

A Postscript on the “Review of the Cheaper Medicines Program of the Philippines”

The DBM-PIDS study on the Cheaper Medicines Program of the Philippines which include Botika ng Barangay (BnB), Botika Ng Bayan (BNB), P100 treatment Pack, and the Role of PITC Pharma, Inc. in Government Drug Procurement provided valuable findings and recommendations towards the smooth implementation of these programs.

Most of the findings are generally valid, and in order to promote accessible and affordable quality drugs for the population, the DOH has introduced the following initiatives to improve program management and implementation:

- Partnering with a non-profit, non-stock, non-government organization (NGO) licensed by the Food and Drug Administration as drug distributor or supplier (carrying only generic drugs) and, with a list of BnBs as a network of beneficiaries or partners to act as Pharmaceutical Distribution Network (PDN). Currently, the PDN registered by NCPAM are as follows: 1) Kabalikat ng Botika Binhi, Inc., 2) Kaunlaran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, Inc. (KMPI), 3) National Pharmaceutical Foundation (NPF), and 4) Philippine Government Employees Association (PGEA).
- A Memorandum of Agreement made and entered into by the DOH and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) last September 2010, establishing Three Hundred (300) Botika para sa Taumbayan (BPT) in the different government agencies nationwide except NCR.
- Another Memorandum of Agreement made and entered into by the DOH and the Philippine Government Employees Association (PGEA) last September 2010, establishing One Hundred (100) Botika ng Manggagawa (BM) in the different government agencies in the National Capital Region.

As the study concluded, the BnB program provides a strong signal from government of its commitment to pursue the provision of accessible and affordable essential medicines and the general health care of the population, especially the poor is well acknowledged.

DOH, as the authority in implementing cheaper medicines program in the country, remains committed in ensuring that the critical measures for efficient and effective Health programs are implemented towards the achievement of the health system goals.