



**PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL**  
**P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**PHILIPPINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) SEEKS TO CURB ILLEGAL  
TRAFFICKING OF ORGANS FOR TRANSPLANT**

MANILA – The Philippine Department of Health (DOH) issued Administrative Order No, 2008-0004 dated 3 March 2008 called the “Revised National Policy on Living Non Related Organ Donation and Transplantation and its Implementing Structures” to curb the “potential for abuse and manipulation” of mostly poor organ donors, who are “vulnerable targets for organ sale and brokering”.

There have been instances where Filipinos from poverty-stricken communities have been preyed upon by “brokers” who match individuals with foreign nationals in need of kidney transplants, in exchange for a small percentage of the amount paid by the organ recipient, in “backdoor” illegal organ trafficking operations masquerading as “health / medical tourism” programs.

More than 10,000 Filipinos develop End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) every year. Of these, 50 – 60% are suitable candidates for kidney transplants. But due to the supply of organs, less than 10% (approximately 500) are able to avail of the procedure. However, foreign nationals are able to avail of transplants in the Philippines. In 2007, upwards of 500 transplants were performed in the Philippines with foreign organ recipients; reducing the already limited supply for Filipino nationals who are also in need.

In an effort to curb this Health Secretary Francisco Duque signed the Administrative Order to temporarily ban kidney transplants for foreigners, to give priority to Filipino patients over foreigners in the allocation of locally available kidneys.

The Philippine Consulate advises those in the United States who are considering this procedure to conduct due diligence, to ensure that the system is done in accordance with Philippine rules and regulations, under the guiding principles of the Philippine Organ Donation and Transplantation Program (PODTP), specifically: equity; justice; benevolence; non-maleficence; solidarity; altruism and volunteerism.

For more information on DOH AO No. 2008-0004, please see the website of the Philippine Department of Health: <http://www.doh.gov.ph/files/ao2008-0004.pdf>.