

Belmonte gets first dose of Sinovac

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Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, who had been infected twice with COVID-19, received her first dose of Sinovac vaccine on Sunday.

Belmonte said she was inoculated with the China-made jab at the city's vaccination site at the Ateneo de Manila University.

"I hope that after getting vaccinated, I could encourage more QCitizens to get inoculated too against COVID-19," she said in a statement.

Belmonte said she booked her vaccination appointment through the city's EZConsult website to "observe the process for myself and make suggestions as to how this can be improved."

Belmonte's vaccination came as the government bumped governors, mayors and other local government officials in the vaccination priority list, making them second to medical frontliners and ahead of senior citizens and persons with comorbidities.

"Although I am part of the A1 category, I decided to wait until most of those in the identified priority groups had been vaccinated. After recovering from COVID-19 last month, I did not see the need for me to be vaccinated immediately," Belmonte said.

"Because I tested positive for COVID-19 twice, I know the importance of vaccines to prevent severe symptoms of the virus," she added.

The mayor first contracted the virus last year. She tested positive for the disease again last March.

While noting everyone's right to refuse a particular vaccine brand, Belmonte urged her constituents to get vaccinated.

"Herd immunity cannot be achieved if we all wait for a preferred vaccine brand based on the notion that it is of a higher quality or more prestigious. All the vaccines approved by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) are safe and effective," she said.