

COVID-19

HEALTH BULLETIN

May 11, 2020

Introduction

ActiveLink helps businesses optimize and implement a sustainable benefits program that empowers employees to do more, give more, and live more.

As the pandemic tempers throughout the world, we initiated a health bulletin to share insights and government updates about COVID-19. Our goal is to make sure you get the information you need to anticipate irregularities brought by the coronavirus outbreak.

We will closely monitor the coronavirus crisis to bring you the latest combined information from different medical research institutions, government agencies, and insurance companies. We're here to make your benefits better. Connect with us at inquiries@benefitsmadebetter.com to see how we can help you.

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COVID-19 Update

AS OF MAY 11, 2020

No. of cases worldwide: 3,976,043¹

No. of deaths: 277,708 (7%)¹

Confirmed cases in the Philippines: 11,086²

State update on coronavirus outbreak

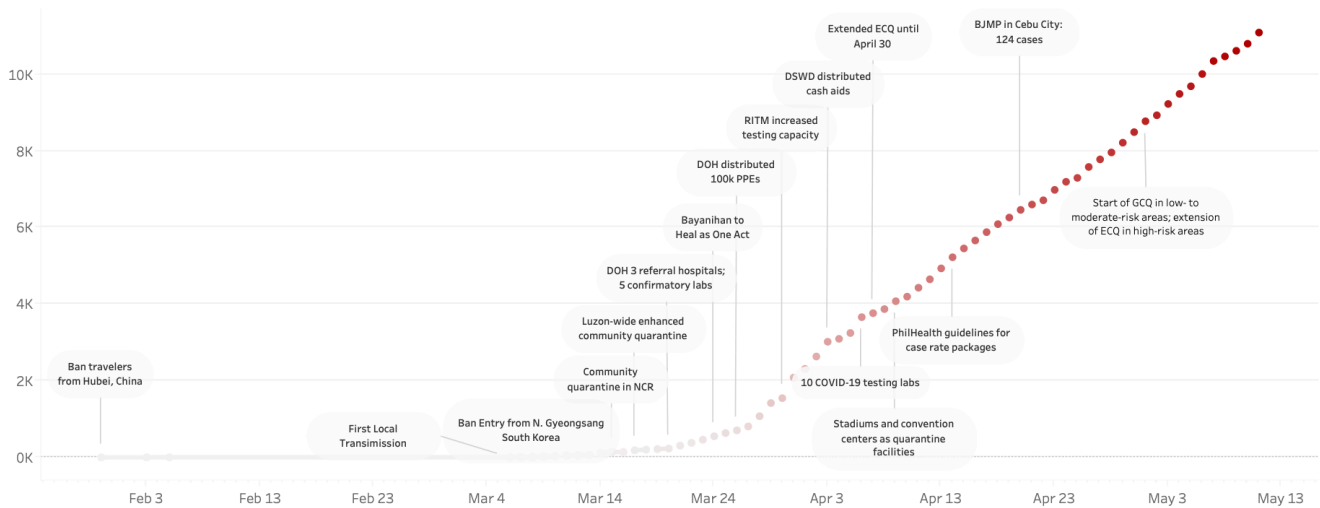


Figure 1. ActiveLink's Business Intelligence tool on Philippine government's response to COVID-19

Last week, the total number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the Philippines surpassed 10,000. The country has recorded a total of 11,086 cases of COVID-19. Of these cases, 1,999 have recovered and 726 have died.

The Department of Health (DOH) also reported that 1,991 (19%) healthcare workers have been infected with COVID-19. A total of 584 healthcare workers have recovered and 34 have died.

PROFESSION	NO. OF INFECTED
Nurse	753
Physician	628
Nursing assistant	127
Media technologist	72
Radiologic technologist	39
Others	372

The pandemic has claimed the lives of healthcare workers treating patients with COVID-19. The World Health Organization (WHO) warned that the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) is endangering healthcare workers worldwide.

Healthcare workers rely on PPE to protect themselves and their patients from getting infected with the virus. The lack of proper protective gear may leave our healthcare workers dangerously ill from the virus.

