Towards Transforming the Philippine Health Care System

The Zuellig Family Foundation’s unique role in influencing health systems and help generate better health outcomes for the poor can be actualized by maximizing synergies from program interventions. The foundation’s innovative training programs that empower local health and community leaders serve as a means to establish a network of accountable and responsible health leaders and professionals. The Community Health Partnership Program’s aim of adopting 50 municipalities in 5 years as social laboratories and providing our partner municipalities with infrastructure support & access to resource partners contributes to the foundation’s over-all goal of transforming the Philippine health care system to be more equitable and responsive.

Amidst the devolution of basic health services across the country, the Philippine health care system remains to face fragmentations and gaps in terms of accessibility and equity. Most of the problems seen in the field, especially in the ARMM region, are related to lack of resources, disconnects in the implementation of health programs, poor governance and inadequate local infrastructure. The Zuellig Family Foundation aims to support local leaders and champions for health to address these problems through the innovative synergy of our programs in the fields of capability building, strengthening Local Health Boards through action research, as well as stakeholder and community health partnerships.

OUR MISSION
Committed to contribute to national development through programs and projects that will promote social development of the Filipino.
The Institute addresses two of the major thrusts of the Foundation’s response to reduce health inequities, namely: influence the policy environment to make health structures and systems become more equitable and build capability of health leaders to establish and sustain equitable health programs and services.

The Research and Policy Studies Program is focused on addressing the Health Sector Reform Agenda through action research and situational analysis. This involves the areas of governance, health regulation, health systems delivery and health financing. The researches and studies are discussed with key influential people in the local and national government. This is also essential to the foundation’s formulation of the framework for the training programs and in the intervention with partner communities.

The Institute’s Capacity Building Program recognizes the role that leadership plays in replicating best practices in local health systems. As an essential part of the Foundation’s agenda for action, various training and mentorship programs equip health leaders, professionals, and the youth with the necessary tools to address health inequities.

The Health Leadership and Management Program (HLMP) is designed to enhance the capability of middle and senior level officers and managers to lead their organizations and implement responsive health programs that will improve health outcomes of their community. The course is anchored on the Bridging Leadership Framework and supplemented by sessions on managerial practices and skills as part of leadership capital development.

Health Leaders for the Poor (HL4P) is a four-module training program given to tri-leaders of the foundation’s partner municipalities. The tri-leaders are mentored by different experts who provide them recommendations/insights on how they can improve their local health systems.

The Health Youth Leaders Congress (HYLC) is convention for medical student leaders to understand issues that currently beset the country’s health sector. As future health professionals, there is a need to invest in them as they are expected to play a critical role in improving the health status of the nation.

Partnership Programs

Aside from the main programs conducted in the research, training and community partnership aspect, the foundation has other programs the addresses the problems in the delivery health system and regulation. There are some of the concurrent projects with partner institutions.

Congressional Commission on Science Technology Engineering (COMSTE)

As part of COMSTE, Zuellig Family Foundation works towards enhancing the country’s competitiveness in health service delivery by exploring the potential role of Information and Communications Technology in ensuring the provision of quality health care particularly in poor rural areas.

Health Systems in Transition (HiT) Philippines

The Foundation is part of a pool of health experts commissioned to conduct a country-based study on health systems and policies. This is part of the continuous effort to promote evidence-based policymaking, initiated by the WHO European Region through the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. This notable distinction is essential in the continuous persuance of the foundation’s advocacy on health.

Assistance to Senate/ Congress Committee on Health

Recognizing the Zuellig Family Foundation as a rational sounding board on public health issues, Executive Director Dr. Kenneth Hartigan-Go has been invited as technical expert to various undertakings of Congress particularly by the Committee on Health. ZFF takes pride for this feat for it has reflected the credibility of the foundation.

Access to Affordable Medicines Project with CARD-MRI

In partnership with the Center for Agricultural and Rural Development - Mutually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD-MRI), the foundation is to design, implement, and establish a drug formulary and social marketing strategies for affordable essential drugs. This project will address the accessibility issues of the impoverished people in Bondoc Peninsula and in the 4th district of Quezon province. ZFF intervenes by providing technical assistance through preselection of drug suppliers for CARD, develop list of essential medicines, training of preferred pharmacy and Hapinoy stores, and monitoring and evaluation of the system. This project will be implemented based on strategically planned phases.

Disaster Response Programs

A(H1N1) Pandemic Awareness Program

As an off-shoot of the previous years’ Asian Influenza awareness campaign, Zuellig Family Foundation were one of the few, if not the only, institution that has spearheaded and actively established a campaign on A(H1N1).

