

[PROCLAMATION NO. 698, August 19, 2004]

DECLARING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER AS "TRADITIONAL & ALTERNATIVE HEALTH MONTH"

WHEREAS, the Traditional & Alternative Medicine Act (TAMA) OF 1997, R.A. No. 8423 declares that it is the policy of the State to improve the quality and delivery of health care services to the Filipino people through the development of the traditional and alternative health care and its integration into the national health care delivery system;

WHEREAS, the intent of this policy is to promote and be able to provide an array of adorable, accessible and effective traditional and complementary / alternative health care options for our people to choose from;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care (PITAHC), created under R.A. No. 8423 in partnership with other government agencies, non-government organizations, the herbal and natural products and industry, the private sector and practitioners of traditional and complementary/alternative health care modalities, are vigorously pursuing the implementation of this policy;

WHEREAS, since much of medical care in the country is focused on primary health care, the first line of defense, there is a need for our people to adopt a healthy lifestyle and be aware of the existence of traditional and alternative medicine which are effective and affordable for preventing and healing a wide variety of diseases;

WHEREAS, there are about 2,000 medicinal plants in the Philippines and there is a need to accelerate the research and development of these plants for medical use.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, in the interest of accelerating the development of traditional and alternative medicine for the good of our people, do hereby declare the month of November as **"Traditional & Alternative Health Care Month"**. PITAHC and the Department of Health, with the cooperation of participating agencies (government and non-government organizations), shall plan, organize and coordinate the activities for the celebration of the month.

All government departments, agencies, and government-owned and controlled corporations are hereby enjoined to support and participate in the celebration.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Republic of the Philippines to be affixed.

DONE, in the City of Manila this 19th day of August in the year of our Lord, Two