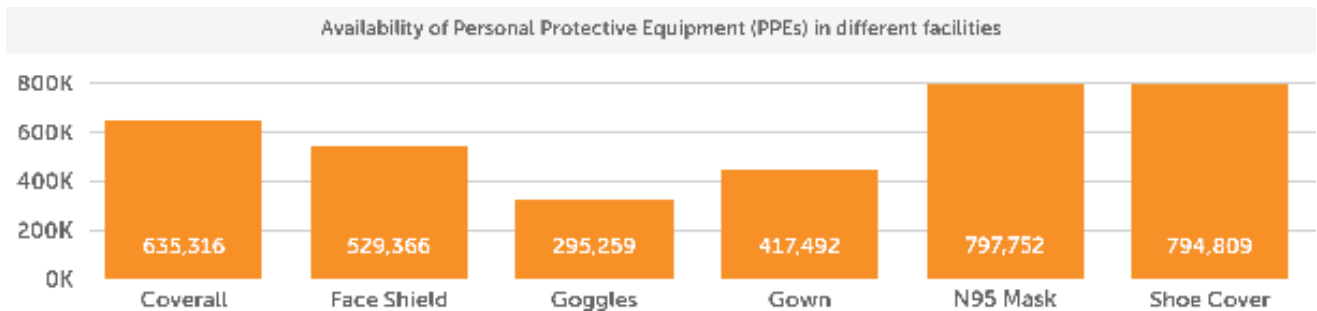


Figure 2. Weekly reported availability of PPEs in different facilities (Accessed May 9, 2020).
Note: 1,773 (96%) of facilities have reported their available PPEs in the DOH data collect app.

Full-on PPE consists of surgical mask, gown, gloves, and goggles or face shield, according to the Philippine Society for Microbiology and Infectious Diseases.³

So far, the DOH has recorded more than 600,000 coveralls, 400,000 gowns, 800,000 N95 masks, and 500,000 available face shields.

Meanwhile, the state health department has reached its testing capacity goal of 8,000 tests per day. This may be attributed to newly certified laboratories:

- Cebu TB Reference Laboratory
- Singapore Diagnostics
- UP-PGH Molecular Laboratory
- De La Salle University–Cavite
- Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital
- Eastern Visayas Medical Center

This brings the total to 26 licensed laboratories for COVID-19 testing.

DOH on new norm in the workplace

As we enter the new normal, the DOH has released the minimum health standard requirements for public places, to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Before entering the office, everyone’s temperatures and symptoms should be checked and recorded. To prevent the possible spread of the virus, everyone must wear face masks, frequently wash or sanitize their hands, observe proper respiratory etiquette, and maintain at least 1 meter distance from others.

Those who have mild symptoms or feel sick should stay at home and consult a doctor by calling telemedicine hotlines. For those with severe symptoms of COVID-19, such as difficulty breathing or altered mental state, the DOH recommends calling the barangay emergency response team or the DOH hotline for proper guidance.

To avoid heat stroke while working or staying at home during quarantine, everyone is advised to:

- close windows and place curtains over the windows;
- turn off and unplug unused appliances;
- hang wet towels inside rooms;
- for air-conditioned rooms, close doors and windows; and
- stay hydrated.

In general, "everyone should maintain a healthy diet, exercise daily for at least 15 minutes, talk regularly with friends and loved ones, and sleep for at least 7–8 hours a day."⁴

Medical Updates

As it becomes clear that a COVID-19 vaccine will not become available in less than a year, a team of international experts have created a research and development roadmap that focuses on finding already-licensed drugs that could be repurposed for COVID-19 treatment.

In a paper accepted for publication on May 7 by the *British Journal of Pharmacology*, the authors propose that this method is a longer-term strategy: by creating a larger list of drug options, we not only guard against the risk of acquired drug resistance, we also arm ourselves against the inevitable future viral threats.⁵

What you should do and why

We need to remember that, at this point, no drug has been confirmed effective for COVID-19 treatment. Even remdesivir – which has made the news lately as one of the most promising drugs for COVID-19 treatment – is described by its manufacturer, Gilead Sciences, as an “investigational drug” that they will try to make more widely available “should it demonstrate the potential to be a safe and effective treatment option based on the results of preliminary clinical trials.”⁶

As for the earlier-hyped hydroxychloroquine, multiple reputable entities – including the US FDA,⁷ the Journal of the American Medical Association,⁷ and the New England Journal of Medicine⁸ – have since given warnings against its use.

It should be clear to all of us by now that for society to overcome this crisis, we cannot just stand back and let the researchers and healthcare workers do their stuff. We need to work together and help in any way we can.

