

QC boosts drive vs polio, vaccinates 160K kids

THE Quezon City government, in coordination with the Department of Health (DoH) and its partner agencies, vaccinated 160,000 children as it stepped up its campaign against polio.

The city government aims to vaccinate 274,785 children.

"I thank the 323 teams of health workers from the QC health department, DoH and other agencies in leading this extensive vaccination drives. There is more work to be done to ensure that our children are safe from this contagious virus," Mayor Josefina Belmonte said.

The city's health department vowed to intensify its efforts against polio by continuing its vaccination drive and through information dissemination.

The local government launched the *Sabayang Patak Laban sa Polio* (Synchronized Oral Polio Vaccination) campaign as part of its efforts against the re-emergence of the polio virus.

Belmonte urged parents, guardians, community leaders and religious groups to enlist children to be part of the vaccination drive.

"Oral polio vaccines are free, therefore I appeal to everyone to

have their children vaccinated. It is our responsibility to protect these children and our communities from polio," she said.

But there were reports that some parents refused to have their children vaccinated because they were worried about the side effects of the oral vaccine.

The city health department reiterated that oral polio vaccine is safe.

Belmonte also appealed to families living in gated subdivisions and condominiums to allow doctors in.

"We strongly seek the coopera-

tion of home-owners associations, and building officials in order to ensure that all children under five are vaccinated. Please allow our doctors to implement our city-wide efforts even in private subdivisions and high-rise condos," she said.

The mayor said health workers would visit homes to vaccinate children and that fixed vaccination areas would be set up in villages, malls and bus stations in the city.

The second round of vaccination will be rolled out on November 25 to December 7.

FRANZ LEWIN EMBUDO