

DOH-CHD Bicol Holds First Reunion of Saved Babies



Children were treated to games and a mascots show featuring both family members and health workers.

The Department of Health—Center for Health Development (DOH-CHD) Bicol spearheaded its first Reunion of Saved Babies at the RC Daguinsin Hall, DOH—Regional Office (RO) 5, on October 26, 2018. Over 100 participants including families and babies from selected provinces in the Bicol Region, health workers, and other stakeholders attended the event. Dr. Rita Mae Ang-Bon, DOH-CHD Bicol Family Cluster Head, in her keynote speech, noted that parents could still help children with disorders achieve their full potential. Meanwhile, Dr. Monrey Isaiah Mancilla, DOH-CHD Bicol Medical Officer III, expressed hope that more parents would be encouraged to have their babies take the newborn screening test.

DOH-CHD Metro Manila Trains CAMANAVA Midwives



DOH-CHD Metro Manila and NSC-NIH held the Newborn Screening Training for the Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines (IMAP) CAMANAVA Chapter at the Quirino Memorial Medical City, Quezon City, on September 28, 2018. Dr. Anna Lea Elizaga, NSC-NIH Unit Head, and all the Project Development Officers of the Center were present at the activity to assist, especially during the practicum of participants.

ENBS: A Recommitment . . . from cover



Annamarie Saarinen, Newborn Foundation Chief Executive Officer, presents the trends on critical congenital heart diseases (CCHD) screening via pulse oximetry and its advantages.

Saarinen, Newborn Foundation Chief Executive Officer; Dr. Ephraim Neal Orteza, NSSPI President; Dr. Maria Beatriz Gepte, G6PD Deficiency Expert Committee Chair; Dr. Reynaldo de Castro, Hemoglobinopathies Expert Committee Chair; Dr. Mary Ann Abacan, Metabolic Disorders Expert Committee Member; Dr. Leniza de Castro-Hamoy, geneticist at the Institute of Human Genetics; Dr. Mary Anne Chiong, Metabolic Disorders Expert Committee Chair; Yugie Caroline Demegillo, NSC-Visayas (NSC-V) Program Manager; Dr. Florencio Dizon, NSRC Quality Assurance Consultant; Jerome R. Comelio, NSC-Central Luzon (NSC-CL) Laboratory Manager; Dr. Sylvia Estrada, NSRC Consultant; Dr. Karen June Ventilacion, Newborn Screening Continuity Clinic (NBSCC) Region 6 Follow-Up Head; and Dr. Anthony Calibo, DPCB-DOH Children's Health Development Division OIC-Division Chief.

Topics for the plenary sessions were the following: updates on NBS; roadmap of NBS from the DOH perspective; PhilHealth Newborn Care Package and other benefits; role of the NSRC; and translating policy into practice from the perspectives of the DOH regional office, newborn screening facility, newborn screening center, and continuity clinic. Global trends on expanded NBS, critical congenital heart disease screening, G6PD Deficiency management, and Alpha Thalassemia management were also discussed, in addition to different disorders such as fatty acid oxidation, organic acid, and amino acid disorders. Collaborative management for optimal patient care outcomes, the Rare Disease Law, and the integration of the ENBS and rare diseases in child health nutrition programs were also part of the plenary sessions. Meanwhile, simultaneous sessions included administrative management of the NBS Program, enhancing quality newborn care and quality testing, and clinical scenarios.

This year's convention was co-presented by PerkinElmer and supported by United Laboratories and all the Newborn Screening Centers in the country.

Mindanao Celebrates NBS Week 2018



Officers and staff of LGU Salay parade through town promoting newborn screening.

Every year, NSC-M enjoins all newborn screening facilities (NSFs), both private and government, to celebrate NBS Week through a Mindanao-wide NBS Campaign Contest to encourage NSFs in the region to advocate the program more effectively and creatively.

The campaign contest runs for the month of October, and entries are submitted at the end of the month. Participating NSFs choose their own theme and platform. Common activities include Reunions of Saved babies, Buntis Congress activities, and ENBS fora for parents and health workers. Others get creative and hold motorcades, display IEC materials around public transport terminals, and go on radio guestings.

This year, some NSFs celebrated NBS Week by having their own mini-contests. Those campaigns conducted online were asked to submit documentation and tag the official Facebook account of NSC-M. Entries were judged according to creativity, message content, campaign reach, and timeliness of submission. Prizes and tokens await winning NSFs.

