DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR
No. *349* s.2001

TO: ALL UNDERSECRETARIES, ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, REGIONAL/SERVICE/BUREAU PROJECT DIRECTORS, MEDICAL CENTER CHIEFS OF SPECIAL/SPECIALTY HOSPITALS/DANGEROUS DRUGS BOARD, LABORATORY PERSONNEL AND OTHERS CONCERNED.

SUBJECT: Laboratory Containment of Wild Poliovirus

On October 29, 2000, the Western Pacific Region was certified “Polio-Free”. This was reached by not having also cases of poliomyelitis as was reported by Philippines source. The only places where the virus might still exist are the medical and biological laboratories. These laboratories may store specimen from unknown poliomyelitis cases or other materials that may have been unknowingly infected with poliovirus. Thus, the possibility of reintroduction of the wild poliovirus from any of these laboratories into the community poses a formidable public health threat.

The World Health Organization Western Pacific Region has prepared an Action Plan for the Laboratory Containment of Wild Poliovirus to ensure that all potential sources of wild poliovirus in the region are documented and under proper containment. The implementation of this Action Plan is on-going and being carried out by the Laboratory Containment of Wild Poliovirus Task Force with Dr. Fem Julia E. Paladin, National Polio Laboratory, Research Institute for Tropical Medicine, as the designated National Coordinator.

The Task Force is faced with a tremendous task of creating the National Inventory of all laboratories that may contain wild poliovirus infectious materials and other potentially infectious specimens in their possession. In this regard, I hereby enjoin all DOH Offices to designate a focal person in each office to cooperate, collaborate and assist the Task Force in achieving its goal.

For immediate compliance.

Signed [Signature]

Received in the Records [Date]

Section on [Date] 11/9/01

[Signature]

MANUEL M. DAYRIT, MD, MSc.
Secretary of Health
September 20, 2001

The Honorable
MANUEL M. DAYRIT, M.D., M.Sc.
Secretary of Health

Through: Channels

Dear Secretary Dayrit,

Under D.O. 10-E, s. 2000 creating the Laboratory Containment of Wild Poliovirus Task Force, the undersigned has been designated as the national coordinator to carry out the implementation of the activities of Wild Poliovirus Containment. In view of my transfer to the Infectious Disease Center and the deployment of the other members to other DOH agencies, amendment is being made on the said Department Order to allow the activities of Wild Poliovirus containment to continue.

In this regard, I have designated Dr. Fem Julia E. Paladin, Head, Virology Department, Research Institute for Tropical Medicine to assume my duties and responsibilities. Dr. Paladin has been actively involved in all of the activities and cognizant of the job.

Your favorable endorsement will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Truly yours,

GEMILIANO DL. ALIGUI, MD, MPH, PhD
National Coordinator

Cc: Dr. Fem Julia Paladin

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