

More than awareness: Demand generation for primary care

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SUMMARY

Indigents face health and economic risks. They have limited access to health care and insurance making them vulnerable to disease and catastrophic health spending. In order to reduce the financial uncertainties associated with future illnesses, indigents are encouraged to participate in the national health insurance program. However, government subsidies do not automatically lead to uptake of primary care benefits as not all indigents are actively utilizing their benefits under the program. One of the primary reasons behind this is their limited knowledge about PhilHealth and its services. This, coupled with poor health-seeking behaviors, have economic and health consequences making it necessary for PhilHealth to intervene. Steps to address this issue include:

- Propose linking social protection programs with social health insurance to provide a safety net response for indigent members
- Develop and implement demand generation activities that are tailored to address the specific information needs of indigent members
- Build partnerships with government agencies and other institutions to jointly promote public awareness on coverage and benefits for indigent members, particularly primary care benefits
- Invest in research and use marketing and social science models to guide social marketing and social/behavioral communication strategies