Over the years, the following NSFs consistently participated in the NBS campaign contest: Municipal Health Office Tagoloan (Misamis Oriental), Dr. Jose Rizal Memorial Hospital (Zamboanga del Norte), Wao District Hospital (Lanao del Sur), Rural Health Unit (RHU)—Wao (Lanao del Sur), Bukidnon Provincial Hospital—Manolo Fortich (Bukidnon), South Cotabato Provincial Hospital (South Cotabato), Municipal Health Office—Quezon, Bukidnon, Margosatubig Regional Hospital (Zamboanga del Sur), Rural Health Office—Margosatubig (Zamboanga del Sur), Municipal Health Office—Salay (Misamis Oriental), and Baylimango Birthing Home/City Health Office—Dapitan City (Zamboanga del Norte). *P.Bermudez*

NEWSBRIEFS

NBS Day Activities in Lanao del Norte

The Provincial Health Office of Lanao del Norte, in partnership with DOH-CHD Northern Mindanao and NBSCC Region 10, conducted a series of NBS Day activities on September 12-14, 2018. The activities aimed to orient mothers of newborns, pregnant mothers, and fathers and guardians on the importance of NBS. On September 12, the celebration was conducted at Kolambagan District Hospital and at Kapatagan Provincial Hospital; on the second day, it was at Lanao del Norte Provincial Hospital; and on the last day, at Linamo-n Rural Health Unit. A total of 57 babies also got free screening. *GBSamonte*

First Parents' Forum in Salay

The inter-local health zone of Misamis Oriental's eastern municipalities—Balingasag, Balingoan, Lagonglong, and Salay—held its first NBS Parents' Forum on October 2, 2018, in coordination with DOH-CHD Region 10. Held in Salay, the activity was attended by some 100 participants, mostly parents of babies with G6PD Deficiency and Congenital Hypothyroidism. Dr. Conchita Abarquez, NSC-M Unit Head, gave a thorough discussion on how babies acquire the metabolic disorders, contraindications, and the importance of adherence to all instructions given during follow-up check-ups. *R.Aguilar*

Promoting NBS Week on Radio

DOH-CHD Region 10 took newborn screening to the airwaves by guesting in two local radio station programs in Cagayan de Oro City. Pauline Angela Balansag and Gil Bernard Samante were invited to "One Region in Nutrition" program anchored by Sheena Marie Tagle at 103.9Mhz Marian Radio Radyo Bandera Cagayan de Oro, which aired live on October 4, 2018. BomboRadyo also featured newborn screening on October 7 in the program "Bombo Medico" anchored by Charmaine Tamsi.



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DOH-RO 11 Celebrates NBS Day

It has been an annual tradition of DOH-RO 11 to celebrate NBS Awareness Week by sponsoring free newborn screening. This year, the team headed by Maria Clarose Mascardo selected the municipalities of Baganga and Cateal in Davao Oriental as recipients, where 46 babies received free screening. The two-day celebration took place on October 24 and 25, 2018, and was coordinated by Baganga Infirmary Hospital and RHU Cateal under the supervision of Dr. Violeta Morales, Municipal Health Officer, and Dr. Modesto Veroy, respectively. In attendance also was NSC-M, headed by Dr. Conchita Abarquez. *P.Bermudez*

Reunion of Saved Babies in Zamboanga

In celebration of NBS Awareness Week, DOH-CHD Zamboanga in partnership with NBSCC Region 9 and NSC-M held a Reunion of Saved Babies at Grand Astoria Hotel, Zamboanga City, on October 3, 2018. Besides celebrating with parents and kids, NBS implementers were acknowledged for the continuing success of the program; they were also able to meet with partners from both private and public sectors involved in follow-up and recall. *IRTomas*

Western Visayas Caps Off NBS Week with Pink Friday

Wear-pink Friday capped off the NBS Awareness Week celebration on October 5, 2018, and was spearheaded by DOH-RO Western Visayas together with NSC-V. The activity was a culmination of #NBSMovement, an extensive social media campaign promoting the NBS Program and its services.

All NSFs in Region 6 were invited to take part in the celebration of the NBS Awareness Week through the #NBSMovement. Organizers encouraged health service personnel to "pose" (smile and show off photogenic angles), "shoot" (make use of photography skills), and "post" on social media using the hashtags #NBS2018, #NBSsavesLives, #NBSMovement, and #supportNBS.

