



MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

## NEWS MONITORING

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### Medicine providers' move praised

THE Health department on Thursday welcomed the gesture of the Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association of the Philippines to voluntarily reduce the prices of select drugs and medicines through their proposed "Mas Murang Gamot Program."

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said the drug companies and manufacturers would voluntarily reduce drug prices by as much as 75 percent for 155 medicines across 36 disease categories, both for the public and private sectors.

"We appreciate the gesture [of PHAP] and we have been continuously evaluating the proposal, taking into account the intended goal of the Maximum Drug Retail Price, which is to improve access to affordable medicines for all Filipinos, he said.

But Duque said some things must be taken into consideration.

"First of all, given its voluntary nature, PHAP cannot guarantee price reduction at points of sale, such as drugstores, drug retailers and private hospitals, which comprise at least 90 percent of the total pharmaceutical market," he said.

"We know that the drug prices in these markets are significantly higher compared with government prices."

Of the 155 drugs promised, only 107 will have their prices cut across the pharmaceutical market. **Macon Ramos-Araneta**