

Breadwinner triumphs over COVID-19 and financial woes

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What happens when in one snap, the provider of the family cannot take care of his loved ones anymore?

“Ako nag-head aning pamilya nako kay breadwinner man ko, nag-agaw buhay ko sa ospital, nag-text pa akong brother na wala na sila’y makaon sulod sa panimalay (Being the head of the household as the breadwinner, while I was hovering between life and death in the hospital, I received a message from my brother that my family has nothing to eat at home anymore.)” Gay Lord Aves, a Cebuano COVID-19 survivor, shares one of his most difficult experiences while fighting for his life due to the novel coronavirus.

On May 21, Aves suddenly felt tired, lost his appetite, and had a terrible headache. Thinking that it was just one of those days where one feels a little under the weather, he just went on with his work, took a medicine, and waited for his condition to alleviate. A few days went by but his situation worsened to having a sore throat, cough, fever, and the dreaded difficulty in breathing which led him to immediately go to a hospital and have himself tested for COVID-19.

As Aves was undergoing self-isolation, his results came in. He was negative for the rapid test, but marked positive with the swabbing or the Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test.

Aves immediately sought help from their local government unit which led him to their barangay isolation center (BIC). During his stay in the BIC, his condition worsened. Breathing became more difficult than ever, to the point of him yearning for oxygen. His father immediately flew to get him. He drove him around the city searching for hospitals. At that time, Aves remembered being hopeless, “I [wanted] to give up on life because of the gravity of pain that [was] just unbearable.” Fortunately, they received a referral to the Allegiant Regional Care (ARC) Hospitals in Lapu-Lapu City where he was finally admitted on the first day of June. He got discharged after over a week in the hospital.



The experience for him was like an arduous climb, as not only did his condition struck on him physically, but also mentally and emotionally. With his family on the line, he converted his worries to strength and fought with his might. Eventually, his oxygen level went back up and his body responded well to the medicines.

“The whole experience was both a tragedy and a victory. It was a near-death experience. But God is so good. He gave me a second chance at life. I am forever thankful to God, to my family and friends and to all the people of ARC Hospitals for all the warmth, help and care they gave me. PhilHealth [also] came as an angel. I never expected it would give me so much financial help during my crisis. My case was placed under the category moderate pneumonia and PhilHealth shouldered 143,000 pesos out of my total bill and it was such a relief!

Wala’y kinutuban ang akong pagpasalamat sa PhilHealth tungod kay taliwala sa krisis pinansyal, wala ako pasagdi sa PhilHealth ug ila gayod gituman ang ilaha’ng saad nga motabang ug moagak sa katawhan.

(My gratitude to PhilHealth will be unending as amid the financial crisis, PhilHealth never left me behind and stayed true to their promise of providing aid towards people).

With many lives lost and many others who are still fighting for theirs during this pandemic, Aves is one of the thousands who got a chance at second life and a living testimony of how important healthcare is. To this day, he actively advocates for convalescent plasma donation to help treat seriously ill coronavirus patients, and be another angel towards others who, like him, may also triumph over COVID-19. (END)

Reference: Dr. Shirley B. Domingo, Vice President for Corporate Affairs and Official Spokesperson | Mobile No: 09171360964