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Marcos agrees with requiring Filipinos to take Covid-19 booster shot

Published July 6, 2022, 7:36 PM

by [Argyll Cyrus Geducos](#)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. has agreed with the proposal to require Filipinos to get the first booster shot as the country attempts to arrest the spread of Covid-19 Omicron subvariants, the state media reported.



President Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos Jr. discusses the government’s vaccination program with Health officials in Malacañang on July 6, 2022, amid the rising number of Covid-19 cases in different parts of the country. (Photo from Bongbong Marcos Facebook page)

This came after [Marcos called Health officials to Malacañang](#) along with members of the Inter-agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases and PhilHealth to discuss the country’s vaccination program.

Their meeting emerged as the country prepared to resume face-to-face classes fully by November this year.

According to a [report](#) by the Philippine News Agency (PNA) on Wednesday afternoon, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire suggested redefining the term “fully vaccinated” to include the first booster shot aside from completing the initial Covid-19 vaccine doses.

“We are recommending that we can expand that it includes also the booster doses so that we can encourage more of our Filipinos to have their boosters,” she said during the meeting with Marcos.

The PNA report, which was taken down in the evening, added that President Marcos agreed with Vergeire as this would protect Filipinos from the Omicron subvariants, especially the students, in anticipation of their return to schools later this year.

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The report earlier found in this link can no longer be accessed. pna.gov.ph/articles/11783...

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“This is going to be very important, lalo na (especially) in preparation for school in the coming semester,” Marcos said.

“Ang plano ni VP Sara (Vice President Sara Duterte’s plan is) to phase in already complete face-to-face. So sana ma-vaccinate (So I hope we can vaccinate them),” he added.

President Marcos likewise instructed the Department of Health (DOH) to intensify its information campaign about booster shots. He stressed that some Filipinos are still hesitant about getting the vaccine despite the spread of Omicron.

“For Omicron, you have to get the booster because it is slightly different,” he said.

“The vaccines that we are using were designed for Alpha, and even Delta medyo (it is) not as effective,” he claimed.

According to the PNA, Marcos also directed the DOH to increase the administration of booster shots by October in preparation for the planned full implementation of in-person classes in November.

[Marcos has yet to appoint a DOH secretary](#), but Malacañang said the President was aware of the position’s importance in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic.

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