



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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MEMORANDUM

TO : Regional Directors of the Jail Bureau
Provincial Jail Administrators
Wardens

ATTN : BJMPRO and Jail COVID-19 Task Forces

SUBJECT : **BJMP COVID-19 ADVISORY # 50: PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS (PTB) SCREENING AMIDST COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

DATE : 18 NOV 2020

I. REFERENCES:

1. VI from the Chief, BJMP on November 11, 2020 to allow commitment of PDL, even without chest x-ray result due to COVID-19 pandemic, without entirely compromising PTB screening;
2. BJMP COVID-19 Advisory #2: Provision of Initial Screening Area in Jail Facility dated March 14, 2020; and
3. DOH Department Memorandum 2018-0239 re Provision of Free Chest X-ray Examination to PDL dated May 28, 2018.

II. BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION:

4. Tuberculosis has long been a serious health threat in detention facilities even before the onset of COVID-19. It is known to be a hundred times more infectious in detention facilities than in the community.

5. Chest x-ray is one of the diagnostic tools and a mandatory requirement in TB screening during admission or transfer of a new committal from other Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs). During this pandemic, however, the absence of chest x-ray result in cases where laboratories and hospitals are inaccessible, should not hamper or delay the intake/commitment process. Proper coordination is key for a continued good relation among our agencies.

6. The present health crisis must embolden our health practitioners to be more vigilant in the conduct of medical evaluation simultaneously sustaining the TB Program in Jails. PTB screening during intake procedures must be intensified particularly in the absence of chest x-ray results, as complacency is equally threatening due to uncontrolled and unmanaged PTB which is highly contagious.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

7. The Regional Directors, as well as wardens, are directed to establish seamless coordination with their counterparts in other LEAs such as but not limited to the PNP, NBI, PDEA on the conduct of chest x-ray for PDL who are scheduled for transfer to our jail facilities.

Exhaustive explanation on the significance of chest x-ray should be made and sustained as part of our TB screening program.

8. If chest x-ray cannot be facilitated by the LEAs because of pandemic restrictions, medical assessment which include TB screening should be intensified during commitment process as it is just as highly contagious as COVID-19.


9. Wardens shall accept the PDL into custody, but strictly adhere to the measures recommended in the BJMP COVID-19 Advisory #2 such as designation of pre-facility entry space as Initial Screening Area, wearing of face masks, provision of gloves and hand sanitizers, proper hand washing and regular disinfection of the area after each use by the newly committed PDL.

10. Newly committed PDL should be placed on quarantine for fourteen (14) days in a separate cell, receive orientation on respiratory etiquette, and should be provided with face mask more so if a PDL is suspected to have active pulmonary tuberculosis infection based on TB screening.

11. Jail Nurse/s should refer PDL to BJMP Medical Officer/s or coordinate with the local health unit for support on medical and other strategies on the management of PTB cases and the DOH for possible conduct of chest x-ray at the jail using their mobile diagnostic laboratory.

12. For information and guidance.

BY AUTHORITY OF THE CHIEF, BJMP:


ARTHUR C LORENZO
Jail Chief Superintendent
Director for Health Service
Chairperson,
BJMP National COVID-19 Task Force