Community Disaster Response Program

There have been numerous typhoons that led to flood that has devastated thousands of families in 2009 alone. In collaboration with Zuellig Pharma, Zuellig Family Foundation has provided essential disaster kits (including mattresses, blankets & cooking pots) to the victims in Botolan, Zambales and Cotabato City, Maguindanao. The materials that the foundation has provided were immensely beneficial to the victims.
The foundation’s innovative health partnership program aims to contribute in improving health outcomes for the poor by making local health delivery systems more equitable. The two-year program incorporates local partnerships between the government, represented by the local chief executive and the municipal health officer – and the private sector represented by the selected socio-civic leader. During this period, the leaders for health undergo the Health Leaders for the Poor training program every six months, after which they are guided to come up with their municipality’s Vision, Mission, Objectives and Key Result Areas for Health to systematize and give priority to health programs and interventions. Efforts towards the Strengthening of Local Health Boards were made possible through the synergy between CHPP and the Zuellig Family Foundation Institute’s policy research arm. The collaboration of the programs are aimed at improving the community’s health care delivery systems by improving their own human, technological, and other resource capacities. The municipalities are also provided with direct community health program assistance in the form of health infrastructure development support as well as assistance in the provision of medicines.

**Health Infrastructure for Partner Municipalities**

The Community Health Partnership Program aims to provide infrastructure development support to enable our partner municipalities to complement their strengthened commitment to health programs with better health service delivery. The ground-breaking ceremonies in most of the areas have already commenced since the start of September 2009. The kind of infrastructure project varies from the different municipalities. From birthing facilities to rehabilitation of the health centers, the foundation never halts in finding ways of improving the health care delivery system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Infrastructure Project</th>
<th>Ground breaking</th>
<th>Estimated Costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya</td>
<td>Construction of Birthing Facility</td>
<td>September 2</td>
<td>Php 478,882.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padre Burgos, Quezon</td>
<td>Construction of Barangay Health Station</td>
<td>September 9</td>
<td>Php 500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacolod, Lanao del Norte</td>
<td>Construction of Barangay Health Station</td>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>Php 500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dao, Capiz</td>
<td>Rehabilitation and expansion of existing Rural Health Center</td>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>Php 480,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dingalan, Aurora</td>
<td>Rehabilitation and expansion of existing Rural Health Center</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>Php 1,400,000 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Datu Paglas, Maguindanao</td>
<td>Rehabilitation of existing Rural Health Center</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>Php 500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paglat, Maguindanao</td>
<td>Rehabilitation of existing Rural Health Center</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>Php 394,447.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen.S.K. Pendatun, Maguindanao</td>
<td>Rehabilitation of existing Rural Health Center</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>Php 502,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultan sa Barongis, Maguindanao</td>
<td>Construction of Barangay Health Station</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>Php 502,662</td>
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</tbody>
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*Note: Estimated Costs include both construction and project management fees.*
The foundation strives to influence and empower local chief executives (LCE) or mayors to have a stake on their health programs. Though the training programs that ZFF has instituted, it had an evident effect on Hon. Datu Boniao Kali, Mayor of GSKP, Maguindanao. Having attained only primary education, he was one of the first to have responded to the call on addressing health service delivery in their municipality. Having a grasp on the essence of being a leader in health through the Health Leadership and Management for the Poor (HLMP), he allocated and provided a budget on essential materials and equipment to the key health leaders in their health community such as the Municipal Health Officer and Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator (MPDC). He also hired three (3) additional midwives to address their maternal health care, acquired new ambulance and has established nine (9) Botika ng Barangays to make medicines accessible. Realizing the importance of health financing, he has enrolled 1,200 indigent families to PhilHealth and pushed for the accreditation of their Municipal Health Center. With Mayor Kali’s eager take on changing the system, it has affected the perception on health of his constituents.

Fixing Work Relationships Towards the Health Improvement of the Community

Having a renewed relationship and working as one has helped improve the health care situation in Bacolod, Lanao del Norte. It was an organizational transformation that was a result of the initiative of the key people in the municipality. The rift between the local government unit (LGU) and the health workers has greatly affected the health reform of the municipality. It can be rooted to longstanding political conflict and the implementation issue of the Magna Carta. Through ZFF’s Health Leadership and Management Program, Mayor Judith Miquiabas and Municipal Health Officer (MHO) Dr. Jaime Magat started to patch things up and decided to move forward together for the benefit of their municipality. Since then, the notable improvements have occurred. The Magna Carta was gradually granted to the health workers, the budget for drug procurement was increased, and the movement for the reactivation of the Local Health Board to institutionalize the programs and policies.

Summary of Local Health Initiatives in line with the Health Sector Reform Agenda Initiatives

The partner municipalities are also provided with direct community health program assistance in the form of health infrastructure development support as well as assistance in the provision of medicines. The diagram below depicts how the four pillars of the Health Sector Reform Program were addressed through the interventions of ZFF:

**GOVERNANCE**
- Re-activation and strengthening of local health boards
- Better inter-agency coordination between DOH and LGUs
- Implementation of Magna Carta for Health Workers
- Participation of inter-local health zones

**HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY**
- Notable addition of health workers
- Constructions of health infrastructure such as health center and birthing facility
- Procurement of ambulance and other medical supplies.
- Access to affordable generic medicines

**HEALTH REGULATION**
- Increase in the establishment of botika ng barangay
- Improvements in drug procurement mechanisms

**HEALTH FINANCING**
- 9925 indigent families were given PhilHealth membership in SLAM alone
- A notable increase in PhilHealth membership in almost all the partner municipalities