

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



22 JUL 27 P4 55

SENATE
S.B. No. 920

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11036, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
MENTAL HEALTH ACT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In 2018, the country passed Republic Act No. 11036 or the Mental Health Act in response to the World Health Organization (WHO) study which revealed that the Philippines has the highest incidence of depression among Southeast Asian countries. This is supported by a 2004 Department of Health (DOH) survey saying that almost one in every 100 households has a member with a mental disorder.

Since its enactment, the law was able to bolster the country's stance on improving the mental health of every Filipino by ensuring access to mental health services and interventions from regional, provincial and tertiary hospitals down to the barangay level and protecting the patients' rights. And while we remain optimistic that this law will continue to address the growing needs of those who seek help, the law must also be strengthened particularly for those who do not have adequate funds to seek treatment.

For employees, a big factor of stress comes from work. Whether it's the long hours of commuting to and from the workplace, the lack of work/life balance, the excessive demands of their jobs, or the less than competitive salary, Filipino workers are constantly being subjected to stress which – according to experts – can lead to several mental health problems such as depression or even dementia.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also strained the mental well-being of many Filipinos especially those who have either been let go from their jobs or whose

businesses and means of livelihood have been significantly hampered. In fact, in 2021, DOH reported that over 3.6 million Filipinos are suffering from mental health issues such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, alcohol use, drug use, epilepsy, etc. This number, according to the department, could only be a fraction of the total number of those who are constantly struggling with this illness. In fact, during the pandemic, calls to the government's mental health hotline skyrocketed.

While RA 11036 has made it easier for all of us to seek professional help, the financial burden of these services can still be challenging to some, especially as PhilHealth has yet to increase its benefit package of P7,800 for mental and behavioral disorders. Hence, the proposed measure seeks to increase the case rate package being currently offered by PhilHealth and include therapy sessions as part of the said package. In addition, the measure shall also mandate that mental health services be included in the primary care benefit package of the Corporation.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of the bill is earnestly sought.



SONNY ANGARA

JA



Senate
Office of the Secretary

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

'22 JUL 27 P4 55

SENATE
S.B. No. 920

Introduced by SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11036, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
MENTAL HEALTH ACT

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 **SECTION 1.** A new section after Section 22 of Republic Act No. 11036
2 otherwise known as the Mental Health Act is hereby inserted to read as follows:

3 **"SEC. 23. MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDER BENEFIT**
4 **PACKAGE. – THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE**
5 **CORPORATION (PHILHEALTH) SHALL INCLUDE THERAPY**
6 **SESSIONS IN THE COVERAGE OF ITS MENTAL AND**
7 **BEHAVIORAL BENEFIT PACKAGE: PROVIDED THAT THE**
8 **HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT COUNCIL (HTAC)**
9 **CREATED BY VIRTUE OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11223 OR THE**
10 **UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE ACT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE**
11 **PHILIPPINE COUNCIL FOR MENTAL HEALTH ESTABLISHED**
12 **UNDER THIS ACT, SHALL REVIEW THE EXISTING CASE RATE**
13 **PACKAGES OF PHILHEALTH FOR MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL**
14 **DISORDERS AND RECOMMEND AN APPROPRIATE INCREASE**
15 **IN BENEFIT PACKAGE; PROVIDED THAT THE HTAC SHALL**
16 **CONSIDER THE CURRENT COSTS OF TREATMENT IN THE**
17 **RECOMMENDATION OF NEW PACKAGES."**

18 **"THE NHIP SHALL ALSO INCLUDE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**
19 **IN ITS PRIMARY CARE SERVICES."**

1 **SEC. 2. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders or rules
2 and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
3 repealed or modified accordingly.

4 **SEC. 3. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
5 after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper of the general
6 circulation.

Approved,