



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

No. 2011- 0238

FOR : ALL UNDERSECRETARIES, ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, CENTERS FOR HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT, SERVICES AND SPECIALTY HOSPITALS, CHIEFS OF MEDICAL CENTERS AND HOSPITALS

SUBJECT : Termination of all "Nurse Volunteer Programs", "Volunteer Training Programs for Nurses" and all similar or related programs, in all DOH-retained hospitals

DATE : August 22, 2011

Republic Act 9418 (Volunteer Act of 2007) defines "Volunteerism" as an act involving a wide range of activities, including traditional forms of mutual aid and developmental interventions that provides an enabling and empowering environment both on the part of the beneficiary receiving, and the volunteer rendering the act, undertaken for reasons arising from socio-developmental, business or corporate orientation, commitment or conviction for the attainment of the public good and where monetary and other incentives or reward are not the primary motivating factors. Likewise, it defines a "Volunteer" as an individual or group who for reasons arising from their socio-developmental, business and corporate orientation, commitment or conviction, contribute time, service and resources whether on full-time or part time basis to a just and essential social development cause, mission or endeavor in the belief that their activity is mutually meaningful and beneficial to public interest as well as to themselves.

The current practice of registered nurses "volunteering" in hospitals to gain 'work experience' and/or to obtain a certificate of work experience and for purposes of meeting requirements for employment abroad, is not consistent with the provisions of this law. In addition, many hospitals have implemented "nurse volunteerism" in the guise of "training programs" in order to justify the collection of "training fees", whereby such basic skills training puts no added value to the professional career of the nurses.

Therefore, all DOH hospitals are hereby directed to discontinue all existing programs involving nurses who deliver free services in exchange for work experience/volunteer nurses, volunteer trainings, and all other similar programs. All hospital-based trainings for nurses should follow a definite career progression to be defined and accredited by the DOH and Professional Regulatory Commission-Board of Nursing.

For compliance.

ENRIQUE T. ONA, MD, FPCS, FACS
Secretary of Health