



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

May 3, 1980

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER  
NO. 77 s. 1980

**SUBJECT: Referrals of Abandoned Children to the Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD)**

The Ministry of Social Services and Development has made strong representations with this Office for the protection of abandoned children in government and private hospitals. Information has also been received that there are instances where children are not discharged to their natural parents after delivery or treatment because of the inability of the parents to pay the hospital bills. Such practices are detrimental to the growth and development of these children.

Despite earlier efforts by the Ministry of Health in its Department Circular No. 182 s. 1963 and various memoranda of the Philippine Hospital Association to member-institutions, there are still cases reported of abandoned children being sold by hospitals thus casting a negative image on the entire medical system.

In order to solve the problem, therefore, and in accordance with an agreement reached with the Ministry of Social Services and Development, Ministry of Justice, and the Office of the Solicitor General, the following guidelines are hereby promulgated for strict compliance of all concerned:

1. An abandoned baby should not stay in a hospital beyond one week in order that bills will not accumulate especially in the case of private hospitals. Even before one week is reached, prior negotiations with the nearest MSSD branch offices should have already been made to enable them to prepare reception of the child in an institution or in a foster family home licensed by the said office and to follow-up parents as the case maybe.
2. The following procedure shall be followed in reporting abandonment of children:
  - a. Accomplish referral form and medical form (See attached).
  - b. Endorse above documents together with other papers that maybe available such as birth certificate, etc., to the nearest MSSD Unit in your area so that immediate transfer of baby can be facilitated.
  - c. Transfer of the child from hospital to a child caring institution.
3. If hospitals intend to accept child boarders, the facility should be established as an extension of the hospital according to the minimum standards for child caring institutions as prescribed by Rules

and Regulations for licensing of Child Caring/Placing Agencies under Article 209 of Presidential Decree No. 603 approved by the Council for the Welfare of Children Office of the President, as of August 31, 1978. Said facility should be licensed by the Bureau of Family and Child Welfare of the Ministry of Social Services and Development. Concerned hospitals should apply for licensing with the said Office.

4. Pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 603, interested parties/persons interested in adopting any child shall be referred to the nearest MSSD office where their application will be properly processed. Under Article 33, 34 and 35 thereof no petition for adoption shall be granted unless the MSSD had made a case study of the child to be adopted and the prospective adopting parents. The MSSD can intervene in court to deny the petition of adoptive applicants whose applications were not processed by MSSD or duly licensed child placement agencies. In fact, the MSSD shall supervise the adoptive parents for at least six months while the child in their home to assess their adjustment and emotional readiness for the legal adoption for the best interest of the child. MSSD adoption services are for free.

5. In order to minimize occurrence of abandoned cases of children all hospital personnel concerned are required to accomplish the attached Certificate of Consent Form upon admission.

6. In case of the need for further clarification, the same should be referred to the Bureau of Family and Child Welfare, Ministry of Social Services and Development, 389 San Rafael, Manila or the MSSD Regional Director of your region, Provincial/City Social Welfare Officer, MSSD, or the nearest MSSD Unit Office.

Also attached are forms to be accomplished in case of referrals of abandoned children.

All government and private hospitals and clinics are further required to submit regular quarterly reports on the number of children left or abandoned with them accomplishing the attached forms for the purpose. The first such report should be submitted on or before March 30, 1980 and every end of the quarter henceforth.

Bureau of Medical Services  
Ministry of Health  
San Lazaro Compound  
Sta. Cruz, Manila

Strict compliance with this circular is hereby enjoined of all concerned.

**ENRIQUE M. GARCIA, M.D.**  
Minister of Health