SUBJECT: Reconstitution of the Task Force for the Laboratory Containment of Poliovirus in Preparation for the Implementation of WHO Global Action Plan III

I. Background/Rationale

Wild poliovirus circulation in the Philippines has long been interrupted, with the last case being reported in 1993. Only two regions and two countries (Pakistan and Afghanistan) remain endemic for wild Poliovirus. High nationwide polio vaccine coverage, a sensitive Acute Flaccid Paralysis Surveillance and a proficient National Polio Laboratory are very crucial in protecting the country's "Polio-Free" status.

As the world is nearing the goal of global polio eradication and the number of cases detected from the community decreases, laboratories that store poliovirus isolates or specimens that may contain the virus will be the remaining sources of the virus. In the post-Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) and post-polio eradication era, most countries will have no need to retain live polioviruses. The risk of reintroduction of poliovirus to the community due to breaches in laboratory storage and security can be eliminated by a thorough nationwide search for and destruction of all WPV and all OPV/Sabin infectious and potentially infectious materials.

The WHO has drafted the 3rd edition of the Global Action Plan (GAP III) to minimize poliovirus facility-associated risk after type-specific eradication of wild polioviruses, sequential cessation of routine OPV use, and introduction of Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) use. This plan aims to reduce worldwide the number of facilities handling and storing poliovirus serving international poliovirus functions of vaccine production, diagnostic, reference, and research. GAP III is implemented in three (3) phases, linked to national and international milestones in polio eradication:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>GAP III</th>
<th>Global Polio Eradication Initiative Milestone</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phase I Preparation for Containment of Polio Type 2</td>
<td>On-going until conditions for global readiness for OPV2 withdrawal have been met.</td>
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<td>Phase II Poliovirus Type 2 Containment Period</td>
<td>Commences as soon as readiness for OPV2 withdrawal is declared and continues until global eradication.</td>
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<td>Phase III Final Poliovirus Containment</td>
<td>Commences when Global Wild poliovirus transmission has not been detected for 3 years and just prior to global certification.</td>
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II. Objectives
1. To reconstitute the members of the National Task Force for the Laboratory Containment of Poliovirus
2. To define roles and responsibilities of all members of the National Task Force for the Laboratory Containment of Poliovirus
3. To identify logistical and support for the operation of the National Task Force for the Laboratory Containment of Poliovirus

III. Reconstitution of National Task Force for Laboratory Containment of Poliovirus

To carry out the activities presented by the GAP III and to translate the Global Action Plan III into a National Action Plan that will prepare the country for post-OPV and post-polio eradication, the Task Force for the Laboratory Containment of Poliovirus is hereby reconstituted as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Chair:</th>
<th>Head, Office for Technical Services Department of Health</th>
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<tr>
<td>Vice Chair/ National Coordinator:</td>
<td>Technical Supervisor, National Polio Laboratory-Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (NPL-RITM)</td>
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<td>Members:</td>
<td>Representative, Department of Virology, RITM</td>
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<td>President, Biorisk Association of the Philippines</td>
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<td>Division Chief, Public Health Surveillance and Information Division Epidemiology Bureau</td>
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<td>Director, Women, Men, Children Health Development Division</td>
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<td>Secretariat:</td>
<td>NPL-RITM</td>
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<td>Advisers:</td>
<td>Chair, National Polio Certification Committee</td>
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<td>Head, Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology University of the Philippines</td>
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<td>Representative, Polio Expert Panel</td>
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<td>Director, Health Facility and Development Bureau</td>
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<td>Director, Knowledge Management and Information Technology Service</td>
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IV. Roles and Responsibilities

The Task Force for the Laboratory Containment of Poliovirus, under the leadership of the Chair, shall be responsible for the oversight of all containment activities in the Philippines:

1. To oversee and coordinate implementation, monitoring and evaluation of containment activities
2. To call for an inter- and intra-agency meeting related to laboratory containment
3. To coordinate with all concerned agencies in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laboratory containment activities
4. To facilitate formation, supervision, and support of regional structures to support laboratory containment activities at sub-national levels
5. To decide on matters pertinent to the implementation of containment activities
6. To facilitate the development and approval of detailed action plan
7. To identify and provide additional resources for the laboratory containment

The Chair shall be supported by a vice chair/national containment coordinator, members and secretariat. The Chair shall convene a meeting annually to evaluate plans and activities.

