



Face mask supply good for 2 months, says DOH

BY GERARD NAVAL

THE Department of Health (DOH) yesterday said its stockpile of face masks to protect health workers from the Coronavirus Disease-19 (COVID-19) is fast dwindling and would be good only for a maximum of two months, adding it is still waiting for the P2 billion supplemental budget from Congress to enable them to more personal protective equipment (PPE).

"As of now, we still have enough supply of personal protective equipment for our health workers. It's good for another 1 to 2 months," DOH Undersecretary Eric Domingo said. "We can still do with it but we really need to purchase more already."

Referring to the needed supplemental budget, Domingo said: "It is the promise of our leaderships in the House and Senate that they will prioritize it. And, of course, we have the support of the President on that."

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of confirmed COVID19 cases remained at three, including one death.

The first and third confirmed COVID-19 cases – the 38-year-old and 60-year-old Chinese females, respectively, have fully recovered and have been discharged after testing negative for the virus twice.

Domingo's revelation comes on the heels of the Philippine government admitting that it is bracing for the likelihood of the local transmission of the COVID-19.

In an earlier advisory, the DOH appealed to the public to "judiciously use masks."

It noted that use of surgical face masks is only recommended for persons caring for the sick; persons with respiratory infection symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, or have fever; and healthcare and other frontline workers, such as the police and immigration personnel.

The agency said N95 masks must be reserved for healthcare and other frontline workers, who are attending to patients with respiratory infection symptoms (cough, colds) or patients under investigation; those entering rooms of persons under investigation (PUIs) or confirmed COVID-19 patients to provide care or clean/disinfect the environment, or obtain clinical specimens; or those handling clinical specimens, soiled medical supplies or equipment, or come in contact with potentially contaminated environmental surfaces.

As of Thursday, the DOH said the number of PUIs has increased to 441 while the number

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The second confirmed COVID-19 case, a 44-year-old Chinese male, died last Feb. 1.

A total of 252 have been found negative of the virus while the remaining 186 still have pending test results.

A total of 230 negative or pending cases are still being monitored in various hospitals while 208 have been discharged.