

THE TRUTH

ABOUT THE OWWA-MEDICARE FUND TRANSFER

Allegation That the P530M OWWA-Medicare fund was transferred to PhilHealth in 2004, prior to the national elections

The truth The PhilHealth took over the reins of the Medicare program for OFWs from the OWWA only in March 2005 through the establishment of the Overseas Workers Program. Prior to the transfer, a Technical Working Group composed of representatives from both PhilHealth and the OWWA worked closely together and drew up the implementing guidelines to ensure the smooth transition and uninterrupted service to OFWs.



The TWG also agreed to transfer P530 million to finance the basic OFW program for a period of one year.

The first tranche worth P300M was transferred to PhilHealth last March 16, 2005, through LandBank of the Philippines - OWWA Extension Office Cheque Number 159101. The second and final tranche worth P230M was transferred last April 15, 2005 through Cheque Number 159118.

Allegation That there is no available fund for the Medicare needs of OFWs

The truth The fund for the health insurance needs of OFWs and their legal dependents is available. In fact, we have paid some P234 million for the PhilHealth claims of OFWs for the period March 2005 to February 2006, and another P261M for the 48,000 unprocessed claims that we inherited from the OWWA in 2005.

In a matter of nine (9) months since we took over the Medicare program for OFWs, benefits availment rose by 100 percent, from 1.1 percent to 2.25 percent, indicating that more OFWs and their families availed themselves of the medical care benefits under the National Health Insurance Program.

We assure the reading public that should any of the repatriated Filipinos from Lebanon get confined at any of our accredited hospitals nationwide, PhilHealth is ready, willing and financially able to significantly finance their hospitalization. This is our commitment to our hardworking OFWs who deserve nothing but the highest quality of genuine public service.