

## QC hospital faces possible closure?

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Thousands of Quezon City residents may be deprived of needed medical assistance next year if the Rosario Maclang Bautista General Hospital ceases to operate because of the absence of a functioning electronic medical records (EMR) and e-claims system.

Mayor Joy Belmonte has appealed to the Department of Health (DoH) to allow the city to use its free EMR system, so that the local hospital will be granted a license to operate for 2020.

As early as 2017, the DoH has requested hospitals to have a fully functional EMR from an accredited systems provider in order to be granted a license to operate. The mayor said it was discovered recently that the hospital's information system was awarded during the previous administration to Geodata Solutions Inc., a systems provider whose EMR system is not yet accredited by the DoH, in the amount of P16.295 million.

Geodata's Diana Hospital Information System appeared to be less than 40 percent operational based on evaluation by hospital staff, according to Dr. Richard Joseph Cabotage, director of Rosario Maclang Bautista General Hospital.

This, despite being past the supposed delivery date and having been fully paid since June 2019 through an acceptance letter signed by previous City Administrator Aldrin Cuna.

He informed the mayor that the hospital was already negotiating with the DoH's IT group for the use of its e-claims and EMR programs to hasten the renewal of the hospital's permit to operate.

"This is the only way we can continue with our operations and fulfill our mandate to serve our constituents." Dr. Cabotage told Belmonte in a letter dated 9 December 2019.

When Geodata presented its hospital system last year, it claimed that it was ready for the DoH and its e-claims use and its accreditation was near completion.

But upon the hospital's application for the renewal of its license to operate, Cabotage said they discovered that Geodata was still in the stage of processing its final DoH accreditation.

With the free DoH system performing the same function and already compliant with the department's requirements, the mayor is considering the cancellation of the previously awarded project for failure to deliver and being redundant.

"Funds saved may be reallocated to services that would address the citizens' needs," Belmonte said.

She also ordered an investigation into the agreement with Geodata to determine accountability for its failure to deliver the required system under the deal.

Located in Barangay Batasan Hills, the 100-bed Rosario Maclang Bautista General Hospital was completed this year. It caters to the medical needs of thousands of residents in the city's 2nd district, which includes Batasan Hills, Payatas, Holy Spirit, Bagong Silangan and Commonwealth.

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