QC orphanage denies infected guest caused COVID-19 outbreak

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The Gentle Hands Orphanage in Quezon City denied reports that an asymptomatic visitor caused the COVID-19 outbreak in their facility.

Gentle Hands Inc, the social welfare agency which manages the orphanage, said it had no visitors for the past "540 days of strict quarantine".

"We were quite shocked to find our home positive for COVID," Gentle Hands Inc. said in a statement posted on its Facebook page.

"We are thankful for God's continued grace and wisdom as we navigate this time. Please keep the children and all our staff in your prayers," it added.

The agency, meanwhile, said it is still open to accepting donations, whether food or other supplies.

The Quezon City government reported Thursday that 122 children and staff in the orphanage contracted COVID19.

Of the total number of infected persons, 99 are aged 18 years and below.

According to Quezon City Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit (CESU) head Dr. Rolly Cruz, the orphanage has 163 residents including children and personnel, of which 143 underwent testing for COVID-19.

Cruz said three male staff allegedly went out of the orphanage to get their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine last Aug. 13. Six days later, one of the children developed symptoms.

The remaining individuals who were not swabbed include 14 children aged zero to one-yearold and two children between three and 10 years of age.

As for the 32 staff, the CESU said five are fully vaccinated, 19 are partially vaccinated, while eight are waiting for vaccination schedules.