

Capiz Now has 'Dengue Fast Lanes'

Contributed by Imee Distura

ROXAS CITY, Capiz (Feb. 14) -- Five government hospitals in the province have activated their respective dengue fast lane to give immediate and appropriate medical attention to patients who manifest the signs and symptoms of dengue fever.

These hospitals are Roxas Memorial Provincial Hospital here, Sen. Gerardo Roxas Memorial District Hospital in Dao town and the district hospitals in the municipalities of Tapaz, Mambusao and Pontevedra.

"All Rural Health Units (RHUs) also have dengue fast lanes where patients may avail of the Rapid Diagnostic Test to refer dengue – infected individuals with danger signs to hospitals," Provincial Dengue Program coordinator Mark Louie Atanque said.

The antigen for early diagnosis of dengue virus infection is free at the government hospitals and RHUs since early January, he added.

Based on records at the Capiz Epidemiological Surveillance and Response Unit, 254 suspected dengue cases in the province were recorded from Jan. 1 to Feb. 2 this year.

The figure, which includes one death, is a 429 percent increase compared to the statistics of the same period in 2018.

The increase of suspected dengue cases maybe attributed to lack of community involvement, lack of support at the barangay level especially in the enforcement of anti-dengue measures and solid waste management, among others, according to Roxas City Sanitation inspector Mary Cris Lamaniego during a Local Health Board – initiated press conference last week.

The media interaction was aimed to solicit the support of local journalists and broadcasters in a massive information dissemination to mobilize communities particularly on the enhanced 4s strategy to prevent and control dengue.

The strategy consists of search and destroy mosquito breeding places, secure self-protection, seek early consultation and support residual targeted spraying as well as misting.

"Fogging will only be carried out during an outbreak," said City Health Officer Dr. Lory V. Cahilog, adding that city health authorities are going into the barangay level to intensify the campaign against natural and artificial breeding places of mosquitos.

The city has an existing ordinance authored by Sangguniang Panlungsod Committee on Health, Nutrition and Sanitation chairperson Dr. Cesar Yap, Jr. which penalizes "mosquito breeders" due to negligence or lack of concern to clean their respective surroundings which become favorable to mosquito proliferation.