



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

20 May 2021

DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

No. 2021 - 0242

FOR: ALL DIRECTORS OF BUREAUS AND REGIONAL OFFICES, BARMM MINISTER OF HEALTH; CHIEFS OF MEDICAL CENTERS, HOSPITALS AND SANITARIA, AND OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Inclusion of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and Varenicline in the Primary Care Formulary

By virtue of Republic Act 11223, otherwise known as the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act, health technology assessment (HTA) shall be institutionalized as a fair and transparent priority-setting mechanism to provide financing and coverage recommendations on health technologies to be funded by the Department of Health and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation.

In relation to the request of Disease Prevention and Control Bureau - Lifestyle-Related Diseases Division (DPCB LRDD) to include **Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) (i.e., nicotine transdermal therapeutic system and nicotine polacrilex), and varenicline** in the Primary Care Formulary. Please be informed that the Secretary of Health approved the final recommendation of the Health Technology Assessment Council (HTAC), to wit:

- NRT and varenicline are listed in the 2019 Philippine National Formulary (PNF) Essential Medicines List with the following approved indications, and pharmaceutical forms and strengths.

Active Ingredient	Pharmaceutical forms and strengths	Approved indications
Nicotine transdermal therapeutic system	Patch: 7 mg , 14 mg and 21 mg patch	Aid to decrease withdrawal symptoms triggered by tobacco cessation (smoking and smokeless tobacco products)
Nicotine polacrilex	Pastille: 1 mg and 2 mg Gum: 1 mg and 2 mg	
Varenicline Oral	0.5 mg and 1 mg tablet	Aid to tobacco cessation treatment

- The Philippine Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) - Diagnosis and Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence 2017 recommends the use of NRT and varenicline for treatment of tobacco use and dependence.



- Administrative Order 2021-0031 or the “*Guidelines on the Implementation of Unified and Standardized Tobacco Cessation Services at All Levels of Care*”, ensure that implementing guidelines are in place at all levels of care.
- Re-evaluation of the above-mentioned health technologies in terms of appropriate funding three (3) years after the implementation.

Kindly disseminate to all concerned officials in your areas of responsibility, so they may be appropriately guided in their procurement activities. All are enjoined to ensure rational procurement, distribution and use of health technologies in all government and private facilities.

Your full cooperation in this endeavor is expected and highly appreciated.

By Authority of the Secretary of Health:



GERARDO V. BAYUGO, MD, MPH, CESO I
Undersecretary of Health
Health Regulation Team