Noa Gafni, Executive Director of the Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation, has two suggestions that companies can implement to help their employees survive this crisis:⁹

- **Encourage mental wellness.** It is already a given that all employees who can work from home should be recommended to continue doing so. But all this new isolation can wreak havoc on some people. Some companies have begun expanding mental health benefits to include a number of therapy sessions. If your company cannot afford this, at least find a way to *ensure* (not just encourage) that your team members remain connected with each other.
- **Provide financial security.** In these uncertain times, it’s a huge help for people to at least be certain where their next meal is coming from. If work from home is not feasible in your company, explore modifying paid leave policies, assisting with applications for government loan, or giving 13th-month pays earlier.

PhilHealth, HMO and group life insurance coverage

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) will shoulder the cost of treatment for patients with COVID-19 based on a case-rate package, including COVID-19 testing.

The state-run insurance agency has also clarified that patients may use their health insurance coverage and mandatory discounts, such as senior citizen and PWD discounts, to help substantially cover the cost of treatment.

As of May 6, the following HMO providers and healthcare administrator confirmed that they will continue to cover availments related to COVID-19, based on the allowable limit of the member's policy:

- Intellicare
- Maxicare
- Avega
- PhilCare
- Cocolife

HMO providers will only cover availments in accredited hospitals. Meanwhile, availments in government-owned hospitals will not be covered, and reimbursement claims are subjected for approval.

These group life insurance providers will also cover loss of life due to COVID-19, as of April 17:

- Manulife Philippines
- Etiqa
- Generali

Please take note that the above provisions are based on the notification sent by HMO, medical insurance and group life insurance providers, which are subject to change without prior notice.

Meanwhile, HMO providers are operating with a skeletal workforce; hence, members may experience delay in contacting their HMO providers' call center hotlines.

1. Maxicare

Customer Care Hotlines: (02) 8582-1900, (02) 7798-7777

Provincial Toll-Free Hotline: 1-800-10-582-1900 (PLDT), 1-800-8-582-1900 (Globe)

Online Member Gateway for LOA issuances: membergateway.maxicare.com.ph

All Maxicare Helpdesks are temporarily closed, while some primary care centers are open from Monday to Sunday, 7 AM to 7 PM.

2. Intellicare

24/7 Call Center Hotline: (02) 7902-3400, (02) 8789-4000

3. PhilCare

Customer Service: (02) 8462-1800

COVID Care Helpline: (02) 8462-1818

4. Etiqa (formerly AsianLife)

Primary care centers are closed until further notice. For urgent medical availments, members may call the following:

Medical Information Center Hotline: (02) 8895-3308

Provincial Toll-Free Hotline: 1-800-10-8895-3308 (PLDT)

Mobile No.: 0917-5208919, 0908-8834901

Email: mic@etiqa.com.ph (for Certification of Coverage and LOA issuances)

5. Cocolife

24/7 Helpline:

Landline: (02) 8812-9090, (02) 8396-9000

Mobile No:

SMS: 0917-622-COCO

Call: Globe: 0917-5360962

Smart: 0908-8947763

Sun: 0922-8928828

Hospital Network

As of April 17, 2020, these hospitals are **at full capacity** and can no longer admit patients who are positive with COVID-19:

1. St. Luke’s Medical Center – BGC and Quezon City (*outpatient COVID-19 testing can be accommodated*)
2. The Medical City
3. Makati Medical Center
4. Asian Hospital Medical Center
5. Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center
6. Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center
7. De Los Santos Medical Center
8. Capitol Medical Center
9. United Doctors Medical Center
10. De La Salle University Medical Center
11. Our Lady of the Pillar Medical Center
12. Medical Center Imus
13. Bautista Hospital
14. De La Salle University - Rodolfo Poblete Memorial Hospital
15. N.L. Villa Memorial Medical Center

Meanwhile, here are some hospitals currently accommodating and handling COVID-19 cases:¹⁰

NCR

PRIVATE HOSPITAL	ADDRESS	CONTACT NO.
Fatima University Medical Center	20 MacArthur Highway, Valenzuela City	(02) 8291-6538
Cardinal Santos Medical Center	10 Wilson, Greenhills West, San Juan City	(02) 8727-0001
University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center	64 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City	(02) 8715-0861
Diliman Doctors Hospital	251 Commonwealth Ave., Matandang Balara, Quezon City	(02) 8883-6900
Manila Doctors Hospital	667 United Nations Ave, Ermita, Manila	(02) 8558-0888
University of Santo Tomas Hospital	España Blvd., Sampaloc, Manila	(02) 8731-3001
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital	46 P. Sanchez Street, Sta. Mesa, Manila	(02) 8716-8001 to 20
Adventist Medical Center – Manila	1975 Donada cor. San Juan St., Pasay City	(02) 8525-9191

