

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Leyte

SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Province of Leyte recognizes health as a fundamental right of every citizen and a pillar of inclusive development. Guided by the 1987 Constitution, the Local Government Code of 1991, and Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care Act, local government units are mandated to ensure accessible, efficient, and equitable delivery of health services to their constituents.

Despite significant progress, the current health system continues to face challenges such as fragmented referral mechanisms, uneven access to medical records, gaps in digital integration, and limited financial resources for sustaining health programs. These challenges have often resulted in delays in treatment, duplication of services, and reduced efficiency in delivering care—issues that have been further highlighted during public health emergencies.

This ordinance addresses persistent gaps in the health system, such as fragmented referrals, lack of interoperability of medical records, and uneven access to services. This seeks to institutionalize a harmonized, integrated, digitalized health system and formalizes the responsibility of municipalities, cities, and barangays in supporting integrated health services across the Province of Leyte. It provides the framework for shared responsibility among the Province of Leyte and its component LGUs to ensure accessible, affordable, continuous, and quality health services for all Leyteños, while strengthening digital health systems, financing mechanisms, and inter-LGU cooperation. The ordinance also emphasizes the adoption of the Quick Medical Record (QMeR) system and other ICT platforms to ensure real-time data sharing, efficient referrals, and secure management of health information in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173).

Furthermore, it provides for the creation of a Special Health Fund (SHF) to pool resources from national government agencies, PhilHealth, local government units, and development partners, ensuring sustainable financing for integrated health services. Capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms are likewise embedded to ensure that the ordinance does not remain purely structural, but instead becomes an operational and transformative framework for health care delivery.

By enacting this ordinance, the Province of Leyte affirms its commitment to the goals of the Universal Health Care Act—promoting a people-centered, efficient, and, technology-enabled health system that advances Leyte’s vision of inclusive and equitable health care. Hence this proposed policy:

AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING THE INTEGRATION OF LOCAL HEALTH SYSTEMS WITHIN THE PROVINCE OF LEYTE INTO A PROVINCE-WIDE HEALTH SYSTEM (PWHS), OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “LEYTE INTEGRATED HEALTH SYSTEM ORDINANCE”

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WHEREAS, Section 11, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development and to prioritize the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, women, and children;

WHEREAS, Section 17 and Section 33 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, provide that LGUs shall discharge devolved health functions and may consolidate or coordinate their efforts and resources for purposes commonly beneficial to them;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11223, otherwise known as the Universal Health Care Act, directs the integration of local health systems into province-wide health systems, and mandates shared responsibility among the DOH, PhilHealth, DILG, and LGUs;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 8792 or the Electronic Commerce Act of 2000 and Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012 recognize the use of secure electronic systems to promote efficiency, accountability, and confidentiality in government transactions, including health data management;

WHEREAS, the Province of Leyte has pioneered digital health innovations such as the Quick Medical Record (QMeR) and other interoperable information systems to support integrated health service delivery;

WHEREAS, the Province of Leyte and its component LGUs have signified their willingness to cooperate, pool resources, and jointly organize the Province-Wide Health System (PWHS), also known as the Health Care Provider Network (HCPN), while respecting LGU autonomy and promoting collaboration;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained, by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the Province of Leyte in session assembled, that:

SECTION 1. TITLE. This Ordinance shall be known as the “**Leyte Integrated Health System Ordinance of 2025.**”

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the Province of Leyte to ensure the delivery of continuous, coordinated, and integrated health services to all its constituents by integrating all local health systems into a Province-Wide Health System (PWHS), in accordance with the Universal Health Care Act and other pertinent laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES. This Ordinance aims to:

1. Establish a Province-Wide Health System (PWHS) that ensures accessible, affordable, and quality health services for all residents;
2. Integrate provincial, city, and municipal health offices, hospitals, health centers, and other LGU-managed health facilities into a functional PWHS;
3. Promote cooperation and collaboration among LGUs in addressing health issues;
4. Strengthen primary care, streamline referral pathways, and rationalize the use of health resources across the province;
5. Institutionalize the use of digital health systems, including interoperable electronic medical records, to improve coordination, efficiency, and accountability.

SECTION 4. SCOPE OF APPLICATION. This Ordinance shall apply to all health offices, facilities, services, human resources, and other operations related to health under the management of the Provincial, City, and Municipal LGUs, private clinics and other private health institutions in Leyte.