The Vice-Chair, who is also the National Containment Coordinator is responsible for the following functions, with the assistance of all members:

1. Review and update the National Containment Plan in accordance with GAP III.
2. Identify and coordinate with other key stakeholders (agencies, institutions or facilities, both in the public and private sectors) for the successful implementation of containment activities.
3. Monitor and follow-up each agency, institution or laboratory to ensure that the containment activities are carried out in a timely and effective manner until global eradication is achieved.
4. Review and analyse completed forms submitted by each institution and laboratory maintaining inventory of polioviruses or other potentially infectious materials.
5. Classify materials as infectious, potentially infectious, or non-infectious.
6. Coordinate/conduct laboratory visits and inventory search as needed to facilities at risk of storing poliovirus or potentially infectious materials.
7. Prepare reports for submission to the National Certification Committee for Polio Eradication and the World Health Organization-Western Pacific Regional Office.
8. Update the National Inventory as often as necessary to meet the requirements for global polio certification.
9. Collaborate with the WHO Regional Office on issues related to the implementation of GAP III.
10. Report to and update the Chair on all containment activities.

The National Polio Containment Coordinator is also hereby authorized to call the assistance of various DOH Officials and personnel as necessary to ensure the success of the containment activities.

The Secretariat shall provide technical and administrative support in the form of the following:

1. Laboratory testing of isolates and/or specimens using the standard WHO polio virus isolation algorithm, if deemed necessary.
2. Identify a secure location for storage if ever wild poliovirus is isolated.
3. Propose a manner of disposal for wild polio virus isolates, in concordance with strict biosafety and biosecurity practices.
4. Provide support to the Laboratory Containment members and secretariat, when appropriate.
5. Coordinate with agencies, institutions and laboratories identified in the plan.
6. Assist in the review of completed forms and inventories.
7. Provide administrative support during laboratory visits and inventory search.
8. Provide secretariat support during meetings in terms of preparation of:
   a. Notices of meetings to be distributed one week before the scheduled date together with other pertinent documents.
   b. Meeting Agenda
   c. Attendance and minutes of the meetings.
   d. Consolidated monthly/quarterly/annual narrative accomplishment reports.

Advisers are to be invited in meetings to assist and give advice to the Task Force on the different aspect of Polio Endgame.

V. Logistical and Funding Support for Operations

The DOH Women, Men, Child Health Development Division (formerly Family Health Office) shall allocate funds for the operations and sustainability of the Task Force.

The Task Force shall include in its annual line item budget the amounts necessary for its continued operations. This shall include (1) personnel, (2) the cost of office supplies, laboratory supplies and reagents, (3) holding of meetings, (4) travel and accommodations for containment surveys, laboratory evaluation and monitoring, (5) production and shipment of advocacy, awareness and orientation materials.
Supplemental budgetary requests as needed may also be submitted for funding to the DOH EB and to the DOH Disease Prevention and Control Bureau (DPCB).

All the members of the Task Force are entitled to collect per diem, honoraria, allowable transportation and other operating expenses from their respective sending agencies in the performance of their duties for polio virus containment, subject to existing accounting rules and regulations.

VI. REPEALING CLAUSE

Department Order No. 303-D s 2001 dated October 2, 2001 is hereby rescinded.

VII. EFFECTIVITY

This Order shall take effect immediately.

PAULYN J. ROSELL-UBIAL, MD, MPH, CESO II
Secretary of Health