

QC awards Seal of Excellence to top 55 private lying-in clinics

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A TOTAL of 55 private lying-in clinics out of 80-plus registered and located in the city were recognized by the Quezon City government, through the **Quezon City Health Department**, with a Seal of Excellence Award for being fully compliant to the standards of the Department of Health (DOH) and the local government requirements for health facilities rendering services for maternal and child health.

The grant of the Seal of Excellence to compliant lying-ins and birthing clinics was implemented by virtue of a city ordinance. It refers to the quality label awarded to those who have achieved all essential maternal, neonatal and child health indicators.

Quezon City Mayor **Joy Belmonte** lauded all the awardees and noted that the Seal of Excellence Award “promotes healthy competition, encourages innovation, fosters a culture of excellence and nurtures collaboration that leads to a win-win situation.” The award has indeed inspired many to level up, from only 23-percent compliance when it was launched in 2016, this year, 63 percent are already compliant.

The mayor posed a challenge during the summit for compliance to reach 100 percent by next year. Once the goal is met, she intends to make the Seal of Excellence as Quezon City’s entry to the Galing Pook Award, which recognizes the best practices of LGUs all over the country. According to Dr. Esperanza Anita Escano-Arias, officer in charge at the Quezon City Health Department, both the 100-percent compliance and Galing Pook qualification are doable as long as the commitment and collaboration of all the parties involved remain strong. But at the end of the day, she said, “Whether we will meet that goal or not is entirely up to the private lying-in clinics, because they will be the ones to implement the standards. They should embrace and own it. We are just here to support them.”

‘Good synergy’ – Unilab

LEADING pharmaceutical and health-care company, Unilab Inc., is the partner of the city government and the clinics to achieve their goals. “We have a good synergy and long-standing partnership with Quezon City in terms of ensuring high quality of health care provided to the residents, particularly the mothers and their children,” said Claire Papa, Unilab’s head for external affairs and social partnerships. “The Seal of Excellence is a joint undertaking of the Quezon City Health Department and Unilab as part of the long-term advocacy on maternal and child health.

Belmonte commended the awardees, as well as the government agencies and partners from the private sector for their commitment in working together so that the city will achieve the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals particularly SDG 3.1 that by 2030, global maternal mortality ratio will be less than 70 per 100,000 live births.

She proudly announced that Quezon City’s ratio is now at 50, among the lowest in LGUs.

“Quezon City established our maternal and neonatal health council to ensure the collaboration of the public and private sectors 10 years ago to prioritize the needs of mothers and their children,” Belmonte said.