

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL

29 August 2017

NNC Memorandum No. 2017-011
Series of 2017

SUBJECT: Guidelines for providing medical and survivorship assistance to Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS)

Background and rationale

The Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS) Program is a human resource development strategy of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition, which involves the recruitment, training, deployment and supervision of volunteer workers for nutrition or barangay nutrition scholars (BNS). Presidential Decree No. 1569 (1978) mandated the deployment of one BNS in every barangay in the country to monitor the nutritional status of children and link communities with nutrition and related service providers. Presidential Decree No. 1569 also mandated the NNC to administer the program in cooperation with local government units.

In many instances, BNSs perform more than their prescribed tasks by actually delivering or facilitating the delivery of services, mobilizing the community for nutrition action, linking with various sectors, and keeping records.

The NNC used to include in its support to active BNSs a Php 5,000 GSIS accident insurance coverage. In mid-2014, the provision of financial assistance for medical purposes or in connection with the death of a BNS started as a substitute for the GSIS accident insurance coverage in the past. In-house financial assistance was preferred over the GSIS accident insurance coverage because of the high cost of premium paid by NNC per year compared to the number of BNSs availing the insurance.

Aside from a modest monthly traveling allowance from the NNC in Manila, and from the provincial, city, municipal or barangay governments, a BNS may avail of assistance for sickness and hospitalization or the survivorship assistance for their family in case of a BNS's death.

Since 2014, the NNC has provided two types of assistance in this context: medical assistance and survivorship assistance. Medical assistance started in the amount of Php5,000 in 2014 and was increased to Php10,000 in 2015. Likewise, survivorship assistance started in the amount of Php10,000 and was increased to Php20,000.

This set of guidelines was developed to further define the assistance being provided to BNSs in line with the existing mandate of hospital institutions, specifically of government hospitals, coverage of PhilHealth insurance and maximizing the DOH medical assistance both along in-patient and out-patient care.

Objective of the guidelines

To prescribe standard requirements and procedures for extending medical and survivorship assistance for BNSs for more efficient use of available resources.

Who may avail

All BNSs on active status of duty regardless of the fund source of allowance/honorarium, i.e. barangay, municipal, city or provincial funding can avail of medical and survivorship assistance from NNC.

In addition, the assistance could be extended to BNSs who have been separated from duty provided the request is filed within six (6) months from the last day of effectivity of his/her contract of service as BNS. However, medical assistance shall be provided only if the reason of separation from service of a BNS was due to illness or medical condition.

For medical assistance, confinement and care should be in a government health facility except for cases 1) wherein the therapy/services are only available in private clinic/hospital; 2) BNS is in a life-threatening situation where the nearest care provider is a private one; and 3) as endorsed or referred to by the municipal health officer (MHO) or city health officer (CHO).

Assistance provided

1. Survivorship assistance in the amount of Php 20,000 for any cause of death.
2. A one-time per year medical assistance amounting to Php5,000 as additional assistance for confinement in a hospital and related post-confinement cost.

Notification and filing of claims

1. The BNS, an immediate member of the family, nutrition action officer (NAO), or the district/city nutrition program officer may notify their respective LGU of the condition of the BNS who may need assistance along with pertinent document attached.
2. Application Requirements
 - a. General requirements
 - 1) Endorsement letter of the local chief executive addressed to the NNC Executive Director through the NNC Regional Nutrition Program Coordinator (NPC)
 - 2) Endorsement of the NNC Regional Nutrition Program Coordinator addressed to the NNC Executive Director