San Juan de Dios Education Foundation, Inc. Hospital	Service Rd, 2772 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	(02) 8831-9731 to 36, 02) 8831 5641
Veterans Memorial Medical Center	North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City	(02) 8927-6426
Metropolitan Medical Center	1357 G. Masangkay St. Sta. Cruz, Manila	(02) 8863-2500, (02) 8254-1111
Medical Center Manila (ManilaMed)	850 United Nations Avenue, Ermita, Manila	(02) 8523-8131
St. Clare's Medical Center	1838 Dian St. cor. Boyle St., Makati	(02) 8831-6511
Fe Del Mundo Medical Center	11 Banawe St., Brgy. Doña Josefa, Quezon City	(02) 8712-0845 to 50, (02) 8712-2552 to 53, (02) 8732-7103
FEU – Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation	Regalado Ave. cor. Dahlia St., West Fairview, Quezon City	(02) 8983-8338
New Era General Hospital	Commonwealth Ave, New Era, Quezon City	(02) 8932-7387
Alabang Medical Clinic	297 Montillano St., Alabang, Muntinlupa City	(02) 8842-0680 0917-7123400 0933-851 4427
Las Piñas Doctors Hospital	8009 CAA Rd., Pulanglupa II, Las Piñas	(02) 8825-5236, (02) 8825-5293

Outside NCR

PRIVATE HOSPITAL	ADDRESS	CONTACT NO.
Qualimed - Sta. Rosa Hospital	W, E Nature Ave., Santa Rosa City, Laguna	(049) 303-0000
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Medical Center	Km.78 McArthur Highway Brgy. Saguin, San Fernando, Pampanga	(045) 435-2420
Bataan St. Joseph Hospital and Medical Center	151 Don Manuel Banzon Avenue, City of Balanga, Bataan	(047) 237-0226
Urdaneta Sacred Heart Hospital	15 MacArthur Highway, Urdaneta, Pangasinan	(075) 656-2296
Ace Dumaguete Doctors, Inc.	Claytown Road, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental	(035) 523-5957
Daniel O. Mercado Medical Center	1 Pres. Laurel Highway, Tanauan City, Batangas	(043) 778-1810, (043) 405-1000
Dr. Pablo O Torre Memorial Hospital	BS Aquino Dr, Bacolod, Negros Occidental,	(034) 433-7331
Clinica Antipolo Hospital and Wellness Center	L. Suumulong Memorial Circle., Antipolo City	(02) 8695-9486
Divine Grace Medical Center	Antero Soriano Highway, General Trias, Cavite	(046) 482-6888

Nueva Ecija Doctors Hospital	AH 26, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija	(044) 960-5500
Perpetual Help Medical Center-Binan	National Highway, Sto. Nino, Binan City, Laguna	(049) 531-4475
San Pedro Calungsod Medical Center	Kalayaan Rd. Kawit, Cavite	(046) 484-3112
The Medical City South Luzon	L. United Blvd., Santa Rosa City, Laguna	(049) 544-0120
The Medical City Iloilo	Locsin St. Molo, Iloilo City	(033) 500-1000
Angono Medics Hospital	Rainbow Village 1, Quezon Ave., Brgy. San Isidro, Angono, Rizal	(032) 451-1996
Batangas Health Care Hospital Jesus of Nazareth	Gov. Antonio Rd., Batangas City	(043) 723-4144
Binakayan Hospital and Medical Center	179 Covelandia Rd. Balsahan-Bisita, Kawit, Cavite	(046) 516-0500
Binangonan Lakeview Hospital	193 Manila East Rd., Binangonan, Rizal	(02) 8570-0791
Cavite Medical Center	Manila-Cavite Rd., Dalahican, Cavite City	(046) 431-9988

Please contact your HMO provider or log in to your Benefits Made Better (www.benefitsmadebetter.com) account to know if these facilities are accredited by your HMO provider.

Government Guidelines and Instructions

Guidelines for public transportation

For areas under the general community quarantine, public transportation has resumed operations at reduced capacity.

