

REGISTRATION OF ALL HEALTH WORKERS IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

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The Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia has reported that all health professionals in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have to register with the Saudi Council of Health Specialists (SCHS). The SCHS is a quasi-government agency tasked by law to register all medical practitioners in the KSA regardless of nationality and sector of employment (whether public or private). The SCHS hopes to register all health workers by next year.

According to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Onaizah (Central Region Office) in Saudi Arabia, the registration aims to validate the credentials of health workers in the KSA as some of them may not have the qualifications and skills necessary to perform their jobs.

Thus far, the SCHS has registered 80,681 medical practitioners. It has yet to check the credentials of some 2,000 pharmacists, 50,000 nurses, and 50,000 medical technicians. Those who are found to have faked their credentials or have misrepresented their work proficiency face blacklisting in the KSA.

Presently, about 3,200 medical practitioners working in the KSA have been blacklisted after they failed the Saudi accreditation examinations or were found to possess fake credentials. The problem is particularly pronounced among Asians, which comprise 66 percent of all health workers in the KSA. Asians were found to comprise 90 percent of those blacklisted and they include some Filipinos.

As the continued employment of Filipino medical workers depends on their compliance to this new requirement, Filipino health workers and licensed agencies deploying these workers to the Kingdom are advised to ensure the authenticity of their credentials.

For the guidance of all concerned.

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