

Low vaxx rate among pediatric age group

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ILOILO City – With the low coronavirus vaccination rate among the pediatric age group, the Department of Health (DOH) in Western Visayas is recommending to local health offices to tap schools conducting face-to-face classes.

It noted the low vaccination rate especially among the five to 11 years old age group – only at 43.22 percent.

As of May 18, the number of fully vaccinated children under this age group was 186,390, or 17.25% of the regional target of 1,080,597.

During the recent Joint Response and Vaccine Operation Cluster meeting, Dr. Bea Camille Natalaray, Infectious Disease Section head of DOH region 6, noted that the increase in the number of vaccinated children is relatively steady, however, not all children who got their first dose got fully vaccinated.

Also, only Guimaras and Iloilo provinces have utilized at least 50% of the allocated vaccines with 53.12% and 55.98%, respectively.

Meanwhile, Bacolod City recorded the slowest consumption at 24.41%.

With this, the region's health department is recommending to all local health offices and government units to engage and involve the partners from the Department of Education in vaccination activities.

To further support this mechanism, the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) issued Resolution No. 167-D dated May 12, 2022, strongly encouraging public and private educational institutions for basic education to undertake COVID-19 vaccination programs for their respective learners.

According to Natalaray, some 302 schools across the region are already conducting face-to-face classes.

These educational institutions for basic education are enjoined to allow the DOH, in coordination with their respective LGUs to conduct the COVID-19 vaccination program within their premises to provide an opportunity for children to get vaccinated.

Likewise, private educational institutions may, with their consent, undertake vaccination coordination with DOH and the LGUs concerned.

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Aside from this, DOH 6 also enjoins stakeholders to further explore other venues to provide vaccination activities among children such as the house-to-house or mobile vaccination activities as per National Vaccine Operation Center (NVOC) Advisory No. 151, and coordination with private practicing pediatricians and medical clinics, among others. (PIA-6, DOH-6/PN)

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