

# Defeating DENGUE



By: Jonathan M. Yao

NEWS reports have been keeping tab of the number of dengue cases all over the country. The numbers are alarming, and everyone is encouraged to do his part to help stop this mosquito-borne disease from claiming more lives.

Dengue fever is a worldwide health problem especially in tropical countries like the Philippines. This year, the National Epidemiology Center or NEC has recorded 40,648 cases of dengue from January to July 31, with 328 deaths recorded. It is believed that the situation is due to overpopulation, pollution, climate change, and lack of participation of people in their communities.

In a recent episode of “PhilHealth Hataw sa Serbisyo” over Radio DWIZ 882 KHz-AM, Dr. Rey B. Aquino, President and CEO of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) discussed why dengue is such a menace to society, how this can be prevented and how PhilHealth helps members cope with the financial implications of hospitalization due to dengue fever.

What is Dengue Fever? According to Aquino, this is a disease caused by a family of viruses that are transmitted through a bite of a female *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito that carries the dengue virus. He said that this type of mosquito lives in dark places and are day-biters. They also lay their eggs in clear water and attacks on the hind and back of their moving targets.

What are the symptoms of Dengue Fever? Aquino said that continuous fever for more than two weeks and reaching as high as 40 degrees centigrade is one of the symptoms of the disease followed by skin rashes, nose bleeding, poor appetite, nausea, and vomiting.

In accordance with the DOH’s 4S Laban sa Dengue campaign, Aquino advised listeners to do the following to prevent Dengue Fever:

- **Search and Destroy.** Destroy the breeding grounds of

mosquitoes by getting rid of stagnant water also found in flower vases and water containers.

- **Seek Immediate Consultation.** If one experiences fever for more than two weeks, he should seek immediate medical consultation.
- **Say No to Indiscriminate Fogging.** Fogging only makes mosquitoes move to other places and can only be done during peak biting time when there is an outbreak.
- **Self Protection Measures.** Listeners were encouraged to use insect repellent and to don long-sleeved shirts when going out.

He also answered some myths on dengue transmission, such as: can coughing or touching a person with dengue cause transmission of the disease? Or, that you only get dengue once in your lifetime, to which Aquino explained that since there are four types of the dengue virus, it is also possible to contract the disease four times.

For PhilHealth members confined in a tertiary hospital for Dengue Fever Stage 1, Aquino said that they can avail themselves of up to P500.00 per day for hospital room and board fees; and P4,200.00 for drugs and medicines that should be in the Philippine National Drug Formulary. He added that P3,200.00 will also be paid for X-ray and other laboratory exams done during the period of confinement, while a maximum of P1,200.00 is available for the professional fee of the attending physician.

He reminded members, however, to ensure that the hospital and physicians are PhilHealth-accredited, and that the member have updated premium contributions to ensure hassle-free availment of benefits.

*PhilHealth Hataw sa Serbisyo airs every Friday, 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. over Radio DWIZ 882 KHz-AM. It is hosted by PhilHealth President and CEO Dr. Rey B. Aquino and is co-hosted by DWIZ News Director Ely Aligora and seasoned anchor Marou Pahati-Sarne. It can also be heard LIVE through [www.dwiz882.com](http://www.dwiz882.com).*

