

Coverage of disability-related services for children with disabilities in The Philippines

MISSING BILLION

Geography and scale:	The Philippines – Nationwide
Type of disability:	Children with disabilities

Involved actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) • UNICEF Philippines



Best practice description

PhilHealth provides benefit packages covering children below 18 years with developmental disabilities, mobility impairments, visual disabilities, and hearing impairments in The Philippines. These packages include various interventions, ranging from:

1. Assessments by medical specialists
 2. Assessments by allied health specialists
 3. Rehabilitation therapy
 4. Assistive devices (prosthesis, orthosis, spinal bracing, seating devices, wheelchairs, hearing aids, optical aids, electric aid and white cane); including yearly services and replacement of devices.
- Currently, these services are provided by a few government health care institutions in the country.

Origin / impetus for best practice

- Around five million children have disabilities in the Philippines and only 5% have access to assistive technology.
- Households caring for children with disabilities face a triple financial burden. These are additional costs of accessing general health services, disability specific goods and services, and limited employment opportunities.
- In 2015, PhilHealth began financing packages for adult persons with disabilities. Benefit packages cover assistive devices such as upper and lower limb prosthesis, lower limb orthosis and spinal orthosis, and rehabilitation sessions in four government facilities and three private facilities.
- The Philippines has undertaken a series of reforms since 2019 towards the realization of universal health coverage for people with disabilities, most recently extending it to children with disabilities.

Impact / results of implementing best practice

- Other government and private institutions will be contracted to increase availability of assessments.

Critical success factors for best practice

- Country commitment with Universal Health Care
- Increasing the budget allocation for the National Health Insurance Program
- Increased tax on alcohol and tobacco as a source of funding

Impact statement

“We are introducing this Z benefit package which is an improved, rationalized and relevant benefit for children with disabilities mainly to prevent the catastrophic spending of the poor and marginalized who are enrolled in the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) while ensuring quality healthcare services”
Dr. Celestina Ma. Jude P. de la Serna, Interim/OIC, PhilHealth President and CEO (March 2nd, 2018).

Lessons learned

- This program is expected to trigger supply-side investments by the private sector and local government. In addition to reforms in health professional education to respond to the health human resource gap, with the leadership of the ministries of health and education.

Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhilHealth Benefits package • RA 11228 - An Act Providing For The Mandatory Philhealth Coverage For All Persons With Disability (PWDs) • Implementing rules and regulations of RA 11228
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Further links & information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philhealth website
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