

QC sets up 6 COVID-19 test centers

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Half a dozen districts of Quezon City are hosts to community-based testing centers for the coronavirus disease in preparation for the anticipated increase in the number of cases of the dreaded virus, local government officials said.

According to Dr. Rolando Cruz of the Quezon City Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (QCESU), testing is key to the local government's campaign of identifying, isolating and treating COVID-19 positive patients, while preventing its spread in the communities.

Cruz allayed worries on the increase in the number of viral infections in the city, stressing this was an indication the local government is on the right path in the fight against COVID-19.

"Testing is like driving with the headlights on, which is way better than driving in the dark. Through it, we can properly isolate and give care to our patients who tested positive," the medical official said.

The Quezon City government recently opened community-based testing centers in Districts 1, 2 and 3.

The District 1 testing center is at the Esteban Abada Elementary School while the Batasan National High School is the site of the testing area for District 2.

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For District 3, the city government assigned the Old Balara Covered Court as a testing site, which began operating on Wednesday.

The three testing centers operate from 8 a.m. up to 3 p.m. and targets 50 tests a day.

Quezon City has its District 4 testing center at the Quezon City Experience or QCX, District 5 at SB Park Novaliches and District 6 at the University of the Philippines-Asian Institute of Tourism along Commonwealth Avenue.

Tests are continuously conducted by city government hospitals as well as by the QCESU.

In partnership with various test laboratories, hospitals and other partners, a total 140 samples are analyzed and tested each day, according to Cruz.

The medical official acknowledged setbacks in terms of turnaround time for test results.

"We recognize the enormous challenges being faced by the national government so we profusely thank them for assisting the local government unit," he said.

However, Joseph Juico, project manager of the community-based tests, said Quezon City is also exploring the establishment of its own polymerase chain reaction laboratory and the beefing up of QCESU's manpower for contact tracing.

Juico said, "Hopefully, we can also enter into partnerships with more laboratories to further increase our testing capacity to 300-500 tests per day.

Quezon City has thus far tested more than 3,000 patients to date and on target to meet the goal of 10,000 patients this month.