QC to check closed care facilities

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QUEZON City Mayor Josefina "Joy" Belmonte on Friday ordered an inventory of all closed-setting and long-term care facilities in the city following a reported Covid-19 outbreaks in an orphanage and two religious convents. Belmonte has instructed Dr. Rolando to be more proactive in conducting Cruz, head of the City Epidemiology testing and review of health protocols and Surveillance Unit (CESU), being observed by care facilities to conduct an im- mediate inventory and other high-risk institutions. of all facilities including convents, "The City Architect and the Denursing homes, rehabilitation centers, partment of the Building Official shelters, halfway homes for victims of have also been tapped to recom- mend violence and abuse, hospices, correctional ways in which these facilities facilities, among others. can retrofit their buildings to make

The mayor also directed CESU them more resistant to virus transmission," Belmonte said.

The local chief executive also reminded the public, especially administrators of facilities with confined and closed settings, to observe minimum health protocols at all times and to report immediately to CESU or the barangay (village) as soon as someone within their community is manifesting symptoms so infections can be rapidly curtailed.

"We should not be reactive every time there is an outbreak. We can see now a number of reported outbreaks from these high-risk facilities so let's get ahead of them. We will test them and check if they have strict health protocols in place," Belmonte said.

She said CESU must also determine the vaccination status of individuals staying or work- ing in these facilities and convince the unvaccinated to do so.

First to be placed under special concern lockdown (SCL) was the Religious of the Virgin Mary compound in Cubao where there are 114 Covid-19 cases reported, 50 of them mem- bers of the convent staff and 64 were nuns.

The second convent struck by Covid-19 was the Convent of Holy Spirit in Barangay Im- maculate Conception. Of the positive cases, 13 were nuns and nine were staff including the first index case.

Of the 22 positive cases, 14 were fully vaccinated while the rest have not received any vac- cine shot, according to the CESU chief.

He said the Holy Spirit convent has a population of 90 individuals, of which 46 were swabbed by the city government last September 10 while the rest refused to be tested at that time.

"Per our agreement with them, they will take care of the testing of the remaining 44 indi- viduals and they will send us the results as soon as they come out," Cruz said.

Swab results of the 46 showed that 25 have tested negative while 21 were positive, the CESU report said.

The first index case in the facility was a physical therapist who was reportedly exposed to a nun who had succumbed to the virus early September.

Meanwhile, the majority of the nuns who tested positive are between 80 to 101 years old.

The convent was put under the care of doctors from St. Luke's Medical Center for monitoring while the patient was being cared for by caregivers who were not infected by the virus.
The local government attended to the needs of the facility's residents by sending medicines, vitamins, hygiene kits, masks, alcohol, soap, rice and food packs. The facility was put under SCL on September 15.
A few days before the outbreaks at the two convents, some 122 individuals, 99 of them children (aged 18 and below) and 23 personnel, tested positive for Covid-19 at the Gentle Hands Orphanage in Barangay Bagumbuhay, Project 4.