



PAMBANSANG SAMAHAN NG MGA NARS NG PILIPINAS, INC.

(PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION, INC.)

Member, INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES

1663 F.T. Benitez St.,
Malate, Manila 1004
Philippines
Website: www.pna-ph.org

Telephone: (632) 400 4430 / (632) 521 0937 / (632) 536 1888
Telefax: (632) 525 1596
E-mail Address: philippinenursesassociation@yahoo.com.ph

PNA REMAINS FIRM IN ITS STAND STOP EXPLOITATION OF NURSE-VOLUNTEERS!

*Statement of the **Philippine Nurses' Association**
during the Press Conference held in PNA National Office, January 26, 2011*

The unscrupulous practice of some hospitals accepting “nurse-volunteers for a fee” has caught the attention of legislators, hospital administrators and the general public. Varied reactions and opinions are now on the air coming from different perspectives. But amidst all these, the Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) remains firm in its official stand to advocate for **absolute protection** of our fellow nurses who volunteer to provide services for the Filipino people. Accepting volunteers in hospitals is not the issue. **What PNA cannot accept is that there are nurse-volunteers who are asked to pay large sum of money** for the number of months they stay in the hospital as volunteers **doing regular nursing staff functions** 8 hours a day. Saving money from accepting nurse-volunteers instead of hiring regular staff nurses and at the same time gaining profit from the money paid by nurse-volunteers is really an EXPLOITATION, AN INJUSTICE!

The Department of Health’s immediate response of convening an Investigation Team to unmask this exploitative practices by some hospitals must be vigilantly monitored. Let us not wait for more nurses to suffer! True enough that these nurses submitted themselves voluntarily to work in the hospitals even without salaries. But it is politically incorrect to brand them as “willing victims”! The PNA challenge our national government, respected legislators and colleagues in the health profession to address the root causes of this “volunteerism-for-a-fee”: such as massive unemployment and underemployment of nurses, lack of political will to provide legislated salaries and benefits (such as Salary Grade 15 entry level salaries of nurses and full implementation of Magna Carta of Public Health Workers), implementation of closure of non-performing schools of nursing, protection of nurses from illegal recruiters and protection of overseas Filipino nurses.

Nurse-volunteers are registered professional nurses. They have adequately passed a four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing and have undergone clinical practicum in different specialty areas as per approved CHED Memorandum No. 14, series of 2009. These nurse-volunteers are also passers of PRC Nurse Licensure Examinations (NLE). Hence, going through the scheme of volunteerism in the hospital is NOT A REQUIREMENT for them to be hired. And therefore, “volunteerism-for-a-fee” is all the more NOT NECESSARY AT ALL.

Advocating for the protection of the volunteer-nurses will ultimately end into quality, safe health services for the Filipino people. LET THERE BE SYNERGY OF ACTIONS NOW! **What matters most is saving the life of many Filipino people by health providers who are equally protected and respected!**

TERESITA IRIGO-BARCELO, PhD, RN (Sgd)
National President
Mobile Number: 09159111411