

QC pilots mall-based vaccination sites

The Philippine Star · 7 May 2021 · 8 · By JANVIC MATEO

The **Quezon City government** is conducting a dry run of four additional mall-based vaccination sites to cater to residents and staff who belong to priority categories.

The new vaccination sites, which prioritized barangay-assisted bookings, were set up in SM City Sta. Mesa, SM Fairview, Robinsons Magnolia and Robinsons Novaliches this week. A similar vaccination site was also established in SM North last month.

Mayor Joy Belmonte said the objective of the initiative is to make the process easier and more accessible for senior citizens and individuals with comorbidities who are not capable of booking a vaccination appointment online.

“This is part of our efforts to make it as easy as possible for our residents to get a shot and be protected against COVID-19,” she said.

Aside from preparing the venue, the malls also provided the medical personnel for the inoculation program.

Business permits and licensing department head Margie Santos said the partnership with malls allows the city government to speed up its inoculation drive against COVID-19 and addresses the lack of available healthcare workers who will conduct the vaccination among residents.

“Our private partners provide us with venue and manpower. In return, we provide them vaccines and supervision in administering these. These partnerships not only help ramp up our vaccination drive but also increases foot traffic in commercial areas that can help businesses recover amid the pandemic,” Santos said.

With more essential workers and priority residents getting their vaccines, Belmonte described the partnership as a “win-win situation” for both the health and economy.

The city government also partnered with academic institutions, including the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila University, for the vaccination program.

It also rolled out a mobile hospital program to directly bring the vaccines to priority residents living in areas far from existing vaccination sites.

Last week, Quezon City also announced its plan to open a drivethrough COVID-19 vaccination site to make the inoculation faster, especially for drivers of public utility vehicles.

The drive-through site will be activated once the city government receives the go-signal for the inoculation of individuals belonging to the A4 priority group, which includes other essential workers such as market vendors, public utility vehicle drivers and frontline personnel in the education sector.