



PhilHealth ensures financial risk protection for all IP communities

T rue to its mandate to provide responsive health insurance coverage for all citizens of the Philippines, PhilHealth Regional Office 10 has recently forged a partnership with the seven (7) tribes of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in the province of Bukidnon.

The partnership was highlighted by the “*Pagdang-ul Panablay*” rites, a solemn ceremony where IP leaders officially accept and welcome outsiders with good intentions into their community. As part of this cultural tradition and to show gratitude, the IP leaders ordained Regional Vice President Delio A. Aseron II and Local Health Insurance Office- Bukidnon Chief Romulo M. Lapuz Jr. as a bona fide *Datus* and were given lumad names: RVP Aseron as “*Datu*

Salimbangon” which means an instrument connecting life; and Chief Lapuz as “*Datu Kilala*” recognizing his effort in bridging the seven tribal communities to the different programs of PhilHealth.

According to Datu Victorino “*Migketay*” Saway, one of the IP leaders, the partnership is a “big opportunity” for the lumad communities, noting that a lot of the lumads in the province are not aware of the various programs of PhilHealth and still rely on traditional methods in treating diseases instead of availing their readily available benefits, be preventive or curative medical intervention.

In photo:

RVP Delio Aseron II and LHIO-Bukidnon Chief Romulo Lapuz with their wives, while sharing a light moment with the IP leaders in Bukidnon.



RVP Delio Aseron II and LHIO-Bukidnon Chief Romulo Lapuz Jr. during their ordination as "Datu Salimbangon" and "Datu Kilala", respectively.



Datu Arthur Melendez presents RVP Aseron II with a gift sword during his ordination.

"Dako kaayo ni nga oportunidad sa amo nga mga lumad kay hangtud karon naa pa gyud mga igsoon namo nga wala pa nasayod kung unsa ang mga benepisyo gikan sa PhilHealth nga makatabang kaayo sa panahon nga naay ma-hospital. Sinugdanan pa lamang kini atong PhilHealth-tribal partnership (This is a big opportunity for us lumads because even now we still have members who do not know about PhilHealth and what are the benefits when we are hospitalized. This is only the beginning of the PhilHealth-Tribal partnership);" Datu Migketay said.

Under this newly forged partnership, PhilHealth, particularly LHIO-Bukidnon, commits to provide a priority lane for lumad clients, to conduct orientation in every municipality in Bukidnon.



RVP Delio Aseron II.

RVP Aseron stressed that the main purpose of the partnership is to improve access to quality health care services in unserved and underserved communities and to ensure that lumad communities have an active participation in the implementation of the Universal Health Care.

"Pantay pantay tayo na magbigyan ng dignidad dahil ang programang Universal Health Care ay para sa lahat at para sa pagkakapantay-pantay ng lahat ng mga Pilipino," RVP Aseron said. ###



LHIO-Bukidnon Chief Romulo Lapuz Jr. said their office commits to conduct orientations about PhilHealth services, programs, benefits, in lumad communities.



IP leader Datu Migketay performs the ritual symbolizing their acceptance of PhilHealth to serve their communities.