

A Situational Analysis on Access to Medicines of Persons with Disabilities

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Background of the Study

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) are people “who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (United Nations, 2007).

RA7277, 1992

disability is defined as “a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more psychological, physiological or anatomical function of an individual or activities of such individual; b) a record of such impairment; or c) being regarded as having such an impairment.” Chapter III Section 20 has indicated that the state will “protect and promote the

BACKGROUND

A critical factor in ensuring PWDs' access to health care services is to understand the current situation and environment including their access to medicines

PWDs have greater unmet needs and poorer levels of health.¹

- RA 7277(1992) or the magna Carta for Disabled Persons granted the rights and privileges of PWDs for their rehabilitation, self development and self reliance.
- RA9442(2006) gave 20% discounts for the purchase of medicines in all drugstores
- RA10754 (2015) exempt PWDs from VAT

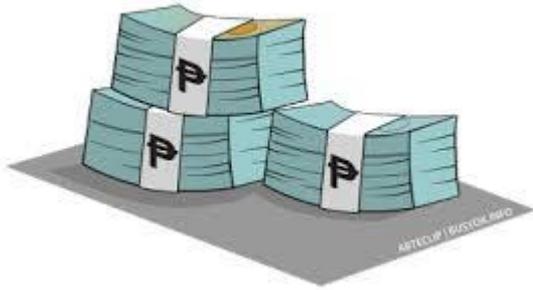
Although guidelines were already released, hindrances still exist in the PWDs' access to medicines with some drugstores refusing to follow the law.²

¹ World Health Organization (2014). *Fact Sheet: Disability and health*.

² Food and Drug Administration of the Philippines Memorandum Circular No. 2010-012: Republic Act No. 9442 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations

OBJECTIVES

Determine the magnitude of PWD access to medicines



Affordability



Availability



Accessibility

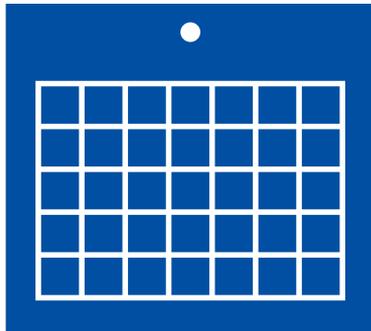


Extent of
Accommodation



Acceptability

Descriptive cross-sectional study design



Step 1

Desk Review of health policies and previous researches



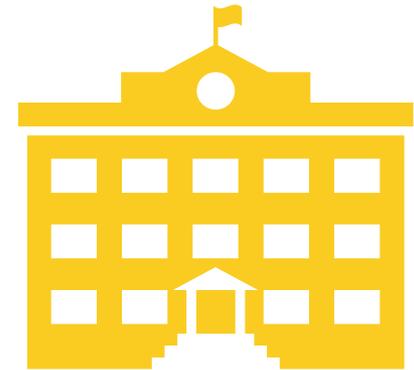
Step 2

Cross-sectional Survey

1,200 PWDs in:

- 18 mun, 36 bgy,
- 6 provinces in LuzViMin
- 2 cities, 6 bgy in NCR

69 public and private pharmacies



Step 3

Triangulation of results for policy recommendations

RESULTS

Affordability

- 78.1% of PWDs who consulted a health provider in the past 12 months were prescribed with medicine
- Only 30.6% of PWDs were employed
- 83.6% of those were earning below the minimum wage

Table 1. Health insurance for PWDs

	Number	Percent
Yes, PhilHealth	748	62.1
Indigent member	367	49.1
Sponsored member	115	15.4
Member from the informal sector	92	12.3
Member from the formal sector	99	13.2
Others	65	8.7
Missing	10	1.3
Yes, other insurance	4	0.3
No	453	37.6
Total	1,205	100.0

- Lack of money was the main reason for 3.1% of PWDs who were not able to take all prescribed medicines
- 23.2% of drugs during consultation were given to the PWD for free

Table 10. Cost of maintenance drugs

	For Disability Maintenance Drugs	Other Illness Maintenance Drugs
Monthly cost of maintenance medication		
n	298	179
Mean (\pm SD)	836.85 (\pm 1092.11)	649.47 (\pm 1175.58)
Median (Min, Max)	420 (0, 7380)	228 (0, 8262)
Monthly income		
n	89	76
Mean (\pm SD)	7503.37 (\pm 6261.00)	5071.38 (\pm 4941.96)
Median (Min, Max)	5000 (500, 210000)	2750 (300, 20000)
Percentage of maintenance medicine which were given for free	32 (8.2%)	50 (23.5%)
Percentage of maintenance medicine in which the PWD prescribed with it has no income	299 (76.7%)	135 (63.4%)
Percentage of daily income spent on medication		
n	59	67
Mean (\pm SD)	122.11 (\pm 163.78)	290.36 (\pm 412.43)
Median (Min, Max)	36 (0, 591.04)	150 (0, 2000)

RESULTS

Availability



- Availability of medicines is rated poor in the public sector than the private sector

- 6.8% of PWDs were not able to obtain a medicine because of unavailability in pharmacies which are mostly private
- During the observation using shadow buyer, half of the medicines for their disability were available 1-25% of private pharmacies



RESULTS

Accessibility

- 57.9% of medicines were purchased in a pharmacy closest to the PWD's home
- Botika ng Barangay/Bayan was a good strategy by the government, however, it had problems with financing and restocking of medicines

Acceptability

- 24.1% of PWDs were unsatisfied with the Magna Carta for Disabled persons
- 23.9% of PWDs interviewed always avails the 20% discount
- 11.9% always avails the 12% VAT exemption



RESULTS

Extent of Accommodation

- More than half of PWDs interviewed were satisfied with the level of helpfulness of a pharmacist
- Most of the pharmacies included in the study mentioned that PWDs which are able to purchase their medicines because of the law has increased
- Small pharmacies in rural areas have a hard time implementing the law because the discount is larger than the mark up price

Table 2. Provision of the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons

	Private Pharmacies (n=42)		Govt Pharmacies (n=27)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
20% discount	19	45.2	21	77.8
12% VAT exemption	16	38.1	10	37.0

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need to improve the implementation of the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons in terms of medicine access



Customize and expand the benefits according to the needs of the PWD, possibly through PhilHealth's TSeKaP



Disseminate information on the benefits of PWDs



Make telemedicine and home delivery available for PWDs



Enact Communication Access Laws for PWDs and conduct related researches



Develop a central registry for medicine purchases of PWDs



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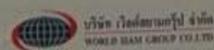
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NOVARTIS

Thank you!