Other activities included barangay health classes, rounds of Buntis Congress, a special NBS Day, counseling services for mothers, reunion of saved babies, NBS quiz bee, and information dissemination within and outside the health facilities.

NBS Week, which ran on October 1-7, 2018, highlighted the efforts of all the participating NSFs in advancing the NBS Program. *GExmundo*

MMMHMC, NSC-NL Go ENBS

The success story of the Mariano Marcos Memorial Hospital and Medical Center (MMMHMC) toward the Philippine Governance System Initiation Stage began with the courage to go beyond expectations and with the compassion and commitment to provide quality healthcare to the community.

In the same way, NSC-NL is going forward with the full implementation of the ENBS Program to provide better health outcome for all the newborns in Regions 1 and 2. This journey to full ENBS set off with a commitment pledge from all the NBS Coordinators from the different health facilities in Ilocos Norte during the ENBS Symposium held at Dr. Juanito Rubio Hall, MMMHMC, on October 23, 2018.

Miriam I. Ramones, MMMHMC Chief Nurse, gave the welcome remarks. Also present to express their support were Dr. Josephine Ruedas, Nursing Academe from Mariano Marcos State University; Dr. Fanny Carmelita Domingo, Provincial Health Officer of Ilocos Norte; Dr. Virgilio Mangapit, Provincial DOH Officer of Ilocos Norte; the DMO IV from PDOHO Ilocos Norte; and Nicole Bugarin, Regional NBS Coordinator from DOH-CHD Ilocos.

Lectures during the ENBS Symposium aimed to strengthen the adherence and commitment of different healthcare institutions to ENBS. Dr. Karla Modesta Albano, NSC-NL Follow-Up Head, discussed the background of ENBS panel of disorders. Dr. Modesty Leaño, NSC-NL Laboratory Manager, discussed the role of stakeholders in the full implementation of the ENBS Program and shared her experience as healthcare provider, advocate, and a mother. Participants, speakers, and facilitators also signed the commitment board as a manifestation of their



Seated from left to right: NSC-NL Program Manager Anthony James Almazan, Laboratory Manager Dr. Modesty Leaño, Unit Head Dr. Ma. Paz Virginia Otayza, and NSRC Program Support Unit Head Ma. Elouisa Reyes join the coordinators and guests from Ilocos Norte during the ENBS Symposium.

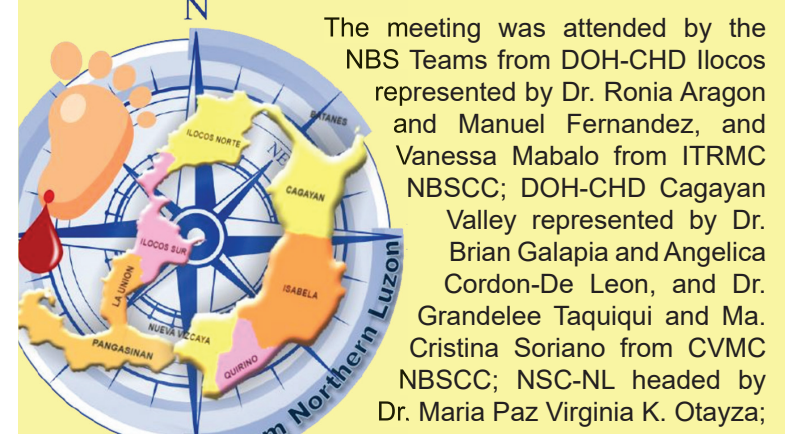
dedication to the ENBS Program.

Ma. Elouisa Reyes, NSRC Program Support Unit Head, and Lita Orbillio, National NBS Coordinator from the DOH Central Office, were invited to further encourage the participants by providing program updates and discussing the role of the NSRC, opportunities for research studies regarding NBS, and the Roadmap of Newborn Screening as well as Strategic Framework of Newborn Screening Program 2017-2030. Moreover, to guide the participants in their transaction with NSC-NL, Anthony James F. Almazan, NSC-NL Program Manager, elaborated the role of the Newborn Screening Center.

The symposium was formally closed by Dr. Ma. Paz Virginia Otayza with the hope for more babies to be saved through ENBS. *AJAImazan*

Consultative Meeting Brings Together Regions 1, 2

To build a strong partnership for an improved implementation of the NBS Program in Regions 1 and 2, DOH-RO 2 hosted the 2nd Northern Luzon Consultative Meeting at Taj Hotel Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, on September 7, 2018.



