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## Causes of Deaths in the Philippines (Preliminary): January to December 2020

**Reference Number:** 2021-114

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### ***Explanatory Note***

*Data on causes of death presented in this press release were obtained from the timely and late registered deaths at the Office of the City/Municipal Registrars throughout the country and submitted to the Office of the Civil Registrar General through the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)-Provincial Offices (POs) for encoding. Information presented includes deaths that occurred from January 2020 until December 2020 (cut-off date is as of 26 February 2021 on the processed death certificates). Figures presented herein are still preliminary and may differ in the final counts. Moreover, the number of deaths by cause vary from the number released on 05 March 2021 (with similar cut-off date of 26 February 2021) as causes of death data are processed in a separate system. Deaths of Filipinos abroad are not yet included in the data, only those who died in the country but whose usual residence is abroad.*

*Figures in this release, specifically for deaths due to Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), may differ from the one released by the Department of Health (DOH). Data from PSA are based on the descriptions written on the medical certificate portion of all death certificates received which were certified by the Local Health Officers, while data from the DOH were collected through a surveillance system. Furthermore, COVID-19 deaths in this release refer to both confirmed and probable cases as of registration, whereas figures released by DOH were deaths from confirmed cases only. Coding of causes of death is based on the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems revision 10 (ICD-10), which is governed by the World Health Organization (WHO).*

*In response to the emergence of COVID-19, the WHO issued two new emergency codes to be used when coding causes of death for statistical purposes. Code U07.1 refers to COVID-19-virus identified, which is used when COVID-19 is confirmed by a laboratory test, while*

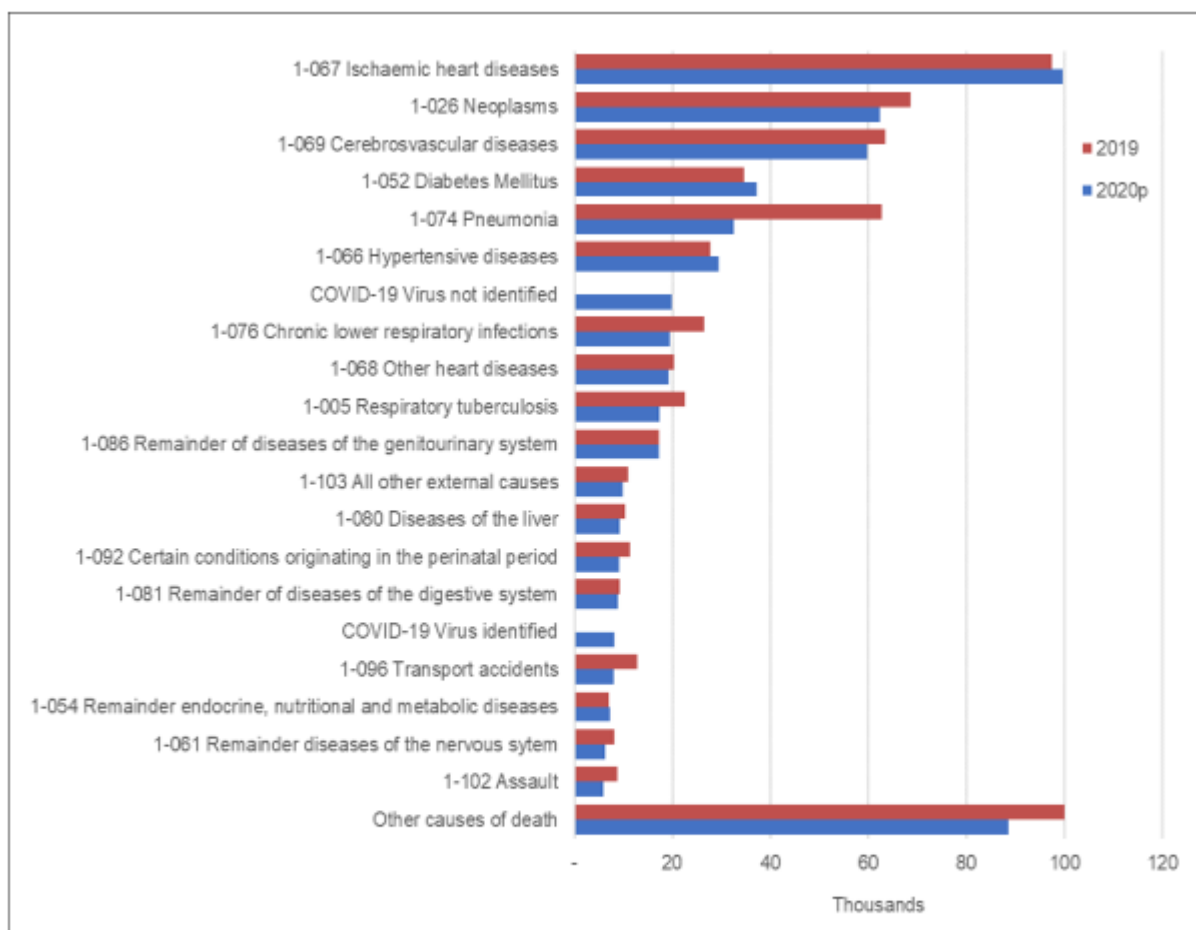
code U07.2 refers to COVID-19-virus not identified, used for suspected or probable cases as well as clinically-epidemiologically diagnosed COVID-19 cases where testing was not completed or inconclusive<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.who.int/classifications/icd/COVID-19-coding-icd10.pdf>

