

## QC adopts house-to-house swabbing

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Quezon City has adopted various approaches to ramp up testing of its residents such as house-to-house swabbing to minimize the mobility of possible coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) carriers.

The city's Epidemiology Surveillance Unit (ESU) started this week the homebased collection of swabs for those who have come in close contact with COVID-19 patients. It also covers persons who have to undergo confirmatory tests, according to Joseph Juico, assistant secretary to the mayor and testing program coordinator.

"There are those who have symptoms but have yet to be tested. The barangays can call the ESU to lessen foot traffic at testing centers," Juico said in a phone interview.

The ESU has so far collected swabs from 84 people, data released by the city government showed.

The swab samples will be sent to laboratories at the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine and Lung Center of the Philippines for PCR testing, with the results expected in two to three days.

The local government has opened a testing center at the Quezon Memorial Circle to accommodate those identified by barangay health officials as suspected COVID-19 cases. The center collected swabs of more than 180 people in three days. Juico said the facility, located at the QCX Museum, also serves as a one-stop shop for patients as it conducts blood testing and X-ray.

"So that when we bring them to our isolation facility, we can give them the necessary medication pending the results of their COVID-19 tests," he said.

Quezon City also tied up with the Philippine Red Cross, which has donated 1,500 test kits and a laboratory to test swabs collected from city residents.

Swabs are also being collected at three hospitals run by the local government.

Juico said the city government is looking at establishing its own testing facility.

The Department of Health recorded 982 COVID-19 cases in Quezon City with 79 deaths and 72 recoveries.