

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 85% NBS Coverage by 2010: DOH Orders all health facilities to meet target
- Cavite LGU Assembly: Embracing Change and Moving towards Success
- NSC-NIH Accreditation Renewed
- Newborn Screening: Make it the First Step

newborn screening

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85% NBS coverage by 2010: DOH Orders all health facilities to meet target

To ensure that the newborn screening is made more accessible and affordable to the general public, DOH released an Administrative Order setting an eighty-five percent (85%) target NBS coverage by 2010 to all health facilities.

This action is in accordance with the National Comprehensive Newborn Screening System's move towards a more sustainable program implementation by increasing coverage and strengthening implementation at all levels and in both public and private health facilities.

The AO was a result of a resolution made by the Advisory Committee on Newborn Screening (ACNBS) amending the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 9288 after a

review of the hospital performances.

Data shows that of the 1,610 health facilities enrolled as Newborn Screening Facilities (NSFs) in 2007, only 1,325 (82.3%) are active in the collection of newborn screening specimen. Moreover, majority of these NSFs have below 30% NBS coverage when computed against their reported live births.

Also in this AO, the standardized fee on NBS was reiterated and corresponding sanctions were included.

A recent survey conducted on more than 800 hospitals offering newborn screening services around the country. Findings showed that 287 out of the 576 who responded were charging beyond the standardized fee of P550 and the maximum allowable service fee

of P50 as stated in Administrative Order No. 2005-0005 released by DOH in 2005.

To address these issues, several consultations were made during the National Technical Working Group (NTWG) meeting. As a result, the following administrative fines shall be imposed on health facilities that refuse to provide NBS service and/or collect more than the maximum allowed NBS fee:

First Offense - Warning

Second Offense – Administrative fine of fifty-thousand pesos (Php50,000)

Third Offense - Administrative fine of one hundred thousand pesos (Php100,000)

(Continued on page 2)

Cavite LGU Assembly: Embracing change and moving towards success



From left: Cavite City Mayor Bernardo S. Paredes, Ms. Wenalyn Viaña, Acting Program Manager—NSC-NIH, and Dr. Lino Antonio Barron, City Health Officer—Cavite.

The City Health Office of Cavite organized a series of Newborn Screening (NBS) training as a testimony of their commitment made during the LGU Consultative Meeting conducted by NSC-NIH and CHD-CALABARZON held in Cavite.

Immediately after the consultative meeting, NBS trainings were conducted on July 17-18 and July 24-25 through the efforts of Dr. Lino Antonio Barron and Ms. Teresita Desquitado of City Health Office. Sixty participants composed of doctors, nurses, midwives and barangay health workers attended the training facilitated by Wenalyn Viaña and Hilda Hernandez of NSC-NIH. Both trainings were funded by the Office of the City Mayor Bernardo S. Paredes.

(Continued on page 4)



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August 8, 2008

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 2008 - 0026

SUBJECT: Addendum to the Rules and Regulations Implementing Republic Act No. 9288, Otherwise Known as the "Newborn Screening Act of 2004"

Newborn Screening (NBS) is an essential public health strategy that enables the early detection and management of several inborn errors of metabolism, which if left untreated, may lead to mental retardation and even death. In line with the mandate and thrust of ensuring quality life for all, promoting people's right to health, ensuring children's right for survival and full development, the Department of Health (DOH) issued policies, Administrative Order No. 1-a s. 2000 and Administrative Order No. 121 s. 2003, pursuing the nationwide implementation of NBS. Consequently, Republic Act 9288 known as the Newborn Screening Act of 2004 was enacted in April 2004 which establishes the National Comprehensive Newborn Screening System (NCNBSS) to ensure that NBS is geographically accessible and affordable to every baby born in the Philippines. To ensure that the law is implemented at all levels, DOH issued the following:

- a. Administrative Order 2005-0005 standardizing the NBS fee at P550.00 and setting the maximum allowable service fee at P50.00; and
- b. Directives to Bureau of Health Facilities and Services and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC) to include NBS in hospital licensing and PHIC accreditation to ensure that health facilities i.e. hospitals, birthing facilities, rural health units, shall ensure that adequate and sustained NBS services such as information, education, communication, screening, recall and management of identified cases are provided in the hospital.