SECTION 5. DEFINITION OF TERMS. For purposes of this Ordinance, the following shall be mean as follows:

- a. **Province-Wide Health System (PWHS)** - An integrated local health system where healthcare providers deliver continuous and coordinated health services to individuals and communities in Leyte.
- b. **Health Care Provider Network (HCPN)** - A group of primary to tertiary care providers, whether public, private, or mixed, offering people-centered and comprehensive care in an integrated manner.
- c. **Primary Care Provider Network (PCPN)** - Groups of public, private, or mixed primary care providers serving as the initial and continuing point of contact of clients in the health care delivery system.
- d. **Special Health Fund (SHF)** - A pooled financial resource at the PWHS level intended to finance health services and system operations.
- e. **Quick Medical Record (QMeR)** - The official electronic health information system of the Province of Leyte to support patient records, referrals, and reporting in compliance with data privacy laws.

SECTION 6. GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

- 6.1. The PWHS shall be guided by the principles of universality, equity, quality, efficiency, and accountability.
- 6.2. Integration of local health systems is a shared responsibility between the Provincial Government and its component LGUs.
- 6.3. The PWHS shall strengthen primary care and ensure functional two-way referral systems across facilities.
- 6.4. Digital health systems shall be interoperable, secure, and compliant with national data privacy and ICT policies.
- 6.5. Financing of the PWHS shall be supported through the Special Health Fund, pooled from LGU contributions, PhilHealth payments, DOH grants, and other allowable sources.

SECTION 7. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE.

- 7.1. *Provincial Health Board (PHB)*. The PHB shall serve as the highest policy and oversight body of the PWHS. It shall be chaired by the Provincial Governor, co-chaired by the Provincial Health Officer, and composed of representatives from the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, League of Municipal Mayors, DOH, PhilHealth, private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders.
- 7.2. *Provincial Health Office (PHO)*. The PHO shall serve as the technical and administrative secretariat of the PHB, responsible for network planning, monitoring, and evaluation, and for ensuring compliance with health policies and standards.
- 7.3. *Municipal and City Health Boards*. These Boards shall retain their local functions but align their plans and programs with the PWHS framework.

SECTION 8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Provincial Government. The provincial government of Leyte through the Provincial Health Board shall:

- a. Formulate provincial health policies and plans consistent with national priorities;
- b. Manage and finance provincial and district hospitals;
- c. Consolidate health information through QMeR and submit reports to DOH;
- d. Provide technical supervision, capacity building, and logistics support to LGUs;
- e. Institutionalize the Special Health Fund and ensure equitable allocation of resources.
- f. Act as the technical lead in implementing and monitoring the integrated health system; and,

- g. Oversee LGU compliance with service delivery standards, referral protocols, and data reporting.

Municipal and Component City Governments. All local government units through their Local Health Board under the territorial jurisdiction of the province of Leyte shall:

- a. Formulate local health plans aligned with provincial strategies;
- b. Manage and finance RHUs, BHSs, and LGU-owned hospitals to meet licensing and accreditation standards;
- c. Implement health promotion, regulation, and referral activities;
- d. Ensure proper use of QMeR and submit timely health reports;
- e. Maintain local facilities, roads, and transport support to strengthen referral systems.

SECTION 9. DIGITAL HEALTH SYSTEMS.

- a. The Quick Medical Record (QMeR) and other approved systems shall serve as the official digital health platforms of the PWHS.
- b. All health facilities shall adopt and comply with data entry, reporting, and security protocols.
- c. Data sharing shall comply strictly with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and relevant DOH guidelines.
- d. The Province retains ownership of QMeR but grants LGUs and accredited partners rights of use for service delivery and reporting.

SECTION 10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION. The Provincial Health Board shall conduct annual performance reviews of the PWHS, including financial audits of the SHF, system functionality assessments, and health outcome tracking. Results shall be submitted to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan. A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework shall be developed by the PHO within six (6) months of approval of this Ordinance.

SECTION 11. FUNDING PROVISIONS. A Special Health Fund (SHF) is hereby established at the provincial level, pooled from LGU contributions, PhilHealth, DOH support, and other grants. The SHF shall be managed by the PHB through a dedicated account, subject to existing government auditing rules and regulations.

SECTION 12. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS (IRR). The Provincial Health Board, through the PHO, shall draft the IRR within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Ordinance, in consultation with LGUs and stakeholders.

SECTION 13. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Ordinance is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 14. REPEALING CLAUSE. All ordinances, resolutions, and executive orders inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 15. EFFECTIVITY. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its approval and publication in a newspaper of local circulation.