### ***Ischaemic heart diseases, neoplasms, and cerebrovascular diseases are still the three leading causes of death in the Philippines***

The top three causes of death in the country in 2020 were ischaemic heart diseases, neoplasms, and cerebrovascular diseases. Incidentally, these were also the leading causes of death in 2019. In 2020, deaths due to ischaemic heart diseases were the leading cause of death with 99.7 thousand cases or 17.3 percent of the total deaths in the country. This was an increase of about 2.3 percent from the 97.5 thousand deaths or 15.7% of the total deaths in 2019. On the other hand, neoplasms, commonly known as “cancer”, came in second with 62.3 thousand deaths or 10.8 percent. Cerebrovascular diseases were the third leading cause which accounted for 59.7 thousand deaths or 10.4 percent of the total. Neoplasms and cerebrovascular diseases both showed a decrease of -9.3 percent and -6.0 percent, respectively, from the previous year. Deaths due to diabetes mellitus (37.3 thousand or 6.5% share), which ranked fourth in 2020, had an annual increase of 7.8 percent. Meanwhile, deaths due to pneumonia, which recorded 32.6 thousand cases (5.7% share) in 2020, posted a -48.1 percent decrease from 62.7 thousand (10.1% share) in 2019, making it the fifth leading cause of death for the year. (Table 1 and Figure 1)

**Figure 1. All Cause Mortality (Top 20), Philippines:  
January to December, 2019 & 2020<sup>(P)</sup>**



Note: Symptoms, signs, and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified (R00-R99) are not included in the analysis due to the unspecified nature of these causes.

(p) - Preliminary

### *Deaths due to ischaemic heart diseases and diabetes mellitus exceed their average in the last five years*

Among the ten leading causes of death, the number of registered deaths due to ischaemic heart diseases and diabetes mellitus already exceeded their averages in the last five years (2015-2019). Meanwhile, deaths due to pneumonia had the biggest decline, with -24.3 thousand less deaths in 2020 than its average in the past five years. The top three causes of death in 2020 retained their respective ranks in terms of their averages in the last five years. (Table A)

**Table A. Average Number and Rank of Registered Deaths from 2015-2019, Number and Rank of Registered Deaths, by Cause of Death, Philippines: 2020(p)**

(as of 26 February 2021)

