

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8503

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH), DEFINING ITS OBJECTIVES, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Health Research and Development Act of 1998."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to improve the quality of life for every Filipino. For this purpose, the State shall establish a center for excellence for health research and development.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).* – To carry out the above policy, the National Institutes of Health, hereinafter referred to as the NIH, is hereby created and established at the University of the Philippines (UP) Manila. The NIH shall serve as the coordinating and integrating body of the existing research institutes in UP Manila, namely, the Institute of Ophthalmology, the Institute of Socio-Biomedical Research, the Institute of Biotechnology and Molecular Biology for Health, the Institute of Clinical Epidemiology and such other institutes and health research programs which may be subsequently created in UP Manila after the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Objectives of the Institutes.* – The objectives of the NIH are:

(a) To promote science and technology research and development in the field of health;

(b) To promote the development of study groups and research programs;

(c) To establish mechanisms for the dissemination and utilization of research outputs;

(d) To complement graduate programs and faculty research human resource training in UP Manila; and

(e) To ensure that the results of health research and development activities are utilized to improve the health of the people.

SEC. 5. *Functions of the Institutes.* – The Institutes shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) To integrate and coordinate the development and scope of operation of each institute, research programs and component units;

(b) To organize teams and establish programs that will provide research and development innovations for the improvement of existing technologies, medicines, vaccines and other health products and instruments;

(c) To establish research programs on health promotion, disease prevention and control;

(d) To formulate and conduct research on problems associated with aging, degenerative processes, metabolic studies, prevention and rehabilitation of disabilities, wellness, health communications, health and social science, management of health systems, traditional and complementary medicine, and health policies;

(e) To enhance the masters and doctoral pool of researchers and faculty to complement the research and post graduate program of UP Manila;

(f) To provide common research support facilities for its component units;

- (g) To maximize the utilization of expert support staff;
- (h) To optimize resource generation and utilization;
- (i) To establish local and foreign linkages;
- (j) To receive and manage grants, aid, donations or any kind of assistance for achieving its objectives, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the University of the Philippines (UP); and
- (k) To propose and allocate the annual budgetary resources for each component unit.

SEC. 6. *Component Programs of the NIH.* – In addition to the existing component units mentioned in Section 3 of this Act, the NIH shall establish the following component programs:

(a) Health Product Cluster which shall undertake scientific and technological efforts to attain self-sufficiency and global competitiveness in the manufacture of health products and devices;

(b) Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Control Cluster which shall undertake studies on health promotion, epidemiology and disease patterns, and emerging health problems;

(c) Gerontology and Disabilities Cluster which shall conduct studies on problems associated with aging, degenerative processes, metabolic diseases and prevention and rehabilitation of disabilities;

(d) Social and Humanistic Studies which shall promote interdisciplinary approach to health research; and

(e) Health care system studies which shall explore alternatives to western medicine, formulate health policies, undertake researches on health care components and promote regional and international linkages for health human resource development.

SEC. 7. *Network of Health Research Institutions.* – The NIH shall serve as the nucleus of a network of health research institutions. Towards this end, the NIH may undertake research studies in partnership with other health research institutions outside of UP. The partner agencies shall maintain their identity, objectives, programs, assets, facilities and equipment under their respective administrative control. As partner agencies, health research institutions shall have access to NIH facilities and support services.

SEC. 8. *Organizational Structure.* – The NIH shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall report directly to the Chancellor of UP Manila. It shall have a Board of Advisers which shall recommend policy directions for the NIH.

SEC. 9. *Qualifications of the Executive Director.* – The Executive Director shall be a recognized scholar in health research and development. He shall be appointed and shall serve in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of UP.

SEC. 10. *Composition and Tenure of the Board of Advisers.* – The Board of Advisers shall be composed of (1) the Secretary of Health as chairman; (2) the Chancellor of UP Manila as vice chairman; (3) the Executive Director of the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST); and (4) two other members who are recognized scholars in health research and development to be appointed by the Board of Regents upon recommendation of the President of UP. The Executive Director shall concurrently serve as Member-Secretary of the Board. The Secretary of Health, the Chancellor of UP Manila and the Executive Director of PCHRD shall serve in an *ex officio* capacity. The two other members shall serve for a term of two (2) years.

SEC. 11. *Functions of the Board of Advisers.* – The Board of Advisers shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) To recommend the general directions and determine the priorities and thrusts of the Institutes;

(b) To recommend research areas for study and investigation by the Institutes or any of its component units, based on its scanning and interpretation of the demands of health care environment and the needs of the Filipino people;

(c) To recommend to the Board of Regents the establishment of component units of the Institutes;

(d) To generate resources and obtain logistical and financial support for the programs and component units of the Institutes; and

(e) To provide advice to the Institutes on any matter relating to the development of a research area and the administration of their research programs.

SEC. 12. *Appointment of Faculty and Staff.* – The human resource complement of the NIH shall be organized and set-up by the Executive Director in accordance with the existing rules and regulations of UP and upon the approval by the Board of Regents.

SEC. 13. *Public Access.* – The public and other health institutions shall have access to the research findings, facilities and other resources of the Institutes, as provided in the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

SEC. 14. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the respective component units of the NIH. Thereafter, such sums as may be needed for the continued operation of the NIH shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Board of Regents of UP, in coordination with the DOH, the DOST, private and nongovernment organizations involved in health research and development, shall formulate the rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.*—All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 17. *Effectivity.*—This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved, February 13, 1998.