However, despite efforts to enforce the law, NBS coverage in the country remains at a dismal rate of 17% of the 1.5 million newborns as of December 2007 which is far below the targeted goal of screening all babies born in the country. Only 1,610 health facilities are enrolled as NBS facilities as of 2007. Of these health facilities 1,020 are hospitals, which is only 57.6% of the total 1,771 licensed hospitals. Out of the enrolled health facilities only 1,325 (82.3%) are active in the collection of newborn screening. Charging exorbitant fees way beyond the maximum allowed NBS fee of P600.00 are widely reported thus, defeating the purpose of making NBS accessible and affordable to all.


The following additional Rules and Regulations are hereby promulgated to fully implement Rule VII Sec. 24 Licensing and Accreditation of Republic Act 9288 otherwise known as "Newborn Screening Act of 2004":

x x x

- d) The NBS coverage goal is eighty five percent (85%) in 2010. DOH and PHIC shall ensure that such target coverage will be attained by the hospitals and other birthing facilities.
- e) The following administrative fines shall be imposed on health facilities that refuse to provide NBS services and collect more than the maximum allowed NBS fee:

First offense	-	warning
Second offense	-	administrative fine of fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00)
Third offense	-	administrative fine of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00)
- f) The DOH and PHIC shall formulate their respective guidelines on fine imposition.

x x x


FRANCISCO T. DUQUE, III, MD, MSc
Secretary of Health

Upcoming Events

6th Newborn Screening Convention

The Newborn Screening Society of the Philippines Inc. (NSSPI) will hold its 6th Newborn Screening Convention in two venues - Visayas and Mindanao. The convention will be held on October 3 and 7, 2008 in Cebu and Cagayan De Oro City respectively. This year's theme "Sustained Implementation towards a More Responsive Newborn Health Care System" is geared towards long-term sustainability of the program. This event is open to all health professionals and Local Government Units. For inquiries, please text/call 09064224177 for the Visayas convention and 0917221988 for the Mindanao convention.

Consultative Meeting

In lieu of the Newborn Screening's strategic direction towards sustainable program implementation, DOH in coordination with NSRC and CHD - Northern Mindanao will hold a Consultative Meeting on Newborn Screening on October 7, 2008 at Pearlmont Inn, Cagayan de Oro City. Expected to participate in this event are NBS Coordinators and licensing officers from the 17 regions and the Unit Heads of NSC-NIH and NSC Visayas.

The meeting aims to assess the status of Newborn Screening Program in both national and regional level and discuss pertinent issues to come up with strategies that ensure effective and efficient implementation of Newborn Screening at CHD levels. PHILHEALTH is also invited to

(Continued from page 1)

The details and rationale of the target coverage and administrative sanctions for non compliance and/or overpricing are reflected in AO No. 2008-0026 and 2008-0026A dated August 8, 2008 released by DOH. This AO is effective fifteen (15) days after its publication last November 20, 2008.

Furthermore, the DOH and PHIC as the implementing bodies shall be responsible in ensuring that the target coverage will be attained by the hospitals and other birthing facilities and shall formulate their respective guidelines on fine imposition.



clarify issues on claims and reimbursements and to give update on newborn care package.

Reunion of Saved Babies

In celebration of the Newborn Screening Awareness Week, a reunion of saved babies will be held in the Visayas. Close to 100 children saved by newborn screening and their respective parents from all parts of the Visayas are expected to gather at the conference hall of the West Visayas State University Medical Center (WVSUMC), Iloilo City on October 18, 2008.

Children and their parents will be treated to various fun and games for the entire day. The reunion is aimed to establish camaraderie among children and parents, and create parent-led advocacy for newborn screening in the region. The event is organized by the Newborn Screening Center-Visayas, WVSUMC in cooperation with the Center for Health Development - Iloilo.

LGU Assembly

To further strengthen the newborn screening program in Western Visayas, the Newborn Screening Center – Visayas will be holding a Local Government Unit (LGU) Assembly on November 13, 2008 in West Visayas State University Medical Center, Iloilo City.

Municipal Mayors, Health Officers, and Barangay Chairmen of the following LGUs were invited to join in the assembly: Ibajay (Aklan), Sibalom (Antique), Pontevedra (Capiz), Oton (Iloilo) and Binalbagan (Negros Occidental).



