



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
San Lazaro Compound, Rizal Avenue
Sta. Cruz, Manila, Philippines
Tel. No. 711-9502/781-9503



August 8, 2008

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 2008 - 0026

SUBJECT: Addendum to the Rules and Regulations Implementing Republic Act No. 9288, Otherwise Known as the "Newborn Screening Act of 2004"

Newborn Screening (NBS) is an essential public health strategy that enables the early detection and management of several inborn errors of metabolism, which if left untreated, may lead to mental retardation and even death. In line with the mandate and thrust of ensuring quality life for all, promoting people's right to health, ensuring children's right for survival and full development, the Department of Health (DOH) issued policies, Administrative Order No. 1-a s. 2000 and Administrative Order No. 121 s. 2003, pursuing the nationwide implementation of NBS. Consequently, Republic Act 9288 known as the Newborn Screening Act of 2004 was enacted in April 2004 which establishes the National Comprehensive Newborn Screening System (NCNBSS) to ensure that NBS is geographically accessible and affordable to every baby born in the Philippines. To ensure that the law is implemented at all levels, DOH issued the following:

- a. Administrative Order 2005-0005 standardizing the NBS fee at P550.00 and setting the maximum allowable service fee at P50.00; and
- b. Directives to Bureau of Health Facilities and Services and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC) to include NBS in hospital licensing and PHIC accreditation to ensure that health facilities i.e. hospitals, birthing facilities, rural health units, shall ensure that adequate and sustained NBS services such as information, education, communication, screening, recall and management of identified cases are provided in the hospital.

However, despite efforts to enforce the law, NBS coverage in the country remains at a dismal rate of 17% of the 1.5 million newborns as of December 2007 which is far below the targeted goal of screening all babies born in the country. Only 1,610 health facilities are enrolled as NBS facilities as of 2007. Of these health facilities 1,020 are hospitals, which is only 57.6% of the total 1,771 licensed hospitals. Out of the enrolled health facilities only 1,325 (82.3%) are active in the collection of newborn screening. Charging exorbitant fees way beyond the maximum allowed NBS fee of P600.00 are widely reported thus, defeating the purpose of making NBS accessible and affordable to all.

The following additional Rules and Regulations are hereby promulgated to fully implement Rule VII Sec. 24 Licensing and Accreditation of Republic Act 9288 otherwise known as "Newborn Screening Act of 2004":

x x x


d) The NBS coverage goal is eighty five percent (85%) in 2010. DOH and PHIC shall ensure that such target coverage will be attained by the hospitals and other birthing facilities.

e) The following administrative fines shall be imposed on health facilities that refuse to provide NBS services and collect more than the maximum allowed NBS fee:

- First offense - warning
- Second offense - administrative fine of fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00)
- Third offense - administrative fine of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00)

f) The DOH and PHIC shall formulate their respective guidelines on fine imposition.

x x x


FRANCISCO T. DUQUE, III, MD, MSc
Secretary of Health