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HON. MOHAMED L. MANSARAY PILOTS A SUCCESSFUL PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL

The Bill entitled "The Community Health Practitioners' Act 2017", having successfully gone through the stages of law, has finally been passed into law with some amendments by the Parliament of Sierra Leone on Thursday 11th May 2017.

It was a Private Member's Bill that enjoyed an enviable support from both sides of the aisle, and was piloted by Hon. Mohamed Lamin Mansaray from Koinadugu District, who before his election to Parliament in 2012 was a practicing Community Health Officer.

The Bill is an "Act to establish the Community Health Practitioners' Board for the purpose of regulating all professional community health service providers in the performance of their duties and for other related matters".



Hon. Mohamed Lamin Mansaray

Some of the amendments include the appointment of a Board Chairman should be done by the President on the recommendation of the Minister of Health, subject to the approval of Parliament, that Director be replaced with Chairman, to appeal the Board's decision in High Court within thirty days, and a fine of Le30, 000,000.00 for an employee of the Board that is found culpable of falsification, or a term not exceeding two years, or both fine and imprisonment.

Prior to passage into law, Hon. Mohamed Lamin Mansaray enumerated the successes and challenges of CHOs and described them as "the frontline health workers in every sphere of the primary health sector in the country, that are directly interfacing with the communities at chiefdom through national level, before referrals to the secondary health sector". Having regard for their challenges, he said "the Bill is seeking to address those challenges with the view of motivating CHOs in the execution of their duties, most times operating in hard-to-reach areas without the necessary facilities".

Several Community Health Officers (CHOs) who witnessed the proceedings before and after passage acclaimed the initiative of Government, including Parliament for such a Bill whose primary aim is to regulate and develop the primary health sector in Sierra Leone.

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