Cause of Death	2020 <sup>a</sup>	Rank	Average (2015-2019)	Rank	Difference
Total	575,875		586,630		
1-067 Ischaemic heart diseases	99,680	1	82,547	1	17,133
1-026 Neoplasms	62,289	2	65,503	2	-3,214
1-069 Cerebrovascular diseases	59,736	3	60,106	3	-370
1-052 Diabetes Mellitus	37,265	4	32,991	5	4,274
1-074 Pneumonia	32,574	5	56,830	4	-24,256
1-066 Hypertensive diseases	29,511	6	29,806	6	-295
COVID-19 Virus not identified	19,758	7			19,758
1-076 Chronic lower respiratory infections	19,463	8	24,868	7	-5,405
1-068 Other heart diseases	19,298	9	24,592	8	-5,294
1-005 Respiratory tuberculosis	17,433	10	23,260	9	-5,827
1-086 Remainder of diseases of the genitourinary system	17,241	11	17,356	10	-115
1-103 All other external causes	9,799	12	10,416	14	-617
1-080 Diseases of the liver	9,225	13	9,556	15	-331
1-092 Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	9,161	14	10,740	13	-1,579
1-081 Remainder of diseases of the digestive system	8,990	15	8,810	16	180
COVID-19 Virus identified	8,209	16			8,209
1-096 Transport accidents	8,017	17	11,612	11	-3,595
1-054 Remainder endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	7,206	18	6,603	18	603
1-061 Remainder diseases of the nervous system	6,327	19	6,790	17	-463
1-102 Assault	6,008	20	11,311	12	-5,303
Other Causes of Death	88,685		92,932		6,507

### *Deaths due to transport accidents and assault decrease from the previous year*

Registered deaths attributed to transport accidents decreased by 37.4 percent, from 12.8 thousand (2.1% share) in 2019 to 8.0 thousand (1.4% share) in 2020, pushing its rank from 11th to 17th. Similarly, deaths due to assault decreased by 32.0 percent in 2020 (from 8.8 thousand in 2019 to 6.0 thousand in 2020), moving down its rank from 16th to 20th. (Table 1 and Figure 1)

### **Intentional self-harm increases by about 26 percent**

Deaths due to intentional self-harm recorded a 25.7 percent increase from the previous year, making it the 27th leading cause of death in 2020, from rank 31 in 2019. From the 2,808 registered deaths due to intentional self-harm in 2019, this spiked to 3,529 in 2020.

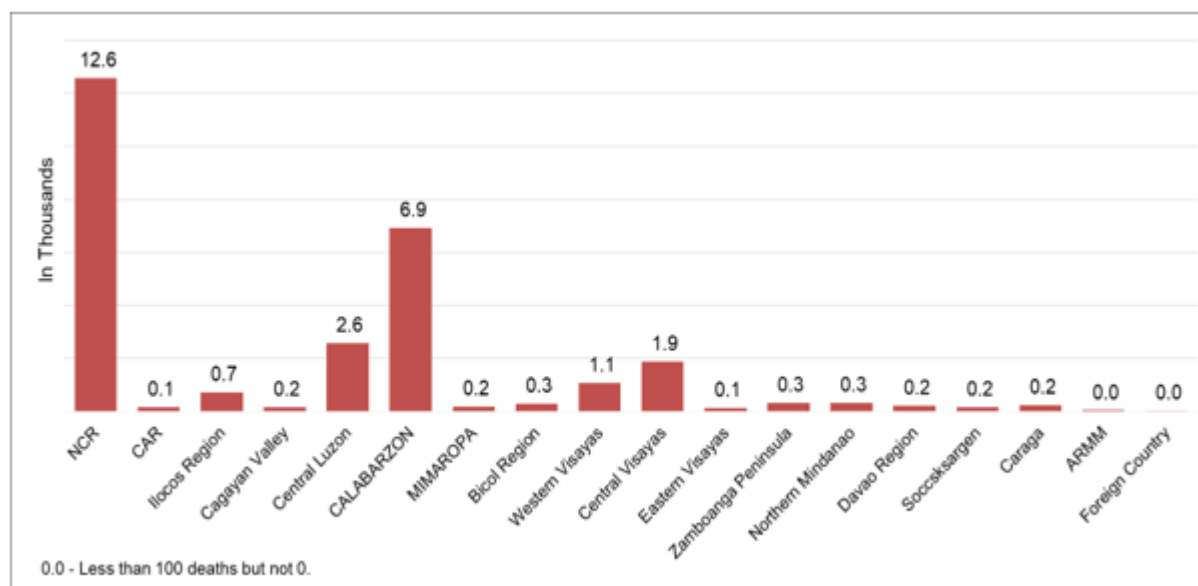
### **Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) ranks among the leading causes of death**

Registered deaths due to COVID-19 accounted for a total of 27,967 deaths or 4.9 percent of the total registered deaths in 2020. By classification, COVID-19 with virus not identified was the seventh leading cause of death in the country with 19.8 thousand cases or 3.4 percent of the total deaths in 2020. Meanwhile, registered deaths due to COVID-19 with virus identified accounted for 8.2 thousand or 1.4 percent of the total deaths in 2020, pushing its rank to number 16. (Table 1 and Figure 1)

