2 more QC areas placed on lockdown

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The Quezon City government has placed two more areas under special concern lockdown due to clustering of COVID-19 cases and possible community transmission of the virus.

Placed under a 14-day lockdown are No. 138-178 Orchids street and No. 153-159 Jasmin street in Barangay Central and No. 43 Salvador street in Barangay Krus na Ligas.

At a press briefing yesterday, Mayor Joy Belmonte said a total of 563 families were affected by the lockdowns in 13 barangays.

Residents will undergo swab tests and will not be allowed to leave their homes, with the city government providing them food and other essential supplies.

Following the surge in COVID-19 cases, Belmonte said they are conducting consultations for the possible imposition of stricter restrictions.

"But we are also trying to be guided by our current data so we can make restrictions in the right places," she said, citing the possibility of longer curfew hours and lowering the allowed capacity in areas where mass gatherings may happen.

According Belmonte, the city cannot afford a total lockdown and sacrifice the livelihood of the people.

"We are not yet at the stage where we should be locking down the entire city. I think we should implement restrictions that will help curtail the spread of the virus," she said.

As of Tuesday, Quezon City registered 2,100 active cases of COVID-19, up from 1,816 on Monday.

Belmonte noted a sharp increase in new virus cases, from a daily average of 75 in the first week of February to 218 this month.

Quezon City ranks 13th out of 17 local government units in Metro Manila at 6.01 percent per 100,000 population, with the most number of COVID-19 cases.

The city government said it strengthened contact tracing and the enforcement of minimum health standards.

Local hospitals accepting COVID-19 patients are also at full capacity, with the COVID-19 ward at the Quezon City General Hospital already at 106.25 percent and the Novaliches District hospital at 118.75 percent.

"We are lucky because there are many COVID-19 referral hospitals in Quezon City," Belmonte said.

Isolation facilities have also started filling up, although Belmonte noted that they have two areas on standby in case the surge in COVID-19 cases continues.

Belmonte added that 12,387 or 38.5 percent of the total healthcare workers in the city have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine.