

Health Conditions, Health Seeking Behavior, and Access to Insurance among Overseas Filipino Workers

Social Development Research Center



The labor migrant sector is significantly contributing to the economy of the country. Their pecuniary contribution in boosting the economy necessitates the government to provide them with the social and health services that they deserve.



Objective

- To describe the socio-demographic and personal characteristics, the health conditions/status, and health-seeking behavior of Overseas Filipino Workers.
- To describe their level of knowledge of and access to PhilHealth Insurance.
- To investigate their attitude toward health seeking.



Sampling

Convenience sampling

- OFW transacting business with the POEA

Research Design

Quantitative

- Structured survey to describes the sociodemographic profile, level of health status, level of knowledge on PhilHealth insurance, attitude toward health and health seeking, health-seeking behavior, access to insurance (PhilHealth and non-PhilHealth), and level of satisfaction with PhilHealth services.

- Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analysis

Qualitative

- A key informant interview was used to provide plausible explanations of the quantitative research findings

Methods



RESULTS & FINDINGS

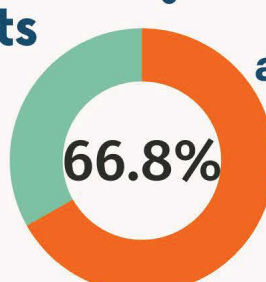
3,001 respondents



1,576

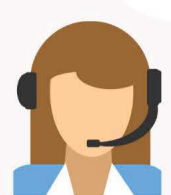


1,425



66.8% are working in the Middle East.

The major destinations include the **Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Kuwait**. In South East and East Asia, major country destinations are **Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore**.



Almost half are working in the **service and sales-related industries**.



22.9% drink alcoholic beverages.



42.1% smoke.

3.677

HIGH

Overall mean for their perceived health status.

In general, the respondents perceived themselves to be healthy.

Causes of Morbidity

- Symptoms and Signs
- Abnormal clinical and laboratory finding
- Diseases of the digestive system
- Diseases of the circulatory system, endocrine, nutritional, and metabolic diseases
- Diseases of the respiratory system

TOP



61.4%

visited a doctor in the past 2 years

8%

sought assistance from traditional health provider

36.4%

self-medicated

89.3%

were not hospitalized over the past 2 years

53.3%

More than half

scored low in the knowledge scale (scores lower than 4 out of 8). Generally, they did not have substantial knowledge about PhilHealth.

Positive attitude toward professional health care.

They preferred to seek medical assistance rather than self-medicate.

They were still likely to self-medicate if health conditions were still manageable.

Younger respondents tended to self-medicate than their older counterparts.



Those who **perceived themselves to be healthy** were the ones with **PhilHealth insurance**.

Inhibiting factors to seek care from doctors

- Financial problems
- No time/work schedule conflict
- Less severity of the illness
- Distance to the hospital
- Self-medication



76%

are PhilHealth members.

Reasons for not being able to enroll in PhilHealth include having a busy work schedule and lack of information about PhilHealth.

Sex, level of education, civil status, country of destination, and income were statistically related to **PhilHealth membership**.

13.2%

have made use of their PhilHealth benefits over the past two years. Respondents who availed of the services were generally satisfied with PhilHealth particularly on membership registration.



Significant Association

Sociodemographic characteristics

- Age
- Sex
- Level of education
- Income,
- Having or not having a partner
- Number of children

Health seeking behavior

- Membership in and access to PhilHealth

Target of Information dissemination and membership campaign

- Women
- Low educated
- Unmarried



Respondents with partner and with children perhaps saw the need to take care of themselves knowing that they have significant others who may be dependent on them.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Health-seeking behavior (in terms of type and number of visits), and access to and membership in non-PhilHealth and PhilHealth insurance can be influenced by sociodemographic and personal factors. **Level of knowledge of PhilHealth was seen to influence both access to insurance and health-seeking behavior.**

This then calls for an intensive campaign to make PhilHealth more known to the public particularly its membership terms and conditions. **Information dissemination should focus on negative impacts of sickness particularly financial risk so that OFWs will see the need to become members of PhilHealth.**