### **Five regions report over one thousand COVID-19 deaths**

Among the 17 regions, the National Capital Region (NCR) registered the most number of deaths due to COVID-19 with 12,582 or 45.0 percent of the total COVID-19 deaths. CALABARZON ranked second with 6,914 deaths (24.7% share), while Central Luzon came in third with 2,576 deaths (9.2% share). Other regions that registered over a thousand COVID-19 deaths were Central Visayas and Western Visayas, with 1,863 (6.7% share) and 1,080 (3.9% share) deaths, respectively. On the other hand, ARMM reported the least number of registered COVID-19 deaths with only 37 or 0.1 percent of the total. *(Table 2 and Figure 2)*

**Figure 2. Number of Registered Deaths Due to COVID-19 by Region of Usual Residence, Philippines: 2020(p)**  
(as of 26 February 2021)

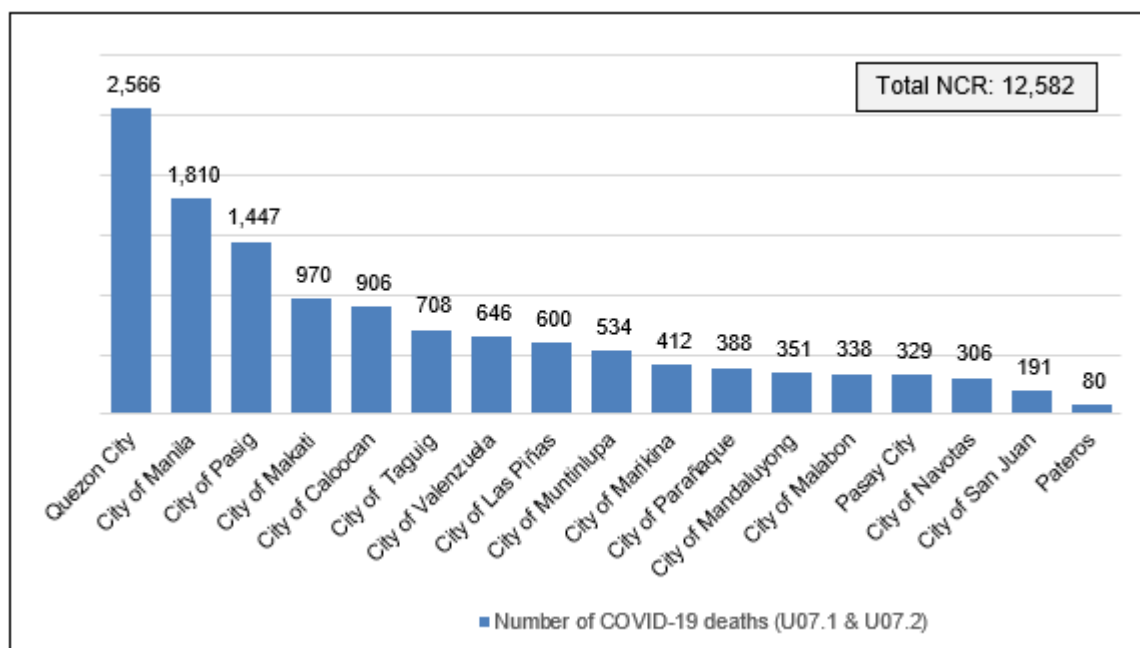


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### Quezon City registers most COVID-19 deaths in NCR

In NCR, most number of deaths due to COVID-19 was reported in Quezon City, with 2,566 deaths or 20.4 percent of the total COVID-19 deaths in the region. This was followed by the City of Manila and City of Pasig with 1,810 (14.4% share) and 1,447 (11.5%) COVID-19 deaths, respectively. *(Table 3 and Figure 3)*

**Figure 3. COVID-19 Deaths in NCR, Jan to Dec 2020(p)**  
(as of 26 Feb 2021)

**DENNIS S. MAPA, Ph.D.**

Undersecretary

National Statistician and Civil Registrar General

**Attachment:** Press Release Average Number of Registered Deaths from 2015-2019 and Number of Registered Deaths by Causes, Philippines: 2015-2020**Tags:**

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