



Good News

From disability to ability

First batch of PWRDs in Caraga finishes skills training on meat processing



While it is true that work-related disabilities limit the capacity of a person to earn a living, it is his desire to overcome his physical limitations that will empower him to return to the productive person he once was. Or, maybe, to become even better.

Seven persons with work-related disabilities (PWRDs) in Caraga Region completed the course on Meat Processing for the PWRDs last July 10, 2015 at the Butuan Manpower Training Center in Langihan, Butuan City.

"This training has given me and my family an opportunity to gain extra money for our daily life. It will be very advantageous for me even if this could be a small time business only. I really appreciate ECC's service to the workers with disabilities", said Roberto Miole Jr., one of the beneficiaries of the said training.

Aside from Miole, other PWRDs who were able to complete the meat processing course are Renato

P. Bugwat, Richard P. Estrella, Ruben G. Catig, Leo E. Piquero, Alan L. Madridano and Eleonar P. Brillo.

The skills training is among the benefits extended by the Employees Compensation Commission (ECC) to PWRDs who were enrolled under its Katulong at Gabay sa Manggagawang May Kapansanan, or the KaGabay Program.

"Under the KaGabay Program, PWRDs are provided equal access to livelihood opportunities by helping them set up their own self-managed micro-enterprises or home-based businesses," ECC Executive Director Stella Zipagan-Banawis said.

"Through this skills training, the PWRDs in Caraga were given the opportunity to learn how to make longganisa and tocino at home. This skills training will open doors of opportunities for the PWRDs and their families as this will help them provide for their families," Executive Director Banawis said.

Aside from the skills training, beneficiaries of the program can also avail of rehabilitation services which include provisions of physical and occupational therapy with the intention of restoring the PWRDs functional capacity and work activity.

Safety and health at the workplace

The ECC Executive Director once again reminded everyone to prioritize safety and health at the workplace.

"While there is the Employees' Compensation Program which they can turn to in times of work-related accidents or illnesses, we should always remember that these contingencies are counter-productive. We should never put ourselves at risk. We, at the ECC, will never get tired of saying that prevention will always be better than compensation," she ended.

End

KaGabay Program changes the life of a PWRD in Caraga

A vehicular accident in Lunao, Gingoog City resulted to the permanent and total disability of Kris L. Salga, an office encoder of Fresh Fruits Ingredients Inc. (FFII) in Medina, Misamis Oriental.

In the early morning of February 22, 2012, Salga was leaving for work when a dump truck swept down the public transportation she was riding. This caused the vehicle to fall on a short cliff. After spending two months in a hospital in Cagayan de Oro, she was forced to go home since her family had no more money to pay the hospital bills. The accident left the sole breadwinner of a very poor family with a brain injury, difficulty in speaking, and inability to walk by herself.

On 10 June 2014, the Caraga Regional Extension Unit of the Employees Compensation Commission (ECC) reached out to Salga and offered her free physical therapy, with transportation and meal allowance under the Katulong at Gabay sa Manggagawang May Kapansanan or KaGabay Program.

After a few months, Salga made a lot of progress. Her speech has progressed well; she can walk on her own; and do several household chores. With several PT sessions on the way, her family is hoping for full recovery in no time.

"We could not believe that Kris will be able to walk on her own again. We are so thankful to ECC for all the assistance it has provided. We never thought Kris will be better again." Rosario Salga, mother of Kris said.

"The Katulong at Gabay ng Manggagawang May Kapansanan or KaGabay is a part of the rehabilitation services offered by the ECC for workers with disabilities, as a result of work-connected sickness or injury. Through the KaGabay Program, qualified workers with work-connected disabilities are evaluated and referred to various institutions for appropriate rehabilitation services which includes physical restoration, or the provision of physical and occupational therapy, prosthesis, and assistive devices, and

livelihood or vocational training to help persons with work-related disabilities (PWRDs) achieve functional independence and become economically productive as they enter the mainstream," ECC Executive Director Stella Zipagan-Banawis said.

Road Safety

The ECC chief calls on motorists to be more careful when they are on the road.

"Most accidents are preventable. Driving with caution saves not only the life of the driver and his passengers but also of those persons who might get involved once an accident takes place," Banawis said.

She also added that when a worker figures in a road accident and gets injured, he or she gets robbed of his ability to be productive.

"Although workers or their dependents can expect compensation from the ECC in the event of work-related injury or illness," Banawis said, "we put a bigger emphasis on promoting safety in the workplace as prevention is always better than compensation and rehabilitation. Prevention of workplace accidents and diseases should be of utmost concern as the health and safety of our workers is our primary consideration"

ECC collaborates with Lucena United Doctors Hospital and Medical Center in providing rehabilitation services to PWRDs

The Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC) is collaborating with Lucena United Doctors Hospital and Medical Center (LUDHMC) in providing rehabilitation services to workers who met work-related sickness or injuries under the Katulong at Gabay sa Manggagawang may Kapansanan (KaGabay) Program.

The ECC and LUDHMC recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement to provide rehabilitation services in the form of occupational and/or physical therapy sessions to qualified persons with work-related disabilities (PWRDs).

ECC Executive Director Stella Zipagan-Banawis stated that ECC ensures that the facilities of the hospitals tapped by ECC for collaboration are well-equipped to provide the best reha-

bilitation services for the PWRDs.

"Rehabilitation treatment is essential for the recuperation stage of PWRDs. PWRDs need immediate assistance and proper treatment so that they will be physically independent and become active member of our workforce once again. That is why we have been collaborating with various hospitals in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao," Banawis explained.

As of June 2015, ECC is in partnership with 37 hospitals all over the country. Thru the memorandum of agreement with hospitals nationwide, the assistance and treatment is now accessible to PWRDs without travelling too far

ECC's KaGabay Program aims to empower PWRDs economically by pro-

viding them with free physical or occupationally therapy, rehabilitation appliances such as prostheses, and giving them free entrepreneurial trainings and re-skilling programs.

With all these benefits and services, Banawis however, encourages employers and employees to practice good occupational safety and health by complying with OSH standards to ensure a healthy and safe work environment for employees. On the other hand, employees should also take reasonable care of their own health and safety.

"I would like to emphasize that prevention is better than compensation. The ECC provides benefits for work-related incidents but good practices in OSH provide a better and healthier community," explained Banawis.