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) and Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) have released protocols to implement strict safety measures against COVID-19 transmission.¹¹

These comply with the DOH's minimum health standard requirements, such as distancing of passengers, limiting the number of passengers, and restricting motorcycle sharing.¹²

Rail transportation

LRT-1, LRT-2, MRT-3, and PNR will resume operations at limited capacity after the lifting of the enhanced community quarantine in Metro Manila. Upon resume of operations, all rail lines will observe the following:

- One-meter social distancing should be maintained inside trains and stations
- Markings, signages, tarpaulins, and other logistics will be utilized to ensure proper distancing implementation
- The following passengers will not be allowed to enter the train station:
 - Not wearing face masks
 - Showing symptoms of COVID-19 or have a temperature of 37.8°C or higher
 - Aged 60 or above, aged 20 or below, or pregnant.
- Train interiors, station premises, and facilities will be regularly disinfected and sanitized
- Handwashing or disinfection stations will be installed

Road transportation

All public utility vehicles (PUVs), transport terminals, and operators that are allowed to operate must follow 3 essential components in the guidelines – safety, capacity, and scope:

- Wearing of face masks and regular disinfection of public transport facilities and PUV units are mandatory
- Passenger load of busses and jeepneys must not exceed 50% of the vehicle's seating capacity, excluding driver and conductor
- Provincial public buses are not allowed to stop, pick up, or drop off passengers in areas under enhanced community quarantine
- Jeepney operations will be limited, subject to the guidelines to be issued by the LTFRB
- For UV Express and taxis, load must not exceed 2 passengers per row, except in the driver's row, where only 1 passenger is allowed
- Tricycles must only have 1 passenger in the sidecar, and backriding is not allowed

- Private cars and motorcycles will be allowed to operate for the purpose of essential travel
- Private cars will be allowed to have 1 passenger in the front passenger seat, while front-facing seats shall not hold more than 2 passengers per row
- Motorcycles are prohibited from having backriders. The DOTr encourages the use of bicycles, and local government units are also encouraged to create bike lanes or bike-only roads
- The mode of PUV that will operate in each route in GCQ areas will be guided by the number of passengers that will be transported
- In areas where buses are not enough to serve the actual passenger demand or where road characteristics will not permit their operations, PUV Modernization Program (PUVMP)–compliant PUVs are the next priority
- In areas where buses and modern PUVs are unavailable, PUJs and UV Express may operate
- In areas where no other mode of public transportation is available, tricycles may be permitted to operate, as determined by the LTFRB, in coordination with the corresponding local government unit
- LTFRB will issue special permits for PUVs that will resume operations. Permits are free of charge, and application may be submitted through LTFRB offices or online channels

Aviation

These flights are allowed to operate in areas under GCQ:

- Government and military flights
- International flights subject to existing IATF-EID protocols
- Air ambulance and medical supplies
- Flight check and weather mitigation flights
- Maintenance and utility flights
- Emergency flights
- Domestic flights to and from provinces and cities under GCQ, subject to required airport clearances and flight plan approvals
- Other flights approved by IATF-EID

Meanwhile, the following guidelines must be observed in allowed flights:

- Passengers are required to wear face masks or face shields
- Passengers with valid travel documents are allowed to enter airport premises
- Checking of body temperature is mandatory upon entry
- Physical distancing is observed inside airport premises
- Security procedures are carried by “no contact means”, including but not limited to the use of walk through x-ray machines, portable scanners, handheld metal detectors, among others
- The regulation on the maximum allowable hand carried bags/items shall be strictly implemented
- COVID-19 rapid-testing facilities installed in all airports will be managed by qualified healthcare providers
- There should be disinfecting with alcohol and/or soap in terminals. Foot baths will be installed in all passenger and airport personnel’s entry and exit points, including boarding bridges and/or similar areas for passenger embarkation or disembarkation

- All airport facilities and equipment, including lavatories, frequently touched surfaces, wheelchairs, trolleys, countertops, etc., will be regularly disinfected and sanitized
- Posters and other health guidelines will be displayed at strategic places. Alert bulletins will be shown through airport flight information display systems and via public announcements
- Digital tools (websites, mobile applications, on-ground kiosks) and communication, as well as education programs through social media, will be utilized to inform and engage with passengers
- All arriving and departing passengers are required to electronically fill out Health Declaration and Passenger Locator Forms

Maritime

All individuals must fill out and accomplish health protocol forms upon entering the port premises and terminals. The body temperature of passengers must be checked upon entering the terminal and embarkation on ships.

Social distancing measures will be strictly observed inside ports, ships, and other passenger vessels at all times.

All disinfecting facilities, such as foot baths, handwashing stations with alcohol and/or soap, and sanitation tents, will be installed in all entrances of terminals, ports, ships, and other passenger vessels.

Information about hygiene and sanitary practices will be disseminated to passengers through different media platforms and at other strategic locations in ports and terminals.

References:

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