

## GROUP 2

### Factors Affecting the Availment Turnout of the Primary Care Benefit Among Indigent Member

Authors: Raymond Acoba, Dex Jesson Belleza, Rose Dacanay, Jennifer Ruth P. Faustino, Karla Mae Jalad, Rowena T. Luciano, Michael M. Maglanque, Ria Pamittan, Susan Rebecca Romero, Sherwin Jay Torreliza, and Garry Zabala



#### SUMMARY (*Why is this important?*)

Primary health care covers the majority of a person's health needs throughout his life (WHO, 2019). More so, it is proven to be highly effective and efficient in addressing the risks of poor health. Despite this, the Philippines, through PhilHealth, recorded a "tremendous decline" in the availment (profile) rate of the Primary Care Benefits (PCB1) among its members, from 49% in 2016 to 14% in 2018, amidst intensive information and education campaigns.

A study conducted by PhilHealth Regional Offices CAR, NCR, III, and VI assessed the factors which contribute to the low availment turnout of PCB1 among PhilHealth members.



#### THE PROBLEM (*What should be addressed?*)

The study revealed that the enabling factors contributing to the low availment turnout of PCB among a certain percentage of PhilHealth's members are: lack of knowledge on its benefits, nonavailability of RHU personnel, and the long waiting time of members in benefiting from the service. On the other hand, rural health units (RHUs) report the following factors affecting their service: lack of medicines, lack of laboratory reagents and lack of manpower to complement the number of indigent members who visit the RHUs.



#### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS (*What are the solutions?*)

On lack of knowledge as a factor among certain PhilHealth members, a strong communication campaign must be planned and conducted which shall utilize all available communication platforms for the target audience segment. It is recommended that policies be formulated which will institutionalize multi-sectoral information multipliers among PhilHealth, local government units (LGUs)/RHUs, and other pertinent agencies and organizations to increase awareness level on PCB. This must start at the LGUs specifically in the Barangay level since they are the first responders and they serve as entry points for healthcare services.

On the issue of the nonavailability of RHU personnel, it is recommended that LGUs be mandated to provide specific and strategic demand-based work and financial plan, as well as commensurate budgetary allocation. This is to ensure the provision of adequate funding in support of operational expenses of RHUs which may be augmented through appropriate Per Family Payment.

As a whole, the factors revealed in the study may be addressed if policies will invoke full support of PCB from other external complementary sources such as the National Government (e.g., DOH, DSWD) and local and international engagements.