

[DOH JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2009-0030, December 22, 2009]

**REVISED POLICIES AND GUIDELINES IN THE CONDUCT OF
FOREIGN SURGICAL AND MEDICAL MISSIONS (FSMM) IN THE
COUNTRY**

I. Background/Rationale

Foreign Surgical and Medical Missions (FSMM) are activities where surgical and medical care are provided by local and foreign organizations upon the initiative/requests of various local government units and groups. They are primarily undertaken in underserved areas/communities with the goal of providing assistance to the needy or as a professional humanitarian endeavor. They may also serve the purpose of continuing medical education (CME), professional advancement and as a venue for transfer of technology by the missionaries to their local counterparts.

II. Objectives

This Joint Administrative Order aims to provide policies/guidelines to:

1. Integrate the efforts of various agencies overseeing the conduct of FSMM.
2. Facilitate the issuance of Special Temporary Permit to Practice for missionaries.
3. Ensure proper supervision and monitoring of FSMM in the country.

III. Scope and Coverage

This order shall apply to all government and private institutions, non-governmental organizations, people's organizations and other organizations undertaking or facilitating the conduct of FSMM in the country.

IV. Definition of Terms/Acronyms

1. **Foreign Surgical and Medical Missions (FSMM)** – is a project or an activity in which health care delivery is provided to the poor segments of Filipino society where medicines, ancillary procedures, medical/surgical interventions, and services are given at no cost to the beneficiary. It also employs a team of Filipino/non-Filipino health service providers, who are foreigners but will need to practice their profession in this country.
2. **Local counterpart** – is a Philippine counterpart organization sponsoring a medical mission. It may be a local medical society or a specialty society or a civic organization or a local government unit in coordination with the local component medical society and/or specialty society of the Philippine Medical Association (PMA). In all cases, it must be a juridical entity properly listed and operating under the Corporation

Code of the Philippines.

3. **Local Component Medical Society** – is a Philippine medical component society of the PMA operating in a given geographical area and is affiliated with the PMA.

4. **Missioner** – is someone sent on a foreign mission especially a religious or charitable mission.

5. **Specialty Society** – is an association of Philippine physicians accredited by the PMA as the recognized association of a given specialty in medicine.

6. **DOH** – Department of Health

7. **PRC** – Professional Regulation Commission

8. **DILG** – Department of Interior and Local Government

9. **PMA** – Philippine Medical Association

10. **PNA** – Philippine Nurses Association

11. **PDA** – Philippine Dental Association

12. **BIHC** – Bureau of International Health Cooperation

13. **BHDT** – Bureau of Health Devices and Technology

14. **FDA** – Food and Drug Administration

15. **CHD** – Center for Health Management

16. **CME** – Continuing Medical Education

V. Guiding Principles

The guidelines on the conduct of FSMM were developed based on the following principles:

1. Underserved communities shall be prioritized.
2. The sponsors shall establish linkages and networks with other concerned stakeholders in the community.
3. All medicines, supplies, reagents as well as medical and surgical services shall be provided at no cost to the beneficiaries.
4. Only qualified and competent medical and paramedical health workers shall perform the appropriate medical and surgical procedures.

VI. General Guidelines

1. The Department of Health (DOH) shall be the lead agency in overseeing the implementation of any FSMM in the country.
2. The conduct of any FSMM shall be guided by the following policies and guidelines where applicable:

2.1 DOH Administrative Order Number 2007-0017 dated May 28, 2007 shall be the basis for acceptance and processing of foreign and local donations during emergencies and disaster situation; and

2.2 DOH Administrative Order No. 54-A, s. 2003 dated June 6, 2003 shall be the basis for the processing and clearance of importation through donations during normal situations by the Department of Health.

3. The PMA shall maintain a database containing the valid documents of the foreign physicians given Special Temporary Permit to practice medicine in the country. Only a valid license to practice medicine in their

country of origin will be required for subsequent application for future missions.

4. Under no circumstances shall a foreigner physician and/or health-related professional practice their profession in the Philippines without a Special Temporary Permit from the PRC.

5. The actual supervision/monitoring of the conduct of the mission shall be undertaken by the local government health unit and local component medical society and/or specialty society of the PMA. Additionally, the DOH CHDs shall oversee the conduct of the mission.

VII. Implementing Mechanism

1. A team composed of representatives from DOH, DILG, PRC and PMA shall be organized to ensure the smooth implementation of the provisions of this issuance.

2. All applications for FSMM shall be submitted to the PMA who shall forward the same to the following professional groups copy furnished DOH. (Application forms can be downloaded from the PMA website – www.pma.com.ph)

2.1 PMA – medical doctors

2.2 PDA – dentists

2.3 PNA – nurses

3. Each member of the foreign medical team must submit the following documents in applying for temporary license to practice during the duration of the mission. All documents must be in English or with English translation:

a. valid/current license from country of origin

b. board certification (specialty)

c. curriculum vitae

* (letters a to c must be authenticated by the Philippine Consulate Office in the country of origin)

d. passport sized picture in four copies (taken within one year)

e. Application letter addressed to the President of PMA to contain the following information:

1. type of mission (medical, surgical or both)

2. duration of the mission and inclusive dates

3. names and specialties of the mission team members

4. written consent from the host local government executive (governor/mayor) and/or chief of the health facility where the mission will be conducted.

f. The following are additional requirements if the foreign mission team members intend to bring drugs, and/or medicines, medical supplies and medical equipment to be donated or used during the mission: