



Improving the Philippine Health Care System

Challenge

In 1998, the Philippine health care system was at a crossroads with three decades of steady progress beginning to plateau. Medical practices in family planning were lagging. Despite a high awareness and desire for family planning, the Philippines still had one of the fastest growing populations in the world. Also, preventive care ranged from the limited clinics and hospitals provided by the government to expensive private clinics far beyond the reach of most of the population.

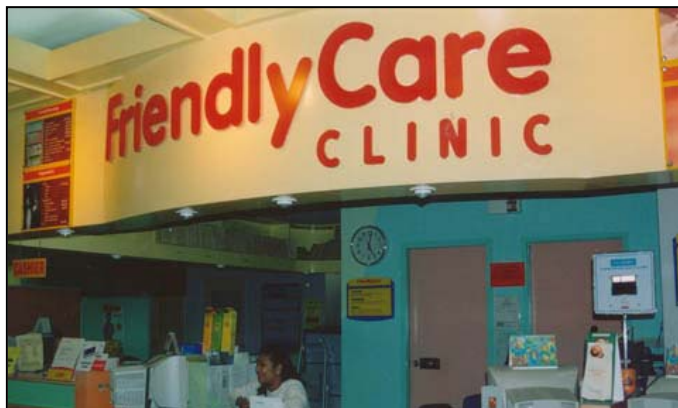


Photo: USAID/Virginia Foley

FriendlyCare Clinic in Cebu provides affordable care in comfortable atmosphere

Results

Focusing on families with modest means, the FriendlyCare network consists of ten clean, cheerful and *friendly* clinics nationwide. In the fourth year of operation, FriendlyCare Foundation, Inc. plans to become financially self-sufficient over time by calling on companies and corporations to become stakeholders in addressing poverty and encouraging social development through partnership.

Almost 80% of the first-time patients are walk-ins. Services are provided for the whole family and include consultation, examination, family planning counseling, reproductive health care services, and dentistry. Private clinics also send specimens to the FriendlyCare laboratory which uses USAID-provided equipment

Initiative

Leaders in the business and government sectors, looking for partners to address poverty alleviation and promote responsible parenthood, founded the FriendlyCare Foundation, Inc. in 1999 with USAID funding.

A non-stock and non-profit organization, FriendlyCare invites greater private-sector participation in the country's family health care and reproductive health care services, providing alternatives to expensive private health facilities and the lower-cost but overcrowded government-run health facilities.

USAID grants supported the establishment of ten FriendlyCare Clinics, and the purchase of equipment, logistics, supplies and salaries. The Philippine Department of Health, Commission on Population, and the National Economic and Development Authority provided guidance on the program's implementation.

