

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd provides medical/dental supplies to health workers

Doctors and nurses serving as health workers in public schools are now provided with medical/dental instruments which they can use to attend to the health needs of school children, the Department of Education said today.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said government must ensure that public schools are well-equipped to minister to the health needs of students. "The school is the second home of the students and we should see to it that they are properly taken care of," added Lapus.

After many years of using their personal medical and dental instruments, the DepEd health workers are now provided with sphygmomanometer, stethoscopes, forceps, otoscopes, dental micrometer machines and other dental instruments, tuning forks for auditory screening, penlights, glucometers, and others. These provisions will enable health workers in public schools to perform regular health examination and prompt treatment to the almost 20 million public school children.

"The health and nutrition of our school children have direct bearing on the holding power of our schools. The healthier and better nourished the students, the better are their chances to stay in school and perform well," Lapus explained.

In 2007, DepEd mobilized its health personnel nationwide to engage in medical and dental projects for grade school children. Some 11 million or 84.5 percent of pre-school to Grades 6 school children nationwide were examined. They were either given immediate treatment or provided with health cards to enable them to seek medical and dental assistance from qualified providers. Part of the project was the diagnosis of children who had either hearing or visual impairment or both.

In a related development, DepEd's health and nutrition personnel will undertake activities under the Integrated School Health and Nutrition Program aimed to improve the health and nutrition and learning capacities of the school children.

The program includes health examinations for the 12.5 million pre-elementary and Grade 1 to 6 pupils. This also includes the over five million first year to fourth year public high school students. The students will also undergo oral examination and prophylaxis by school dentists.

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“All these intensified DepEd efforts to address the health needs of our schoolchildren were made possible because of the significant increase in funding support from the national government,” Lapus noted.

Other student services include height and weight assessment, vision screening, auditory screening treatment and referrals, provision of corrective eyeglasses and supplementary feeding with malunggay-based recipes.

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