

Policy Brief/Note of Philippine Health Issues: Human Rights Violations Committed on Healthcare Workers

Authors : Trina Isabel Santiago, Daniel Chua, Jume Tayaban, Joseph Daniel Timbol, Joshua Yanes

Abstract : Numerous instances of human rights violations on healthcare workers have been reported during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines. This brief aims to explore these civil and political rights violations and propose recommendations to address these. Our review shows that a wide range of civic and political human rights violations have been committed by individual citizens and government agencies on individual healthcare workers and health worker groups. These violations include discrimination, red-tagging, evictions, illegal arrests, and acts of violence ranging from chemical attacks to homicide. If left unchecked, these issues, compounded by the pandemic, may lead to the exacerbations of the pre-existing problems of the Philippine healthcare system. Despite all pre-existing reports by human rights groups and public media articles, there still seems to be a lack of government action to condemn and prevent these violations. The existence of government agencies which directly contribute to these violations with the lack of condemnation from other agencies further propagate the problem. Given these issues, this policy brief recommends the establishment of an interagency task force for the protection of human rights of healthcare workers as well as the expedited passing of current legislative bills towards the same goal. For more immediate action, we call for the establishment of a dedicated hotline for these incidents with adequate appointment and training of point persons, construction of clear guidelines, and closer collaboration between government agencies in being united against these issues.

Keywords : human rights violations, healthcare workers, COVID-19 pandemic, Philippines

Conference Title : ICHSHR 2024 : International Conference on Human Security and Human Rights

Conference Location : Barcelona, Spain

Conference Dates : February 05-06, 2024