

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
 NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

REGIONAL MEMORANDUM
ORD-2024-1146

TO : **SCHOOLS DIVISION SUPERINTENDENTS**
 SDO Makati City
 SDO Muntinlupa City
 SDO Quezon City

FROM : **JOCELYN DR. ANDAYA** *Joy*
 Regional Director

SUBJECT : **ADDENDUM TO THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE RESEARCH ON THE MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES IN PHILIPPINE LOCAL GOVERNANCE LED BY THE CENTER FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

DATE : **September 23, 2024**

- Attached is a letter from the University of the Philippines, Diliman – National College of Public Administration and Governance – Center for Local and Regional Governance (UP-NCPAG-CLRG) in relation to Memorandum DM-OUOPS-2024-09-06160 dated August 1, 2024 signed by Atty. Revsee A. Escobedo, Undersecretary, Office of the Undersecretary of Operations re: **Research on the Mental Health Initiatives in Philippine Local Governance**, for the information and guidance of those concerned.
- Particular attention is invited to paragraphs 2 and 3.
- For further questions or clarifications, please feel free to contact the researchers on this project: Ms. Lourdes V. Santos at lbsantos@up.edu.ph /09621108532 and Mr. Gerard Martin C. Suarez at gcsuarez@up.edu.ph /09171153819.
- Immediate and wide dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.



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Effectivity	01.26.23	Page	1 of 1



Certificate No. PFP QMS
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Greetings,

We, from the University of the Philippines, Diliman – National College of Public Administration and Governance – Center for Local and Regional Governance (UP-NCPAG-CLRG), are writing this message in order to clarify some details with respect to MEMORANDUM OM-OUOPS-2024-09-06160 or the memorandum endorsing the conduct of research of mental health activities at the school and community level.

Adjustments to the Period of Activity: The original completion date endorsed in the memorandum was dated 31 July, 2024 as the data gathering activity was originally scheduled to happen April to June, 2024. However, due to the adjustment of the signatory and the preparation for the transition within DepEd the letter was only endorsed 1 August, 2024. Upon discussion with representatives from the Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division (BLSS-SHD) we are tentatively scheduling the **online** data collecting activities to happen starting from the **3rd to 4th week of September up till the end of November 2024**. After some preparation of the final data gathering instrument, UP-NCPAG-CLRG will initiate contact and coordinate with each region in order to best match everyone's schedule.

Documents to Prepare: In order to streamline the process and establish baseline data for the study, we are kindly requesting the following documents to be prepared in advance so that the UP-NCPAG-CLRG team can better refine its data gathering instrument:

- Existing policies at the school level with respect to mental health, or documents describing mental health activities, if any;
- Existing policies at the regional level with respect to mental health, if any;
- Official designations and job descriptions of people tasked to conduct mental health-related activities at the school level; and
- Number of cases designated as a “mental health” case and documents related to the rationale as to why such cases were deemed as mental health cases.

We believe that **your cooperation** in this study **will provide valuable insights that can be used to develop a capacity development program on mental health first response**.

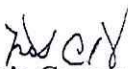
If there are any further questions or clarifications, please feel free to contact the researchers on this project - Ms. Lourdes V. Santos at lvsantos@up.edu.ph / 09621108532; and Mr. Gerard Martin C. Suarez at gcsuarez@up.edu.ph / 09171153819.

Thank you very much!


Gerard Martin C. Suarez
University Researcher


Lourdes V. Santos
University Researcher

Noted by:


Dr. Maria Corazon C. Dumlao
Chief Health Program Officer
BLSS- School Health Division



Republika ng Pilipinas
Department of Education

OFFICE OF THE UNDERSECRETARY FOR OPERATIONS

MEMORANDUM

OM-OUOPS-2024-09-06/60

TO : **REGIONAL DIRECTORS**
National Capital Region, Region II, Region III, Region V, Region VI, Region VII, Region VIII, Region X, Region XI

BARMM EDUCATION MINISTER

FROM : **ATTY. REVSEE A. ESCOBEDO**
Undersecretary for Operations

SUBJECT : **ENDORSEMENT OF THE RESEARCH ON THE MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES IN PHILIPPINE LOCAL GOVERNANCE LED BY THE CENTER FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

DATE : August 1, 2024

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Operations (OASOPS), through the Bureau of Learner Support Services-School Health Division (BLSS-SHD), has been in close coordination with the Center for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG), for the **conduct of research to review existing mental health initiatives and policies at the school**. Results of the research project shall be used to develop an extension program capacitating public school teachers, learners, and local government units (LGUs) in 1) conducting mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS); 2) developing community support or resources to address mental health issues; and 3) integrating multi-stakeholder roles within the local legislative process. For further details regarding this research initiative, kindly refer to their enclosed proposal (**Annex A**).

