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Senate
Office of the Secretary

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

'22 AUG -1 P1 :20

SENATE
S. No. 955

Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE GERIATRIC CENTER – RESEARCH AND
TRAINING INSTITUTE, DEFINING ITS OBJECTIVES, POWERS AND
FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the 2010 Census of Population, there are around 6.2 million senior citizens in the country.¹ This is equivalent to 6.8% of the population.² This number of elderly Filipinos is projected to increase to 9,508,800 by 2020- a growth of 4.3% over ten years.³ By that point, the elderly sector will account for 8.6% of the Philippine population.

Senior citizens are an extremely vulnerable group. They encounter many challenges which are difficult to hurdle due to their old age. As such, they require special protection from the State. The drafters of the 1987 Constitution recognized this and included provisions on the protection of the elderly in our fundamental law.

Health status is one of the major issues faced by the elderly. Dr. Clarita Carlos of the University of the Philippines wrote the following in the Philippine Social Sciences Review: "A third issue is the health status of the elderly. As people age, their health status bodies undergo changes which can make them less resistant to

¹ Philippine Statistics Authority. 2016 *Philippine Statistical Yearbook*.
² *Ibid*.
³ Author's own computation based on 2016 *Philippine Statistical Yearbook*

chronic, debilitating and disabling conditions. Consequently, the elderly tend to be more at high risk of developing disabilities and contracting diseases."⁴

This bill seeks to improve the health support services for senior citizens by establishing the Philippine Geriatric Center – Research and Training Institute (PGC-RTI). Under this bill, the PGC-RTI shall be mandated to:

- a. Equip, maintain, administer, and operate an integrated medical institution which shall specialize in geriatric health services;
- b. Promote medical and scientific research/database relative to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care, rehabilitation and relief of disease of older persons;
- c. Provide education and training of physicians, nurses, officers, social workers, barangay health workers, and other medical and technical personnel in the practice and scientific implementation of health services to older persons; *and*
- d. Coordinate the various efforts and activities of other government agencies and local government units for the purpose of achieving a more effective approach to the delivery of geriatric health.

In view of the foregoing, speedy approval of this measure is eagerly sought.



GRACE POE



⁴ Carlos, C.R. "Concerns of the Elderly in the Philippines" *Philippine Social Sciences Review* Vol. 56, No. 1-4: 1999



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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 "*Philippine Geriatric Center*
2 *Act of 2022*".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
4 protect and promote the right of senior citizens to enjoy the highest attainable
5 standard of health. It shall ensure that quality health services are available and
6 accessible to them through the establishment of a specialized hospital that will cater
7 to their medical needs.

8 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For the purposes of this Act, the following terms
9 shall be defined as follows:

- 10 a) *Senior Citizen* – refers to any Filipino citizen who is at least sixty (60)
- 11 years old;
- 12 b) *Geriatrics* – refers to the branch of medicine that deals with the
- 13 biological and physical characteristics of aging, and the diagnosis and
- 14 treatment of diseases and problems specific to senior citizens;

- 1 c) *Geriatric Health Services* – refers to the medical services or intervention
2 provided to senior citizens by a multi-specialty team usually headed by
3 a Geriatrician;
- 4 d) *Geriatrician* – refers to a medical doctor who is specially trained to
5 evaluate and manage the unique healthcare needs and treatment
6 preferences of older people, and has passed the necessary training and
7 examination to specialize in the field geriatrics;
- 8 e) *Integrated Delivery of Geriatric Health Services* – refers to hospital and
9 community-based medical and psychological services provided to
10 senior citizens by a multi-disciplinary team; *and*
- 11 f) *Multi-Disciplinary Team* – refers to a team composed of health
12 professionals with varied expertise to provide holistic care, which
13 includes a range of interventions to address medical and psycho-social
14 problems of senior citizens. The team is headed by a Geriatrician and
15 includes surgeons, organ-system specialists, nurses, clinical
16 pharmacists, rehabilitation therapists, nutritionists, dentists, social
17 workers, caregivers, family members, and patients themselves.

18 *Sec. 4. Philippine Geriatric Center – Research and Training Institute (PGC-*
19 *RTI).* The National Center for Geriatric Health (NCGH) located in San Miguel, Manila,
20 is hereby renamed to Philippine Geriatric Center – Research and Training Institute
21 (PGC-RTI) and institutionalized as an Independent Level 1, Fifty (50) bed-capacity
22 budgetary hospitals under the direct control and supervision of the Department of
23 Health for the benefit of senior citizens and older persons. The Philippine Geriatric
24 Center – Research and Training Institute (PGC-RTI) shall have a separate line item
25 under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) of the DOH.

26 *Sec. 5. Purposes and Objectives.* – The PGC-RTI shall have the following
27 purposes and objectives:

- 28 a. Equip, maintain, administer, and operate an integrated medical
29 institution which shall specialize in geriatric health services;
- 30 b. Promote medical and scientific research/database relative to the
31 prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care, rehabilitation and relief of
32 disease of older persons;

- 1 c. Provide education and training of physicians, nurses, officers, social
2 workers, barangay health workers, and other medical and technical
3 personnel in the practice and scientific implementation of health
4 services to older persons; *and*
5 d. Coordinate the various efforts and activities of other government
6 agencies and local government units for the purpose of achieving a
7 more effective approach to the delivery of geriatric health.

