

CY 2022 Accomplishment Report of the Benefits Committee

Approved by the Benefits Committee on 13 February 2023

The Benefits Committee is a sub-committee under the PhilHealth Board whose main responsibility is to provide policy directions and set a medium term benefits development agenda, including review of the provider payment mechanism, in line with the progressive realization of Universal Health Care (UHC).

As a new administration took over during the middle of the year, the new administration was confronted with a major challenge of sustaining the recovery of the economy, which has suffered immensely on account of the pandemic, while still addressing the Covid 19 pandemic. Thus, the Benefits Committee took courage in making hard decisions to maintain the continuity of long term policies that would develop a more responsive approach in addressing national health emergency and progressively realize the aspirations of UHC as follows:

- I. Strengthening the Leadership of the Benefits Committee.** To continue the mandate and functions of Benefits Committee in providing policy directions and review of the provider payment mechanisms, the Benefits Committee decided to strengthen its leadership of the Committee. The Committee elected OIC-Usec. Beverly Lorraine C. Ho, Ex-officio alternate of DOH as Chairperson of the Committee, and Usec. Atty. Felipe N. Egargo, Jr., Ex-officio alternate of DOLE as Vice-Chairperson of Benefits Committee.
- II. Enhancement of Benefit Packages Related to Covid 19.** Since the Covid 19 pandemic is still ongoing, the Committee continued to make the benefit packages responsive to the health care needs of Filipinos by improving the existing Covid 19 benefit packages by employing the following measures:
 - The Committee approved the continuance of full financial risk protection for all health workers engaged in health-related work in either public or private sector, with confirmed Covid 19 who need hospitalization, regardless of the employment status, whether confined in public or private hospitals during the declared public health emergency due to Covid 19;
 - To enhance the existing Covid 19 inpatient benefit packages and align the PhilHealth circular with the guidelines of DOH, the Committee approved the following management proposals: (1) Revise case severity definition to include moderate Covid 19 cases without pneumonia and define coverage for pediatric cases; (2) Include rapid antigen test and saliva RT-PCR test as accepted confirmatory test for benefit availment to be applied to claims with admission date starting from the approval of the Board, claims that are in process, under motion for recommendation, and appeal with admission dates of October 6, 2022 for those with antigen tests based on DOH guidelines on the role of antigen test, and May 1, 2021 for those with saliva RT-PCR test based on HTAC recommendation;
 - To establish the Covid 19 antigen testing package, the Committee approved the following proposals: (1) Antigen test price cap to be determined on January 28, 2022; (2) Available to patients with mild symptoms and patients admitted in hospitals; (3) Claimable in isolation facilities as a first case rate and in hospitals as a second case rate; (4) Tests must be conducted using FDA approved tests; (5) Tests used for border control, population based interventions and non-targeted screening will not be covered; (6) Tests are conducted with period of admission or health service delivery;

III. Strategies Towards Progressive Realization of UHC. To implement the provisions of the UHC in providing all Filipinos access to a comprehensive set of quality health services without causing financial hardship and prioritizes the needs of the population, the Committee recommended to the Board the following measures:

- To highlight the benefit development process and benefits for improvement/expansion for CY 2023-2025, the Committee agreed to establish a system to facilitate and fast track the development of a benefit package through a Gantt chart or completion rate for each of benefit packages in the Benefit Plan;
- To address the clamor of members and respond to the needs of specific patient groups, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the approval of extending Outpatient Hemodialysis Package to a maximum of 144 sessions for CY 2022, subject to the inputs of the Committee members.
- The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board the approval of rates adjustment of the benefit packages for orthopedic implants and additional implants for PhilHealth coverage;
- The Committee approved the recommendation to revisit the existing PhilHealth Board resolution on the requirement of sanitation prior to the grant of accreditation to the facility, redefine the tasks and responsibilities of PhilHealth, and to report directly to DOH any observation relating to sanitation in the conduct of monitoring of sanitation;
- Considering that primary care network contracting is an essential component to the broader policy pipeline in implementing UHC, the Committee approved the implementation of the primary care provider network contracting arrangement through Konsulta Package in a sandbox setting including its budgetary requirements, subject to the comments of Committee members;
- To comply the provisions of the UHC Act requiring PhilHealth to implement a comprehensive outpatient benefit, the Committee approved the governing policies of the comprehensive outpatient benefit package, subject to the comments of the Committee members.
- The Committee approved the policy standards for the third party accreditation and development of standards and requirements from third party mechanism in line with the provisions of Universal Health Care and as part of the GCG commitment for CY 2022 comprising 5% of the total weight of expected deliverable of the Corporation.

Membership of the Committee

The members of the Benefits Committee for CY 2022 were the following:

1. Department of Health seating as Chairperson;
2. Department of Labor and Employment as its Vice Chairperson;
3. BGen. Marlene Marlene R. Padua, AFP (Ret) (Health Care Providers Sector Representative);
4. Maria Graciela Garayblas-Gonzaga, MD (Expert Panel Representative);
5. Jason Roland N. Valdez, MD (Direct Contributors Representative);
6. Teodoro J. Herbosa, MD (Expert Panel Representative);
7. Rene Elias C. Lopez, MD (Employers Group);

The table below shows the dates and attendance of each member to the Benefits Committee meeting held in CY 2022:

CY 2022 Attendance of Members from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022:

Name	Sector	Jan.24, 2022	May 13, 2022	Aug.16, 2022	Sept.20, 2022	Nov.11, 2022
Usec. Beverly Lorraine C. Ho, MD	Chairperson, DOH			✓	✓	✓
Usec. Atty. Benjo Santos M. Benavidez	Former Chairperson, DOLE	✓	✓			
Usec. Lilibeth C. David, MD	Former Vice Chair, DOH	✓	*			
Usec. Atty. Felipe N. Egargo, Jr.	Vice Chair, DOLE			✓	*	✓
Asec. Atty. Lennard Constantine C. Serrano	DOLE			✓	*	✓
Maria Graciela Garayblas-Gonzaga, MD	Expert Panel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BGen. Marlene R. Padua, AFP (Ret)	Health Care Providers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jason Roland N. Valdez, MD	Direct Contributors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rene Elias C. Lopez, MD	Employers Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teodoro J. Herbosa, MD	Expert Panel	✓				

Legend:

** denotes that the Board Member is not present during the meeting*

Yellow fields denote that the member is not yet or no longer on board at the time of the meeting.

Rest assured that the Benefits Committee will continue to evaluate and review benefit packages to make PhilHealth more relevant and responsive for the present and years to come.