Such initiative is in line with the mandate of DepEd to promote mental health and well-being in the basic education sector and contributes to the Department's efforts through the BLSS-SHD to strengthen the School Mental Health Program (SMHP).

With this, the BLSS-SHD respectfully **endorses CLRG to your good office for the conduct of research activities in schools within your respective Regions and Schools Division Offices (SDOs)**. For a list of selected SDOs, kindly refer to **Annex B**. We request your coordination with CLRG, through your respective SMHP



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Republika ng Pilipinas
Department of Education

OFFICE OF THE UNDERSECRETARY FOR OPERATIONS

MEMORANDUM

OM-OUOPS-2024-09 *09/08/2024*

TO : **REGIONAL DIRECTORS**
National Capital Region, Region II, Region III, Region V, Region VI, Region VII, Region VIII, Region X, Region XI

BARMM EDUCATION MINISTER

FROM : 
ATTY. REVSEE A. ESCOBEDO
Undersecretary for Operations

SUBJECT : **ENDORSEMENT OF THE RESEARCH ON THE MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES IN PHILIPPINE LOCAL GOVERNANCE LED BY THE CENTER FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

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Coordinators and other personnel concerned, to discuss and work on the research activities. For initial discussion and necessary preparations, your office may directly coordinate with following contact persons from CLRG:

Contact Person	Contact Information
Lourdes V. Santos University Researcher III	09621108532 lvsantos@up.edu.ph
Gerard Martin C. Suarez University Researcher I	09171153819 gcsuarez@up.edu.ph

For queries and concerns, please contact **Amina Aisa H. Boncales**, Technical Assistant II, School Mental Health Program Monitoring and Evaluation, BLSS-SHD through blss.shd@deped.gov.ph, cc: schoolmentalhealth@deped.gov.ph, amina.boncales@deped.gov.ph or you may directly coordinate with the CLRG through the contact persons above.

For your consideration and appropriate action.



CENTER FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE
 National College of Public Administration and Governance
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Mental Health Initiatives in Philippine Local Governance Part 1:
 Reviewing Possibilities for Multi-Stakeholder Capacity Development for Mental Health First Response

Proposing Office	University of the Philippines - National College of Public Administration and Governance - Center for Local and Regional Governance (UP-NCPAG-CLRG)
Expected Start Date	January 01, 2024
Expected Completion Date	July 31, 2024
Background and Rationale	<p>In the face of student suicides, increasing student suicide attempts, and the rising number of Department of Education (DepEd) students seeking school guidance services during the COVID-19 Pandemic and after, enhancing existing mental health promotion and the delivery of mental health services in Philippine primary education has become an important priority for DepEd to address (Felipe, 2023). Moreover, part of DepEd's mandates in Republic Act No. 11036, also known as the Mental Health Act, requires DepEd to pursue strategies that promote the realization of mental health and well-being in educational institutions (Republic of the Philippines, 2018). To fulfill its mandates, the 2024 national budget has allocated two hundred and ten million pesos (P210M), attempting to ensure the effectiveness of programs implemented by the Department (Senate of the Philippines, 2023).</p> <p>However, five years after the enactment of the Mental Health Act, there has been criticism of its implementation as it seems that there is no strategy to harmonize the various mental health programs of different national agencies and local government units (LGUs). <i>"Every LGU or academic institution needs its own program for mental health services. What is the status of the effort in the LGUs and academic institutions? Yes, there are apps, but there's supposed to be tangible actions or programs to [accompany] what was cascaded to the LGUs."</i> states Gabriella Representative Arlene Brosasa in the House committee briefing on rising violence, and suicide cases among students (paraphrased in Macasero, 2023). LGUs and local mental health ordinances are further identified as key to alleviating logistical problems related to realizing the Mental Health Act nationwide.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Mental health ordinances will complement the Philippine Mental Health Law and localize response to prevent suicide, boost diagnosis and treatment of persons with mental health needs, and combat stigma [...] Removing barriers to mental health services through localized interventions needs commitment from everyone in the community,"</i></p> <p>Philippine Mental Health Association National Executive Director Dr. Carolina Uno-Rayco states (qtd. in Sarao, 2023), though local initiatives and ordinances exist (Yabut et al., 2023) the quality of programs varies depending on LGU resources, the vision of mental health service delivery, coordination with other sectors, and scope of service provision.</p> <p>In the past, multi-stakeholder capacity development programs in the health sector have proven to demonstrate some effectiveness in addressing mental health needs of a</p>



