

QC gets int'l award over COVID response

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The **Quezon City government** yesterday received an award from an international organization over its outstanding response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mayor Joy Belmonte, in behalf of the city government, received the Circle of Excellence Award from the National Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) during the Fast-Track Cities 2022 conference at Real Alcázar Palace in Seville, Spain.

“The IAPAC and the Fast-Track Cities Institute selected Quezon City following a rigorous nomination process and subsequent deliberations, in consultation with the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS,” the city government said in a statement.

Apart from Quezon City, the other recipients of the Circle of Excellence Award were the cities of Amsterdam in the Netherlands, New York, Kingston in Jamaica, Johannesburg in South Africa and Lagos in Nigeria.

The 100% Life, a Ukrainian community-based organization, received the Community Leadership Award for its efforts during the ongoing war in Ukraine, and in helping Ukrainians living with human immunodeficiency virus or HIV.

“We dedicate this award to our healthcare workers and other frontliners who have put their lives on the line to address the needs of QC citizens during the pandemic,” Belmonte said.

“This is a validation of their hard work and the effectiveness of our COVID-19 response, especially in the delivery of basic services to the people,” she added.

Belmonte served as one of the panelists during the Fast-Track Cities 2022 conference, tackling various issues on migrant workers and healthcare.

During the event, the mayor pledged the city government’s commitment to the “Sevilla Declaration on the Centrality of Communities in Urban HIV, Tuberculosis and Viral Hepatitis Responses.”

The declaration seeks to ensure that communities are at the heart of efforts by the local governments to attain the Sustainable Development Goals associated with ending HIV disease and tuberculosis, as well as eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030.

“The signing seals our commitment to provide a whole-of-city, integrated approach aligned with national and international initiatives to end TB, HIV and viral hepatitis. We will allot more time and resources to help vulnerable sectors to ensure a healthier community,” Belmonte said.