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- 3) A certified copy of BNS masterlist for the active BNS of current year or a copy of the BNS masterlist indicating the name of the BNS within the immediate six-month period prior to separation/confinement, as attested by the municipal nutrition action officer (MNAO)
 - 4) Photocopy of one (1) valid ID card issued by the government, certified true copy by the barangay secretary or MNAO
- b. For medical assistance
- 1) Letter request of BNS applicant addressed to the head of NNC
 - 2) Original medical certificate issued by the C/MHO or attending physician indicating among others, medical condition, dates of hospital confinement, and hospital of confinement. If applicable, the medical certificate should also explain why hospitalization was in a private clinic. Acceptable reasons are if the needed therapy/services are available only in a private clinic/hospital and if the BNS is in a life-threatening situation where the nearest facility is a private one.
- c. For survivorship assistance
- 1) Letter request addressed to the head of NNC from the next-of-kin of the deceased BNS as identified beneficiary in the BNS master list. If for some reason another beneficiary will be named, the letter request should indicate why the originally-named beneficiary has been changed and should be certified by the barangay captain or C/MNAO.
 - 2) Certified true copy of death certificate
- d. All claims should be filed within six months from the occurrence of the hospitalization or death.

Review and approval process

1. Upon receipt at the regional office, requests or claims should be stamped as received and recorded in the official logbook.
2. The document is referred to the staff in charge of reviewing such claims.
 - a. Staff-in-charge reviews documents submitted to determine validity of the claim and the completeness of the requirements.
 - b. The BNS or the family member of the BNS seeking medical assistance or the beneficiary requesting for the survivorship assistance should be informed of any deficiency preferably in writing or via email message.

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- c. Staff-in-charge should follow up and ensure “closure” of claims the soonest time possible.
3. If the claim is in order, staff-in-charge drafts and finalizes the endorsement of the NPC.
4. NPC does final validation, and if in order, signs the regional office endorsement.
5. The regional office then sends the endorsement with all the supporting documents to the central office via mail or courier services.
6. Upon receipt and recording of the endorsement from the regional office at the Administrative Division, the documents are forwarded to the Nutrition Policy and Planning Division (NPPD) for validation.
7. NPPD staff-in-charge reviews submission, validates against the masterlist of BNS and advises the regional office via email of any deficiency. Should there be any deficiency, the claims will be on hold until the deficiency has been submitted by the regional office.
8. If the requirements are complete, a checklist is attached to the request, signed by the NPPD Chief, and routed to Financial and Management Division (FMD) for processing of the request. A tracking slip will also be attached to the request.

Processing and release of financial assistance

1. Upon receipt of the claims request, the FMD prepares the documents to be processed, i.e. Obligation Request Slip (ORS) and the Disbursement Voucher (DV) for the claim, payable to the BNS for medical assistance and the designated beneficiary for survivorship assistance.
2. The claim will be processed based on existing procedures with a signed cheque as the end point.
3. The signed cheque is then forwarded to the Administrative Division for the preparation of the transmittal letter and acknowledgment receipt for the assistance provided.
4. The transmittal letter is signed by the Executive Director.
5. The Administrative Division (AD) then mails or delivers the check with the transmittal letter and acknowledgement receipt to the regional office concerned.

Acknowledgement of assistance received

1. The NNC Regional Office is responsible for releasing the cheque to the appropriate beneficiary. It should ensure that the transmittal slip is signed by the recipient.

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2. The NNC Regional Office shall forward the transmittal slip duly signed by the beneficiary to the NNC Central Office.
3. At the NNC Central Office, the signed transmittal slip is forwarded to the NPPD for notation and entry into the monitoring form. The NPPD then releases the signed transmittal slip to AD, also for notation, filing.
4. The NNC Regional Office also prepares a letter addressed to the city/municipal mayor in his capacity and chairperson of the local nutrition committee, indicating that the medical or survivorship assistance has been given to the recipient. A copy of the signed transmittal slip is also attached to the letter to the city/municipal mayor.

Funding support

The NNC Central Office will fund the medical and survivorship assistance for BNSs.

Effectivity

These guidelines will take effect immediately and will be in force unless modified in part or full.

95 Sept 2017
Assistant Secretary of Health Maria-Bernardita T. Flores, CESO II
Executive Director IV *[Signature]*

National Nutrition Council
Office of the Executive Director
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