	<p>vi) City Health Workers</p> <p>to gather their institutional and personal experiences with the delivery of mental health programs within the public school and outside in their localities.</p> <p>3) Highlight key indicators, conditions, and strategies that make such programs effective and sustainable in the long-term;</p> <p>4) Develop an evidenced-based multi-stakeholder mental health first response capacity development program that can be implemented in Philippine LGUs, and</p> <p>5) Build a database of existing mental health programs in the Philippines.</p>
Scope	<p>The research focuses on doing an initial assessment of (i) the current state of Mental Health service delivery within schools in the 3 island groups (Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao) and NCR and (ii) the school's interface with other mental health service delivery programs from the national and local government units.</p> <p>Survey questionnaires and key informant interviews (KIIs) will be used to collect information and create the initial database of the mental health services that are currently offered in the Philippines. Due to time and financial restrictions, the KIIs and survey for the island groups of the Visayas and Mindanao will be conducted via Zoom.</p> <p>After the research, it is envisioned that the output of the research will be used to develop a pilot case where DepEd and LGUs can collaborate in i) implementing a capacity development program for mental health first response for multi-stakeholders in a locality and ii) translating the results towards a participatory driven mental health first aid program for that locality.</p> <p>After its implementation, recommendations on how to refine and scale the program across localities will be generated.</p>
Expected Output	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Research Report to be submitted July 31, 2024 (snapshot of the existing mental health programs in the Philippines) 2) Capacity Development Program to be implemented next year (2025) 3) Research Component 2 - Development of database of existing mental health programs in the Philippines (2025) 4) Scaling Plan and Final Report
Resources Needed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Tokens for the Interviewees 2) Transportation, Communication and Meal Allowances for the Interviewers 3) Contingency expenses
Facilitators and Participants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) CLRG Director 2) 2 CLRG University Researchers 3) Department of Education Bureau of Learner Support Services School Health Division (BLSS-SHD), Health and Wellness Unit 4) 12 Schools (3 NCR, 3 Luzon, 3 Visayas, 3 Mindanao) across the Philippines.



	<p>locality and developing a comprehensive community-based mental health program within municipalities (WHO, 2017). However, evidence suggests these have not translated into widespread adoption and institutionalization across localities. Similar findings are true of former DepEd bottom-up programs in that though community programs may find high local success, these have not translated into institutional practice changes (Bautista et al., 2010).</p> <p>In summary, community mental health is a problem that needs to be addressed by all sectors. Though local efforts persist in response to the Mental Health Act, a strategy to harmonize programs and strategies has yet to be seen. Ultimately, developing mental health programs and policies that address the local situation is not enough. How these can be sustained long-term and institutionalized must also be addressed.</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To address the issue mentioned above, the Center for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG), backed by over 50 years of expertise in assisting and empowering local government sectors, developing capacity-building programs for LGUs, and translating research into policy solutions, proposes to conduct research reviewing existing mental health initiatives and policies at the school and community/barangay level. CLRGs purpose is to develop an extension program capacitating public school teachers, students, and LGU employees in i) conducting psychological first response, ii) developing community affordances to alleviating mental health issues, (iii) build a database of existing mental health programs in the Philippines; and iv) integrating multi-stakeholder roles within the local legislative process.</p> <p>Though unable to replace the work of licensed professionals, developing the capacity of schools and communities to recognize and provide basic assistance to their fellow citizens and students and providing institutional support and platforms to do so is seen as a cost-effective way of promoting mental health awareness and lessening the severity of mental health effects within localities. Moreover, by designing this extension program to be jointly undertaken for its entire duration, from capacity building up to policy development and implementation, this intervention hopes to serve as a model that can be cascaded in harmonizing mental health programs nationwide.</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conduct a literature review on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) the existing pandemic and post-pandemic (2019-2024) multi-stakeholder capacity development programs and research related to mental health in developing country contexts; ii) community-based mental health first response practices, and iii) integrating community-based proposals in existing institutional affordances (i.e., policies and practices) within developing country contexts in public schools. 2) Conduct key informant interviews (KIIs) and surveys with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Teachers ii) Guidance Counselors iii) Students iv) Nurse v) Barangay Health Workers



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References

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Annex B

Selected Regions and Divisions for the Conduct of Research

The CLRG identified key locations with Local Government Unit (LGU) ordinances regarding mental health and wellbeing promotion. Regional Offices and SDOs are requested to assist CLRG in the selection and/or coordination with schools. Below is the list of target locations for selecting the research sample.

REGION	SDO
National Capital Region (NCR)	Makati City
	Muntinlupa City
	Quezon City
Region II	Isabela
Region III	Tarlac
Region V	Naga City
Region VI	Aklan
Region VII	Mandaue
Region VIII	Leyte
Region X	Cagayan de Oro
Region XI	Davao City
BARMM	Cotabato City