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ECQ did not go to waste, DoH insists

By Red Mendoza April 13, 2021 36

THE Department of Health (DoH) maintained that the imposition of the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) in the so-called NCR Plus will not be wasted.



Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire

Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said the effects of the ECQ will not be felt until 10 to 14 days after it was modified.

Vergeire said during the ECQ, the region was able to control the exponential transmission rate of the Covid-19.

The DoH official was reacting to the statement of the Healthcare Professionals Alliance Against Covid-19 (HPAAC) that the ECQ was “wasted” because the government had “no clear plans and efforts to fix the root causes and the nation continues to suffer because of this.”

“This ECQ may have slowed down the spread, but the numbers are still perilously high. As demoralized health care providers continue to brave on, the odds of their success are overwhelmed by these gaping needs,” the group said.

Vergeire said if the government did not carry out intervening measures, the daily average of Covid-19 cases would have soared past 10,000.

She disagreed with the HPAAC’s position, pointing out that the government implemented measures such as mobilizing local governments and expanded hospital bed capacity, opening more than 900 beds in the National Center for Mental Health for mild and moderate cases.

Health Undersecretary and concurrent treatment czar Leopoldo Vega said the payments of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. to hospitals during the ECQ period allowed them to build up their bed capacity.

Vergeire said other suggestions, such as the interoperability of the official contact tracing app, were implemented but it will take time before their effects are felt.

Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. also called out the HPAAC, saying he is not sure if the group is really speaking out for medical frontliners.

On Monday, the country recorded 11,378 new Covid cases, pushing the active caseload total to 157,451 and the total cases in the country to 876,225.