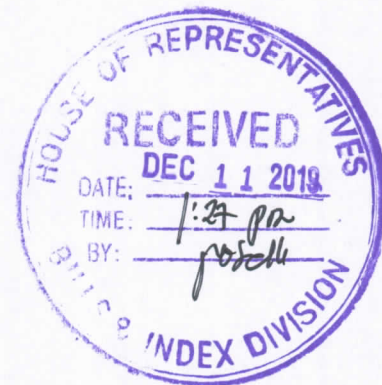


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5787



Introduced by **Rep. CAMILLE A. VILLAR**

AN ACT
CREATING A DENTAL UNIT IN EVERY RURAL HEALTH UNIT UNDER THE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AS PART OF THE PRIMARY APPROACH IN THE
DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Consistent with the administration's goal for a universal health coverage, this measure seeks to establish a dental unit in each of the Rural Health Units (RHU) under the Department of Health (DOH).

Tooth decay and gum diseases are two of the most prevalent dental diseases in the country. 92% of Filipino are suffering from dental caries—tooth decay or cavities—while 78% have gum diseases. A 2015 study¹ even suggested that the Philippines has the highest number of people wearing dentures in Asia. In 2016, the Philippine Prosthodontic Society estimated that around 7 million Filipinos have never been attended to by a dentist due to the "misconception" that accessing dental care is expensive. Perhaps this played a big factor as to why, in 2018, around 80% of Filipinos suffer from some form of dental problem.

Dental disease as an urgent national concern is reflected by the fact that such medical problem is ranked as one of the highest in the country's morbidity picture. In economic terms, every tooth affected means the loss of productivity of two days, lost opportunities, recurring pain and severe discomfort as well as increased cost of dental treatments.

With this measure, each RHU under the DOH will have at least one dentist serving with the priority targets of dental health services—pre-school children,

¹ <http://news.abs-cbn.com/lifestyle/05/29/15/how-ph-ranks-dental-health>

school children, pregnant and non-pregnant mothers and adults—adequately served. Generally, this allows for more accessible dental health care facilities and personnel, and ensures that dentists and dental services are available throughout the country.

In view of the foregoing, the swift passage of the bill is earnestly sought.

Camille Villar
CAMILLE A. VILLAR

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

1 Section 1. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State:

- 2 a) To pursue the Primary Health Care Approach in the delivery of health services
3 and to undertake the appropriate health human resource development for this
4 policy; and
5 b) To promote preventive dental healthcare in the rural areas as part of the
6 Primary Health Care strategy.

7 Sec. 2. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall
8 mean:

- 9 a) *Rural Health Unit* (also known as Main Health Center) shall be composed of a
10 doctor, a nurse and a midwife. Its function is to carry out the public health
11 functions of the Department of Health which includes both preventive and
12 curative health care.
13 b) *Dental Unit* shall be composed of a public health dentist and a trained
14 Barangay Health Worker as a dental aide.

1 Sec. 3. *Creation of Dental Unit.* – As part of the Primary Health Care
2 Approach, there is hereby created a dental unit in every rural health unit under the
3 supervision of the Department of Health.

4 Sec. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within ninety (90) days
5 from the approval of this Act, the Department of Health shall promulgate the rules
6 and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

7 Sec. 5. *Funding.* – The amount necessary for the purpose of this Act shall be
8 funded from the current fiscal year's appropriation for the Department of Health
9 (DOH). Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the implementation of this
10 Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

11 Sec. 6. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
12 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,