Position Statement of the Philippine Dermatological Society on the Use of Intravenous Glutathione for Skin Lightening

The Philippine Dermatological Society (PDS) affirms that evidence supporting the efficacy of intravenous glutathione for skin whitening remains weak and insufficient. We emphasize the following key points:

1. **Lack of Scientific Evidence for Intravenous Glutathione as Skin Lightening**
   There is no strong evidence to support the use of intravenous (IV) glutathione as a skin lightening agent. The Philippine Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has only approved IV glutathione as an adjunctive treatment in cisplatin chemotherapy.[1]

2. **Serious Health Risks Associated with High-Dose Glutathione**
   Reports indicate that high-dose glutathione may cause severe adverse effects, including hepatitis and life-threatening allergic reactions. In addition, there has not been an established "safe" dose or duration of administration of any forms of glutathione.

3. **Proliferation of Fake and Contaminated Products**
   The unregulated use and circulation of counterfeit, adulterated, or contaminated glutathione products—often sold in unlicensed establishments—poses significant health risks. The public is cautioned in buying these products through unverified sellers, online platforms and the like, where regulation is limited, and distribution of fake and adulterated products is rampant.

4. **Administration by Unqualified Individuals**
   The administration of glutathione injections by non-medical professionals further increases the risk of complications and risk of transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and C, when done in non-sterile facilities and by non-medical practitioners.

The PDS fully supports the Philippine FDA's regulatory measures to safeguard public health and patient safety regarding glutathione-containing products.

[1]Food and Drug Administration, 05 July 2019, *FDA Advisory 2019-182, accessed 03 February 2025, <https://www.fda.gov.ph/fda-advisory-no-2019-182-unsafe-use-of-glutathione-as-skin-lightening-agent>.*