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27 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to expire in July, says Concepcion

By: **John Eric Mendoza** - Reporter / @JEMendozaINQ INQUIRER.net / 04:47 PM April 02, 2022



Presidential adviser for entrepreneurship Joey Concepcion

MANILA, Philippines — Some 27 million COVID-19 vaccine doses are nearing expiry in the Philippines with the majority of its eligible vaccinated population yet to receive their vaccine booster shots.

Presidential adviser for entrepreneurship Joey Concepcion on Saturday said the unused vaccines may expire in July as he encouraged the government to [administer the vaccines](#).

“Let’s not allow 27 million doses of the COVID vaccine to go to waste... We need to push a little, and we need to do the groundwork now,” Concepcion said in a statement.

“People have become complacent and no longer feel that they need to be boosted.”

For its part, the Department of Health (DOH) said the government is ramping up its effort to utilize unused vaccine doses.

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malls, sea, air, and transportation terminals have been made available for the public,” the DOH said in a statement on Saturday in response to Concepcion’s remarks.

The DOH added that the vaccination drive is now at the point that the majority of the country’s population has already been fully inoculated. ”In light of this, vaccination rate is expected to drop and extra efforts must be made to reach and find the remaining individuals who have yet to receive a single dose,” the DOH explained.

Once a recipient of donated vaccines, the country may be [donating near-expiry shots](#) to other countries. But before this, the government would first request the manufacturers if the shelf life of the doses sent to the country could be extended.

“The government is taking steps in coordinating with vaccine manufacturers on the extension of vaccine shelf life, close to expiring vials may be considered to be donated to neighboring countries for immediate utilization,” the DOH explained.

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Citing government figures, Concepcion said that as of March 22, there are 65,343,446 Filipinos who have been fully vaccinated, but only 11,629,565 additional or booster shots have been administered, accounting for 13 percent of the eligible population.

Data released by the Bureau of the Treasury also showed outstanding debt breaching the P12-trillion mark for the first time in January, due to the massive borrowing for pandemic response, including the purchase of vaccines.

“If we don’t use these vaccines, we will have wasted the Filipino taxpayers’ money.” Concepcion stressed. “It’s money the Philippines can’t afford to waste.”

/MUF

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For more information on COVID-19, call the DOH Hotline: (02) 86517800 local 1149/1150.

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