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November 20, 2008

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 2008 - 0026-A

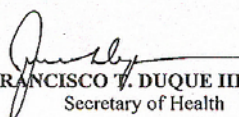
SUBJECT: Amendment to the Administrative Order No. 2008-0026 on Addendum to the Rules and Regulations Implementing Republic Act No. 9288, Otherwise Known as the "Newborn Screening Act of 2004"

The additional Rules and Regulations promulgated to fully implement Rule VI Sec. 24 Licensing and Accreditation, Letter e) of Republic Act 9288 otherwise known as "Newborn Screening Act of 2004," is hereby amended to state:

*e) The following administrative fines shall be imposed on health facilities that refuse to provide NBS services **and/or** collect more than the maximum allowed NBS fee:*

<i>First offense</i>	-	<i>warning</i>
<i>Second offense</i>	-	<i>administrative fine of fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00)</i>
<i>Third offense</i>	-	<i>administrative fine of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00)</i>

As thus amended, all other provisions of Administrative Order No. 2008-0026 dated August 8, 2008, stands in effect. This order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the official gazette or newspaper of general publication.


HON. FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc.
Secretary of Health

NSC-NIH Accreditation Renewed

Last August 20 to 22, 2008 the Newborn Screening Center – National Institutes of Health (NSC-NIH) underwent and subsequently passed a review which was part of the process for the renewal of its accreditation as a newborn screening center.

Section 12 of the Republic Act 9288 or the Newborn Screening Act of 2004, stipulates that no Newborn Screening Center shall be allowed to operate unless it has been duly accredited by the Department of Health based on the standards set forth by the Newborn Screening Advisory Committee.

The Certification of Accreditation for NSCs from the Department of

Health has a validity period of three (3) years subject to periodic monitoring. Re-accreditation includes review of its laboratory capability, as well as, other administrative components (i.e. follow-up of cases, accounting and financial components).

The accreditation team from the Department of Health was joined by foreign experts on newborn screening—Dr. Bradford Therrell, a professor from the Department of Pediatrics, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and Director at the U.S. National Newborn Screening and Genetics Resource Center; and Dr. Veronica Wiley, Head of the New South

Wales Newborn Screening Programme and Secretary-Treasurer, International Society of Neonatal Screening.

Currently there are only two NSCs in the country. The other NSC, NSC Visayas, is located at the West Visayas State University Medical Center in Jaro, Iloilo. It serves newborn screening facilities in the Visayas and Mindanao areas and is due to undergo its accreditation review by 2009. Two other NSCs are set to be opened soon which are projected to be located in Northern Luzon and the Mindanao areas. NSC applicants will undergo the same accreditation procedures set by the Department of Health.





**GERTIE's Story:
Newborn Screening: Make it the First Step**

Gertie is a single mom to Xam

My son was born physically healthy, no defects, no abnormalities until after a month when I discovered that he actually has Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency. He doesn't have enough of these enzymes for his red blood cells to function properly in synthesizing carbohydrates into energy, thus is prone to hemolytic anemia. In the Philippines 1 out of 55 newborns examined are confirmed to be G6PD deficient. Did I worry for this? Of course, but my prolonged anxiety was pre-empted and lessened by the early detection of this disease through newborn screening.

And now, after knowing certain dietary restrictions, I may be able to manage and even help my son understand later on about his condition so he could live normally as any children do. In this time of global crisis, we should invest a lot more on and prepare at the earliest for our family's wellbeing especially our newborns. We don't want to compromise their future or worst, regret for their loss.

The cost of the test is very nominal at PhP600 but the alarm it would cost parents if their newborns are not screened early and later diagnosed with one of the congenital disorders being screened may go as high as PhP6,499/day or more or the life of our precious one itself. If we love and care for our babies, this would give us enough reason not to take this important test for granted. Being a mother is a lifetime commitment and it should start from the time our babies are born.

“my prolonged anxiety was pre-empted and lessened by the early detection of this disease through newborn screening”

This story and more about Gertie's experience as a mom can be found at <http://singlemommatbest.blogspot.com>

(Continued from page 1)

Ms. Viaña stressed the critical roles of the Local Government Unit in the implementation of the program. She also asked the commitment of the people of Cavite to sustain its implementation.

Mayor Paredes committed to support the program by including NBS in their budget. They will sponsor the first 100 indigent newborns who will qualify the minimum requirements which include complete pre-natal check-ups from any of the five district health centers, parents are permanent resident of Cavite City and certificate of indigence from DSWD. He also said that he will monitor the progress of Newborn Screening Program through the City Health Officer.

In addition, the participants identified one RHU to immediately implement the Newborn Screening in their area, while the remaining RHUs were given the tasks to do advocacy plan and community awareness about newborn screening.

At the end of the event, Ms. Desquitado and Dr. Barron, gave certificates of training and congratulated the participants of the training and reminded everyone that each person involved in newborn screening is essential towards the success of the program.



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