Screening Society of the Phil., Inc. (account name), with account numbers: 0051-019939-201 (Security Bank), 4981-0110-96 (Bank of Philippine Islands), or 002410114497 (Banco de Oro).

2) Email the pre-registration form with the clear scanned copy of the validated deposit slip indicating the name/s of attendee/s to newbornscreeningconvention@gmail.com; or fax to (02) 351-7903 or (02) 522-4396; or mail to:

c/o Newborn Screening Reference Center
 National Institutes of Health
 University of the Philippines Manila
 Unit 104, Bldg. A, UP-Ayala Land Technohub, Diliman, Quezon City

3) Send a text message to 0921-305-5094 (Smart) when you have sent your email, fax, or postal mail.

4) Claim your official receipt at the secretariat desk during the Convention.

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#NBSsaves #NBSat20

EDITORIAL STAFF

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Layout Artist:	Emerson Kim J. Lineses	
Contributors:	Nikki Dela Cruz, Yugie Caroline Demegillo, Adrian Doctolero,	Adviser: Maria Melanie Liberty B. Alcausin, MD

Comments and questions may be sent to:

Newborn Screening Reference Center
 National Institutes of Health
 University of the Philippines Manila
 Unit 104, Building Alpha, UP Ayala Land Technohub, Brgy. UP Campus Diliman, Quezon City

Or email us at: info@newbornscreening.ph

Website: www.newbornscreening.ph

Follow us on Twitter: @newbornscreenph



Expanded NBS . . . from p. 6

As NSC-CL kicked off its second NBS photo contest with the theme "Saving More Babies from Mental Retardation and Death with Expanded Newborn Screening," NSFs all over Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, and the Cordilleras readily responded to the challenge.

The participating NSFs interpreted the theme differently yet brilliantly. Each entry has proven to be the best in their respective regions by showing the essence Expanded NBS through their lenses. *NDelaCruz*

Entry from Region 3: Mexico Community Hospital. Photographer's caption: The hands that hold the newborn's feet symbolize the healthcare providers such as doctors, nurses, midwives, and medical technologists and staff. Likewise, the other hands represent the parents, local government, and community who work together in advocating and implementing Expanded Newborn Screening. They all work hand in hand in saving newborns from mental retardation and death. The hands form a heart shape, which symbolizes love, compassion, and dedication of all the people who value the life of every newborn. Lastly, the light signifies a brighter future and a quality life that every newborn deserves.

Your Feedback Is Important to Us!

Thank you for reading our newsletters!

We would love to hear your feedback. Please let us know how we can improve our bimonthly newsletters by answering our feedback form at www.newbornscreening.ph.

If you would like to write an article, please contact us at info@newbornscreening.ph. We will do our best to keep you informed about current and relevant newborn screening issues.



Newborn Screening Reference Center
 National Institutes of Health
 University of the Philippines Manila
 Unit 104, Bldg. A, UP Ayala Land Technohub
 Diliman, Quezon City 1101

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**Number of Babies Screened
 as of June 2016**

8,295,790



Charity Jomanto (rightmost) and Margarita Aziza Echon (second from right) from NSRC and NSC-NIH, respectively, together with Jasmin Torres, Chief Medical Technologist; Dr. Bonifacio Dy, Laboratory Manager; and Laboratory Scientists Ernest Benedict Javier and Chris Laverdur

NSRC, NSC Further Learning on Expanded Newborn Screening

The Expanded Newborn Screening which screens for more than 20 disorders in addition to the basic six test panel started in December 2014. With over a year in operation, it was deemed fit to now further the technical knowledge of laboratory scientists in Tandem Mass Spectrometry (MS/MS). MS/MS is the laboratory testing technology used by Newborn Screening Centers (NSCs) to screen babies for inborn errors of metabolisms including disorders of amino, organic acid, and fatty acid metabolism.

The advanced training, alongside the upgrading of equipment and laboratory facilities in different NSCs, guaranteed that the Philippine newborn screening program is rendering a quality service in its ENBS offer. It is one of the series of advanced training conducted by the program on expanded screening. In August, advanced training on new machine technologies is being scheduled. *CJomanto*

With this consideration, the Philippine Newborn Screening Program sent Charity Jomanto, Senior Quality Assurance Officer at the Newborn Screening Center (NSRC), and Margarita Aziza Echon, team captain of the NSC–National Institutes of Health, to a month of advanced training in MS/MS at the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory in Reno, Nevada, USA, in May 2016.

Jomanto and Echon had hands-on experience on MS/MS instrumentation, machine troubleshooting, and dried blood spot preparation for MS/MS. They were also taught clinical interpretation based on MS/MS profiles as well as interpretation and management of quality control data.

Gratitude is extended to the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory team and the training supervisor, Jasmin Torres, Chief Medical Technologist.