

DOH sets information campaign on Dengvaxia

By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

With the resumption of classes, the Department of Health (DOH) is set to scale up its information campaign on dengue and the controversial Dengvaxia vaccine in public schools covered by its vaccination program.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said health officials would go around the schools to check the DOH regional offices' compliance with his directive to conduct massive information campaign.

"We are visiting certain schools in Marikina next week, Pampanga, Cavite and Cebu. We will also do a program visitation to check on the situation there," Duque said in a forum at the Manila Hotel on Friday.

"I will even do surprise inspections to ensure that our regional staff are following our instruction from our central office," he added.

Duque wants to know if the DOH regional offices have followed his order to put up posters in schools to raise awareness on dengue and

Dengvaxia among the students, parents and teachers.

The DOH chief believes that through the posters, the immunization program will be understood in the context of following DOH's 4S campaign against dengue.

The 4S stands for Search and destroy breeding sites of mosquitoes; observe Self-protection measures to avoid mosquito bites; Seek early consultation if there are symptoms; and Say no to indiscriminate fogging as it should be done

only when there are outbreaks of dengue.

The DOH also released education brochures for distribution to the schools.

The DOH has been closely coordinating with the Department of Education and Department of the Interior and Local Government as part of DOH's education campaign and monitoring activities for vaccinated children.

Controversy started after it was reported that Dengvaxia could cause severe dengue if the vaccine is given to people without history of dengue.

Around 837,000 students in public schools in Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Metro Manila and certain cities in Cebu were injected with Dengvaxia under the DOH's immunization program.

The DOH also got initial reports that at least 32,000 children were vaccinated in private clinics and hospitals.

Duque reiterated that the DOH has been "very cooperative" with the investigation being conducted by Congress on DOH's vaccination program.

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* VACCINATION - DENGVAxia