

## OFW with UK variant in QC now negative for the virus

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The 35-year-old COVID-19 patient who was detected with the United Kingdom (UK) variant of the coronavirus in Quezon City has already tested negative for the virus, the local government said on Friday.

His swab test on Feb. 10 yielded negative results.

However, he still has virus-related symptoms, such as cough and runny nose, the local government added.

Dr. Rolly Cruz, head of Quezon City's Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (CESU), said the symptoms the patient currently experiences do not "necessarily" mean that they are due to COVID-19.

"Kaya lang, meron daw syang ubo saka sipon. We don't know yet kung anong cause ng ubo nya (But he said, he still has a cough and we don't know yet what caused it)," Cruz said in a TeleRadyo interview.

**Mayor Joy Belmonte**, in a text message to reporters, said the local government is still "waiting for the final assessment" of its doctors in their HOPE facility before they "can declare him recovered."

### Riverside lockdown mulled

Over 350 close contacts of the UK variant patient, including the Grab driver who transported him from Manila, have already been identified by authorities.

Eight of them, according to Belmonte, are showing symptoms related to COVID-19 and are now under home quarantine.

A total of 105 individuals have also been swabbed, she added.

"However, the results will still come out today. So it's only today that we will know whether these suspects are positive," Belmonte said in a CNN Philippines interview Friday.

"If so and then there's an evidence of clustering [of cases], then I will recommend a lockdown in the area," the mayor added, referring to the "depressed community" of Riverside, Barangay Commonwealth, where the patient was quarantined.

The local government said they already got in touch with the Grab driver who transported the patient from his first quarantine hotel in Sta. Cruz, Manila to an apartment in Quezon City.

Authorities will also trace all his close contacts.

"Hopefully, matapos na natin ang swabbing today (Hopefully we will finish the swabbing today)... Since we have swabbed members of the community, it is a protocol na hindi muna sila dapat lumabas ng bahay (that they don't go outside their homes)," Cruz said.

The UK-variant patient from Liloan, Cebu was traced in Quezon City on Wednesday, Feb. 10.

He reportedly returned to the country from Korea in August 2020. While processing his papers in Manila, he stayed in Parañaque City where he tested positive for COVID-19. He was first quarantined in a hotel in Manila before his manning agency transferred him via Grab to an apartment the company supposedly owned in Barangay Commonwealth. The **Quezon City government** said they had no knowledge about the patient's case until the Department of Health informed them about it.