

Follow protocols to curb virus spike

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Amid the rise in the number of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) cases in recent days, the **Quezon City (QC) local government** has renewed its call to residents to follow health protocols to help prevent the spread of the virus.

QC officials reminded that the public should be mindful that all are responsible for their health and those around them, particularly their family, friends and loved ones.

“Act responsibly by obeying all health protocols, so we can have a safe and happy Christmas celebration despite the pandemic,” they said,

The LGU also noted the spike in the average number of daily cases, based on the latest report from OCTA Research dated 22 December 2020.

From an average of around 90 cases per day from 9 to 15 December, the number rose to more than 120 cases per day from 16 to 21 December, based on case reports from the Department of Health (DoH).

Dr. Rolly Cruz, City Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit (CESU) head, noted the increase in the city's R_0 , or reproductive number, which indicates how contagious the infectious disease, to 1.54 on 20 December from 1.50 three days earlier. The city started the month with R_0 of 0.92.

From an average of just 0.79 in November, the city's average R_0 this month is 1.13, far from the ideal number of 0.50 set by the World Health Organization (WHO).

When it comes to the positivity rate, Cruz said the city currently had an average of eight percent from 14 to 20 December, up from the six percent that was recorded from 7 to 13 December.

Before this, the city achieved a positivity rate of five percent in three straight weeks from 16 November to 6 December. The WHO recommends a positivity rate of below five percent. Meanwhile, the city conducted an average of 2,197 tests per day from 14 to 20 December, higher than the average of 2,102 the previous week.

Joseph Juico, QC Task Force on Covid-19 head, said the city government has boosted its contact tracing capability to 1:24, meaning it could quickly trace more people who had close interaction with possible or confirmed Covid-19 cases.

Juico stressed the city government is prepared for a spike in cases, but citizens should do their share by taking the necessary safety precautions, especially during the holidays.

It should be noted the city's first Special Concern Area Lockdown occurred after the index case, an employee working in Pasay, contaminated 19 others in a social gathering in Barangay Tandang Sora.