8 Sec. 6. *Scope of Services.* – Consistent with its purpose and objectives, the
9 PGC-RTI shall provide the following services:

- 10 a. Hospital-based services to ensure the availability of medical facilities and
11 equipment necessary to provide long term and palliative services, with its
12 wards divided into the following: dementia, long-term care, palliative care,
13 respite care, and other units as may be deemed necessary;
14 b. Community-based services and programs in partnership with local
15 government units. Research and necessary training shall be conducted for
16 the social functioning of senior citizens and their families, utilizing the
17 multi-disciplinary team approaches, and external outsourcing of resources
18 may be done as needed to implement community based integrated
19 geriatric health services;
20 c. Education programs to pursue excellence and the highest level of practice
21 in the specialized field of geriatrics and other related fields, including but
22 not limited to post-graduate training and short-term courses for medical
23 doctors and allied medical professionals; *and*
24 d. Program development and research to develop cutting edge research and
25 programs to combat diseases of old age and to improve health care
26 services for senior citizens.

27 Sec. 7. *Referral System.* – The PGC-RTI shall be the referral center for all
28 Private and Government Facilities for specialized geriatric care.

29 Sec. 8. *Administration.* – The Department of Health through the Health
30 Facilities Development Bureau (HFDB) shall assume oversight of the PGC-RTI, and
31 promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of
32 this Act.

1 The DOH shall approve the organizational and staffing pattern of the PGC-RTI
2 subject to the evaluation by the Civil Service Commission and of the Organizational
3 Position Classification and Compensation Bureau of the Department of Budget and
4 Management. The DOH may reorganize said structure, modify staffing pattern, and
5 create or abolish divisions, sections or units in the PCG-RTI.

6 *Sec. 9. Appointment and Disciplining Authority of the Secretary of Health. –*

7 The DOH Secretary shall have the authority to appoint, promote, transfer, remove,
8 suspend, or otherwise discipline the officers of the PGC-RTI up to the level of
9 Director, as well as to remove or dismiss all other officials and employees of PGC-
10 RTI, subject to Civil Service laws, rules and regulations.

11 *Sec. 10. Appropriations. –* The budget allocation for PGC-RTI shall be in

12 accordance with its scope of work and mandate as stated herein. The amount of
13 Three Hundred Million (Php 300,000,000) is hereby appropriated for the initial
14 operation and maintenance of the PGC-RTI. Thereafter, the PGC-RTI shall submit its
15 annual budget proposal to the DOH Central Office duly approved by the Secretary of
16 Health as well as by the Department of Budget and Management, which will form
17 part of the budget of the DOH as reflected in the General Appropriations Act.

18 *Sec. 11. Program for Indigents. –* The DOH shall ensure that the PGC-RTI

19 shall adopt and enforce an effective program for indigents. The number of beds
20 allocated for the indigent patients shall not be less than forty percent (40%) of the
21 total number of hospital beds.

22 *Sec. 12. Increase of Bed Capacity. –* The Medical Director may increase the

23 bed capacity of PGC-RTI upon compliance with the guidelines of the Department of
24 Health and Department of Budget and Management concerning bed capacity.

25 *Sec. 13. Income Retention. –* The PGC-RTI shall be authorized to retain its

26 earnings from its operations for the improvement of its service delivery.

27 *Sec. 14. Tax Exemption and Other Privileges. –* The provisions of any general

28 or special law to the contrary notwithstanding, all donations, grants, contributions,
29 gifts, endowments, received by the PGC-RTI pursuant hereto, shall be exempt from
30 income, donor's, and all other kinds of taxes, and shall be further considered as
31 allowable deductions from the gross income of the donor, in accordance with the
32 provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

1 The PGC-RTI is hereby declared exempt from all income and all other internal
2 revenue taxes, tariffs and customs duties and all other kinds of taxes, fees, charges
3 and assessments levied by the government and its political subdivisions, agencies
4 and instrumentalities.

5 The PGC-RTI may request and receive assistance from the different agencies,
6 bureaus, offices or instrumentalities of the government, including the Philippine
7 Charity Sweepstakes Office and Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation in
8 pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

9 *Sec. 15. Annual Report.* – The PGC-RTI shall submit an annual report to the
10 President of the Philippines, the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, and
11 the House Committee on Health, on its activities, accomplishments and
12 recommendations, to better improve the delivery of geriatric health services.

13 *Sec. 16. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within ninety (90) days
14 from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Health, in coordination with the
15 Secretary of Social Welfare and Development and the Secretary of Budget and
16 Management, shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the effective
17 implementation of this Act.

18 *Sec. 17. Transitory Provisions.* – In accomplishing the acts of organization
19 herein prescribed, the following transitory provisions shall be complied with:

- 20 a. The Medical Director of the PGC-RTI shall be a specialized geriatric
21 practitioner and shall be appointed by the Secretary of Health.
- 22 b. The existing personnel of the NCGH shall remain in their current positions
23 until such time a revised and/or new organizational and staffing pattern is
24 implemented.
- 25 c. The Health Facilities Development Bureau of the Department of Health
26 shall ensure that no disruption of service will occur during transition.

27 *Sec. 18. Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
28 unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise affected
29 shall remain valid and subsisting.

30 *Sec. 19. Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
31 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative rule or regulation contrary to or

1 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended
2 accordingly.

3 Sec. 20. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon its
4 publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,