QC approves gender-inclusive health ordinance

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The Quezon City government has approved a landmark ordinance, which aims to provide accessible health care services for all residents, regardless of their gender identity or expression.

The Comprehensive Gender-Inclusive Health Ordinance provides the city's public health system with a framework to deliver gender-affirming primary care, mental health support and specialized medical services.

"This groundbreaking ordinance reaffirms Quezon City's commitment to a health care system that is truly inclusive," Mayor Joy Belmonte said in a statement over the weekend.

"Every citizen deserves care that recognizes and respects who they are. With this legislation, we are ensuring that no one is left behind in our goal of achieving health equity," Belmonte added.

The ordinance mandates the establishment of a genderinclusive health program, with all public health facilities in Quezon City tasked to offer gender-affirming consultations and counseling, medical guidance as well as referrals to specialized services and mental health support.

All forms of conversion therapy and suppression practices are also prohibited.

According to the city government, the ordinance ensures that gender-affirming care will be integrated into existing programs.

Belmonte said the new policy would remove health care barriers for the city's gender-diverse and transgender residents.

"For far too long, members of the LGBTQIA+ community have faced discrimination and limited access to essential health services. This ordinance is a concrete step in addressing that injustice," she said.