

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



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SENATE

S.B. No. 1317

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE GERIATRIC CENTER UNDER THE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported that there are 12.3 million senior citizens in the country. They constitute 11.31% of the country's total population as of May 2020.

The country is projected to transition to an aging population between 2025 to 2030¹. The increasing number of older people will have implications for their pensions and their overall health.

To date, more than half or 55% of our senior citizens have no pension, 23% receive a pension from the private sector, 6% receive a pension from the government, and 16% receive a social pension of only P500².

Furthermore, the Department of Health (DOH) reported geriatric wards' unavailability and a shortage of geriatricians³.

Most of our aging population have little to no financial means, making the highly specialized field of geriatric medical and long-term care even more out of reach. Thus, a need for accessible and quality health care for older people to respond to their health and

¹ Philippine Statistics Authority, Provision of Care for Filipino Older Persons and Responding to the Needs of Aging Societies, Feb. 2019, available at: https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/pdf/expert/29/session8/EGM_26Feb2019_S8_PleneeGraceJCastillo.pdf.

² Senate Committee Hearing on the National Commission of Senior Citizens Act, Jan. 2019

³ DOH – Health Facility Development Bureau, Research and Performance Management Division, Oct. 2019, available at: <https://psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/8.3.1%20Profile%20of%20Geriatric%20Wards%20and%20Accessibility%20of%20Health%20Services%20for%20Senior%20Citizens.pdf>

medical conditions, risks, and vulnerabilities.

To this end, the bill seeks to establish and institutionalize a national center for geriatric health, a specialty hospital under the DOH, that will cater to older people's needs.

The geriatric center is envisioned to provide a full range of health care services to ensure our aging population's quality of life, become an end-referral center for all geriatric healthcare providers, and to stimulate research and training in geriatric health service.

It is our ardent hope that the establishment and institutionalization of the national center for geriatric health will contribute to addressing the vulnerabilities and burden of disease among our aging population.

Lastly, the bill is in remembrance of our elderlies who died due to COVID-19⁴, especially to our colleague in the House of Representatives, this 18th Congress, Senior Citizens Partylist Rep. Francisco G. Datol, Jr.⁵

As such, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator

⁴ WHO: Elderly Comprise Most of COVID-19 Deaths in PHL, <https://www.onenews.ph/who-elderly-comprise-most-of-covid-19-deaths-in-phl-public-markets-other-sources-of-new-transmission-identified>

⁵ Senior Citizens lawmaker Francisco Datol Jr., dies of COVID-19, <https://www.rappler.com/nation/senior-citizens-lawmakers-francisco-datol-jr-dies>

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Geriatric Center
2 Act".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to protect
4 and promote the right to health of the Filipino people and to instill health consciousness
5 among them.

6 Towards this end, the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to
7 health development. It shall ensure that quality health services are available and
8 accessible to them by establishing a specialized hospital that will cater to their medical
9 and health needs.

10 Sec. 3. *Philippine Geriatric Center.* – The National Center for Geriatric Health
11 (NCGH), located in San Miguel, Manila, is hereby renamed as the Philippine Geriatric
12 Center (PGC) and established as a tertiary specialty hospital under the direct control and
13 supervision of the Department of Health to ensure healthcare and quality of life of our
14 older and ageing population.

15 The existing hospital development plan, current bed capacity and service capabilities,
16 including organizational structure and staffing requirements, shall be updated and
17 upgraded consistent with the given mandate under this Act.

18 Sec. 4. *Purposes and Objectives.* – The PGC shall have the following purposes and
19 objectives:

20 a) Equip, maintain, administer and operate an integrated medical institution
21 which shall specialize in geriatric health services;

- 1 b) Promote medical services to the elderly and scientific research/database
2 relative to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care, rehabilitation and
3 relief of disease of older people and aging population;
4 c) Provide education and training of physicians, nurses, officers, social
5 workers, barangay health workers, and other medical and technical
6 personnel in the practice and scientific implementation of health services to
7 older people and aging population; and
8 d) Coordinate the various efforts and activities of other government agencies
9 and local government units for the purpose of achieving a comprehensive
10 and integrated approach to geriatric health and healthcare service delivery.

11 *Sec. 5. Referral System.* – The PGC shall be the National Specialty Referral Center
12 for all private and government facilities for specialized geriatric care.

13 *Sec. 6. Appropriations.* – An amount of One Hundred Million Pesos (PhP
14 100,000,000.00) shall be appropriated for the establishment and initial operations of the
15 PGC.

16 Furthermore, the Secretary of Health shall immediately include in the Department's
17 program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the
18 subsequent Annual General Appropriations Act.

19 Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued operation of the hospital, upgrading,
20 and expansion of services shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

21 *Sec. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Health shall, in
22 consultation and coordination with appropriate government agencies, such as
23 Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Civil Service Commission (CSC), National
24 Commission on Senior Citizens (NCSC), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-
25 Government Organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders, within ninety (90) days from
26 the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations for the
27 effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of this Act.

28 *Sec. 8. Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
29 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other
30 provisions hereof.

31 *Sec. 9. Repealing Clause.* – All existing laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
32 regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed,
33 amended or modified accordingly.

34 *Sec. 10. Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
35 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,