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**FY 2026 Accomplishments Highlight
DPHSS Budget Session**

Hagåtña, Guam — Operational improvements in Medicaid and Public Health training, and organizational efficiencies agency wide are among the FY 2026 accomplishments at the Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) highlighted at a recent legislative budget hearing.

The government's largest executive line agency, with over 400 employees, serves 50,000+ residents a year through various public health, clinical, and social welfare programs.

Agency leadership presented lawmakers with a documented FY 2027 funding request of nearly \$276,276,912 million to meet community needs in public health, social services, and emergency response while optimizing operational performance across the Department.

Key 2026 achievements included: (1) the development of a Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Division of Homelessness Assistance and Poverty Prevention; (2) Medicaid program rebates and cost containment through the implementation of a Pharmacy Benefits Manager system; (3) anticipated opening of the new Guam Public Health Training and Biosafety Level 3 Laboratory; (4) community-centered disaster response interventions following Typhoon Sinlaku; (5) a number of organizational efficiencies and modernization across DPHSS divisions.

"These accomplishments reflect the Department's continued commitment to improving access to services, strengthening public programs, and ensuring that DPHSS is prepared to meet the needs of the people of Guam," said Director Theresa C. Arriola. "From public health infrastructure, seeking accreditation in Public Health to SNAP/Medicaid modernization, and homelessness response, the Department is focused on building stronger systems that serve our community now and into the future."

DPHSS directly serves approximately a third of the island's population every year and has a robust line up of both traditional and innovative programs that are locally administered and rely on a mix of local and federal funding formulas.

The Department's accomplishments reflect a coordinated effort to improve service delivery, increase fiscal responsibility, strengthen emergency readiness, and better support Guam residents across every stage of life.

"DPHSS remains committed to building a stronger, more responsive Department that can meet today's needs while preparing for tomorrow's challenges," said Director Theresa C. Arriola. "The progress shared during the budget hearing reflects the hard work of DPHSS staff, the unwavering support by the Leon Guerrero-Tenorio Administration, the Federal and local partners, and the Department's continued focus on serving the people of Guam."

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Editor's note: Please see attached list of just some of the program achievements.

Strengthening Guam's Response to Homelessness and Poverty

The Division of Homelessness Assistance and Poverty Prevention (DHAPP) Five-Year Strategic Plan establishes a roadmap for improving coordination, expanding access to services, strengthening partnerships, and using data to support more effective decision-making.

DHAPP was transitioned under DPHSS in early 2025 and now serves as the government's lead division for homelessness interventions and poverty prevention services supporting individuals and families experiencing homelessness or severe financial hardship by helping them navigate shelter, food, benefits, health care, housing stability, and other critical services.

The plan reflects a long-term commitment to compassion, coordination, accountability, and stability for Guam's most vulnerable residents.

Generating Medicaid Program Income and Reducing Net Pharmacy Costs

- Guam is now qualifying for millions of dollars in annual Medicaid rebates. An estimated \$2.5 million this year and another \$1.7 million for coverage years dating back to 2024.
- 15% (\$540,000) in annual Medicare Part D savings

This is a first for Guam in the history of its Medicaid program and represents program income that helps to expand financial flexibility within the program.

A Pharmacy Benefits Management program, fully implemented on September 1, 2025, supports centralized pharmacy claims processing, prior authorizations, pharmacy network management, and stronger oversight of prescription drug costs. This initiative also improves access to affordable medications for Medicaid members on and off island and represents a major step in modernizing Medicaid operations, strengthening fiscal accountability, and improving program sustainability.

Advancing Public Health Infrastructure and Laboratory Capacity

The new Guam Public Health Training and Biosafety Level 3 Laboratory in Mangilao is within a few months of opening, with a ribbon cutting planned for July 31, 2026. Once operational, the facility will serve as a local and regional hub for public health laboratory operations and training for laboratory staff from Guam and Micronesia.

Other public health accomplishments include the stand up of a mobile clinic for village outreach, implementation of the Electronic Death Registration System project, regional disease response efforts, communicable disease control initiatives, and continued development of Guam's public health data and surveillance capacity.

Ensuring Continuity of Critical Community Services

DPHSS also highlighted accomplishments across several divisions that provide essential community services to Guam residents.

- The Division of Environmental Health strengthened public protection through inspections, permitting, food handler training, and consumer safety activities, including the issuance of 21,067 health certificates as of April 30, 2026.
- The Division of Children's Wellness continued supporting children and families through child care subsidies, foster care, adoptions, and family reunification services, including support for 3,137 children enrolled in the child care subsidy program.
- The Division of Senior Citizens continued serving Guam's manåmko' through home-delivered meals, senior center support, and other essential aging services, including 240,526 home-delivered meals served as of March 2026.

Improving Day To Day Operations, Systems, and Customer Service

The Division of Public Welfare has improved SNAP application processing timeliness by 36%, increasing from 43% to 79% since January 2025. The division also reduced its backlog of new applications and recertifications by approximately 84%, from 510 to 84 over the past 12 months.

DPHSS reports progress in program integrity, audit readiness, data modernization, major system improvements, and planning in areas including:

- upcoming procurement of a modern Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment system,
- Medicaid claims processing modernization,
- upcoming launch of a new Electronic Health Record (EHR) system in Community Health Centers (CHC's),
- implementation of PrimeRx pharmacy software in CHCs to modernize pharmacy operations, strengthen 340B compliance, and improve medication access.

Responding to Typhoon Sinlaku and Supporting Community Recovery

DPHSS divisions mobilized quickly in response to Typhoon Sinlaku, supporting emergency operations, shelter response, food assistance, medical needs, and continuity of critical services.

Through the Division of Public Welfare, DPHSS issued SNAP Automated Mass Replacement benefits on April 24, 2026, providing eligible SNAP households with 63% of their monthly allotment to rapidly address food loss resulting in approximately \$7 million of additional spending in the local economy. DPW also received federal approval to implement the SNAP Food Loss Affidavit benefit, allowing eligible households to request additional replacement benefits up to the full monthly SNAP allotment.

The Guam Medicaid Program also secured CMS approval for an Emergency Advanced Planning Document, providing \$1.5 million in federal funds, with a required local match of approximately \$385,000, to support Medicaid emergency administrative expenditures. These funds will support continuity-of-operations needs such as generators, computers, and a mobile benefits unit to help sustain Medicaid services during recovery.

Public Health teams extended clinic hours, provided acute care services at shelters, supported immunization outreach, and worked with the American Red Cross to assess medical and social needs of shelter residents. DHAPP also supported shelter coordination for unhoused individuals, conducted street outreach, coordinated transportation with village mayors and partner agencies, distributed food commodities, and assisted with case management and service planning for vulnerable residents.

Additionally, DHAPP supported urgent food commodity distributions through The Emergency Food Assistance Program. These efforts reached 3,040 households and more than 11,060 adults and children. DHAPP assembled 4,000 commodity bags with an estimated total food value of approximately \$120,000 for typhoon-affected households.

These efforts demonstrate DPHSS' ability to coordinate across divisions and community partners to respond to immediate needs while continuing to connect residents to longer-term assistance.

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For additional information, please contact the DPHSS Public Information Officer at julia.n.rivera@dphss.guam.gov. To stay current on DPHSS updates, please visit www.dphss.guam.gov.