

Belmonte, Herbosa discuss pertussis response

The Philippine Star · 7 Apr 2024 · 8

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte on Thursday met with Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa to discuss the city's response to the outbreak of pertussis or "whooping cough."

Among those discussed were the current data on pertussis cases, as well as the local government's efforts to trace contacts and find cases in different parts of the city.

Belmonte also shared the city's efforts to educate the public about the disease, including the importance of vaccination and ways to prevent its spread.

She earlier declared an outbreak and announced plans to procure vaccines and antibiotics for treatment of cases and provision of prophylaxis to close contacts.

"There is no need to panic. We are making this announcement to make everyone more prepared and remain vigilant," Belmonte said in an earlier statement.

"Our declaration (of an outbreak) is an assurance that we are on top of the situation, and we will do whatever it takes to curb the spread of this disease. We are mobilizing our own resources towards procuring the needed vaccines to keep our children safe, until such time as the DOH (Department of Health) supply arrives," she added.

The DOH, for its part, assured the local government that it is taking appropriate measures to combat pertussis and reiterated to provide support, including in vaccination efforts.

Also in the meeting were DOH Undersecretary Eric Tayag, DOH regional director Rio Magpantay, Quezon City health department officer-in-charge Ramona Asuncion Abarquez, city epidemiologist Rolando Cruz, city health operations officer Dave Vergara and assistant city administrator Rene Grapilon.

From Jan. 1 to March 30, Quezon City recorded 33 pertussis cases, including five deaths.