The meeting was attended by the NBS Teams from DOH-CHD Ilocos represented by Dr. Ronia Aragon and Manuel Fernandez, and Vanessa Mabalao from ITRMC NBSCC; DOH-CHD Cagayan Valley represented by Dr. Brian Galapia and Angelica Cordon-De Leon, and Dr. Grandeleer Taquiqui and Ma. Cristina Soriano from CVMC NBSCC; NSC-NL headed by Dr. Maria Paz Virginia K. Otayza;

Various issues were raised and discussed. Each member shared its best practices to improve newborn screening services and to ensure the quality and sustainability of the Newborn Screening System. *DGTamayo*

Clicks for More Pricks

Social media is a powerful tool to promote public awareness on newborn screening and the availability of ENBS in thousands of health facilities nationwide. For this reason, NSFs, VYLH, and the Provincial and Municipal Health Offices in Central Luzon and CAR joined NSC-CL in celebrating NBS Awareness Week on October 1-7, 2018, by posting various advocacy campaigns on social media.

NSC-CL urged NSFs and health offices under Region 3 and CAR to carry out a "fan sign" campaign to affirm and show their support to the program. As a result, pictures of healthcare workers and pregnant women holding up boards with "I support Expanded NBS" and "#NBSsaves" printed on them flooded social media during the NBS Awareness Week.

A few clicks of taking photos and uploading them go a long way in showing support for the NBS Program and in increasing the chances of saving more babies from mental retardation and death. *NDelaCruz*



Prick or Treat!

VYLH-Central Luzon carried out a different but fun approach this Halloween by starting a social media campaign where volunteers changed their profile pictures on social networking sites to the "Prick or Treat" frame designed by Patrice Gayle Lumbang, a VYLH advocate and a student nurse from Tarlac State University.

The volunteers, headed by Dr. Ron Allan Cardona Quimado, aimed to promote ENBS to their respective social networks and also to encourage friends, families, and colleagues to don the frame to expand the reach of the information campaign.

Truly, the scariest thing for expecting parents is not knowing if their child has a heritable disorder that may cost him his entire future. The first "treat" they can give their child is to have him or her screened through ENBS to facilitate the diagnosis of congenital disorders that may cause mental retardation or early death if left untreated. *NDelaCruz*

First Reunion of Saved Babies in CAR

In celebration of NBS Awareness Week, Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center (BGHMC) and NBSCC CAR, in coordination with the DOH-CAR Office, conducted the first Reunion of Saved Babies in the region at the Cancer Center Institute Building, BGHMC, on October 3, 2018.

Thalassemia, and G6PD Deficiency, together with their parents and guardians, the activity was a day filled with fun, games, and learning through lectures.

Dr. Gynette Dizon. Dr. Sharon Gawigawen, Florenz Nastor, and Dominga Dawe discussed with parents various topics such as common metabolic disorders, nutrition, and answers to frequently asked questions regarding the NBS Program.

Attended by 25 babies with confirmed CAH, CH, Alpha

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JBLMRH Holds Community Outreach

As one of the DOH Retained Hospitals, Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital (JBLMRH) makes sure that 100 percent of inborns are given basic health services such as umbilical cord care, eye prophylaxis, administration of Vitamin K, thermal care, immunization services, hearing screening, and newborn screening.

For NBS Awareness Week 2018, the JBLMRH NBS Team together with the Health Promotion and Wellness Services and Nutrition and Dietetics Department conducted a community outreach activity titled "Bridging the Gap: To Reach the Unreachable Areas Towards 100% Expanded Newborn Screening." Now on its second year, the activity aims to reach areas where ENBS is not available and to educate mothers on the importance of newborn screening.

The week-long celebration also included a discussion on essential childcare services among patients of JBLMRH, postpartum mothers and pregnant women in Lubao and Mabalacat, Pampanga, followed by ENBS services for unscreened babies.

First Reunion . . . from page 6



Officers and staff of BGHMC and the participants of the reunion

Clark Dizon, Regional NBS Program Manager, pledged to conduct bigger and more exciting activities for saved babies in the Cordilleras in the future. *FRNastor*



Top: Staff and volunteers from JBLMRH carry supplies to one of the hard-to-reach communities. Bottom: A health worker discusses newborn screening to a room full of mothers and newborns.

