

# Expansion of Social Health Insurance Coverage for Myocardial Infarction in the Philippines

Implementing Agency: Alliance for Improving Health Outcomes

Cooperating Agency: Philippine Council for Health Research and Development & Philippine Health Insurance Corporation

## ABSTRACT

Heart diseases are a major cause of mortality in the Philippines. Acute Myocardial Infarction, which includes ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI), has the highest rate of mortality among the cardiovascular diseases with an average mortality rate of 10% based on health facility records in the Philippines. STEMI is a time-sensitive condition that requires prompt diagnosis and treatment to prevent further damage and death to the heart. Currently, only diagnostics, thrombolytics, and angioplasty are partially subsidized through the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth). Considering the burden of STEMI in the Philippines, there is a need to strengthen financial risk protection for this major cause of death. This paper aims to discuss the development of proposed expansion of social health insurance coverage of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation for myocardial infarction. Through a review of literature and clinical practice guidelines for myocardial infarction, and a series of consultations with technical experts from professional societies and health facilities, the team developed the pathway of care for STEMI patients. A benefit package was developed covering the necessary services across the continuum of care of STEMI patients: (1) First Medical Contact Phase; (2) Acute Care Phase; and (3) Inpatient Management and Rehabilitation Phase. While the expansion of benefit coverage for ACS is an important step in improving access to care, the study has identified that significant challenges remain in terms of healthcare capacity to provide the necessary services. In view of this, it is important to design a benefit coverage that is responsive to the health needs of the population, while ensuring that it is implementable based on the current capacity of the health sector. Additionally, since benefit packages are envisioned to be integrated into a network-based PhilHealth coverage upon the implementation of Universal Health Care, there should be increased efforts to ensure the establishment of health care provider networks.