JBLMRH have been screening newborns since 2012 and maintains 100 percent screening coverage among inborn neonates, in addition to extending screening services even to outborn patients. A total of 758 parents and guardians attended the said activity. One hundred beneficiaries were also identified to receive free ENBS. JBLMRH plans to observe NBS Week through community outreach activities every year. *RDione*

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DOH-RO 3 Holds Second VYLH Regional Camp



Members of Batch Hayaw and organizers of the regional camp

To be a volunteer, one does not necessarily need to have so much time in their hands. One only needs to have a heart full of compassion and a helping hand that is unselfishly caring.

Students and faculty members from different universities as well as nurses under the Nurse Deployment Project from the different provinces of Central Luzon accepted the challenge of joining VYLH during a three-day camp held at La Vista Inland Resort, Balanga, Bataan, on October 26-28, 2018.

DOH-RO 3, NSC-CL, and the Institute of Human Genetics-NIH organized the event. The camp was the third leg for the VYLH-Philippines Batch Hayaw and the second regional camp held in Central Luzon. The first VYLH camp in the region was held in October 2016 and produced volunteers under Batch Kabiili.

The first two days of the event were comprised of a series of lectures, team-building activities, and interactive workshops that greatly helped the volunteers prepare themselves for the challenges that they may face in the future when promoting the advocacies of the organization. Sharing of best practices of volunteers from senior batches in different levels (university, community, hospital-based) and different provinces was done in order to inspire the new generation of VYLH to maximize their abilities in the pursuit of widening the scope of people informed about the organization's advocacies and their importance. The campers also showcased their talents and wit during the talent expo and "Mr. and Ms. Hayaw." Before the end of the second night, the participants swore their commitment to uphold the objectives of the organization and lit candles of commitment.

On the last day of the camp, provincial representatives were selected and were composed of one NDP and one student per province. Dr. Ron Allan Quimado was chosen to be the regional adviser for Central Luzon. Before the camp came to an end, the volunteers showed their fellow campers the richness of each province's culture by presenting a song or dance number unique to their community. In a culminating activity, the participants shared that though they have small individual voices, together they can create a thunderclap that can help future generations reach their maximum potential through the advocacy of expanded newborn screening, informing adolescents about pre-conception health and the importance of folic acid supplementation, and showing support and care for those born with rare disorders. Senior batches also welcomed the new volunteers to the continuously expanding VYLH family. *NDelaCruz*

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Thank you for reading our newsletters! We would love to hear your feedback. Please let us know how we can improve our bi-monthly newsletters by answering our feedback form at www.newbornscreening.ph. If you would like to write an article, please contact us at info@newbornscreening.ph. We will do our best to keep you informed about current and relevant newborn screening issues.



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UPM Chancellor Carmencita Padilla addresses a question on family history of patients with MSUD.

ENBS: A Recommitment to Saving Lives

Some 2,000 delegates from across the country participated in the 16th National Newborn Screening Convention held at the Philippine International Convention Center, Pasay City, on October 9-10, 2018. This year's convention, with the theme "ENBS: A Recommitment to Saving Lives," offered participants 14 plenary sessions and 2 simultaneous presentations.

Melanie Liberty Alcausin. The keynote speakers were Health Secretary Francisco Duque, represented by Assistant Health Secretary Maria Rosario Vergeire, and NIH Executive Director Eva Maria Cutiongco-de la Paz.

The roster of distinguished speakers and resource persons included Dr. Mary Antonette Remonte, Millennium Development Goals Team Leader of the PHIC; Dr. Rodolfo Antonio Albornoz, Disease Prevention and Control Bureau OIC-Director; Ma. Elouisa Reyes, NSRC Program Support Unit Head; Dr. Renilyn Reyes, Western Visayas Regional NBS Manager; Dr. Cynthia Marissa Clemente, Cardinal Santos Medical Center NBS Coordinator; Dr. Anna Lea Elizaga, Newborn Screening Center (NSC)-NIH Unit Head; Dr. Maria Melanie Liberty Alcausin, NSRC Long-Term Follow-Up Coordinator; Dr. Carmencita Padilla, UPM Chancellor and NSSPI Founding President; Annamarie

The gathering was headed by NSSPI President Ephraim Neal Orteza and Overall Chair of the Organizing Committee Maria

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Number of Babies Screened as of October 2018 : **11,954,360**