



Lower quarantine restriction mulled in MM

The Department of Health (DOH) is considering the possibility of lowering the quarantine restriction in Metro Manila as cases of COVID-19 infections in the region continue to decline.

In a radio interview, DOH epidemiology bureau chief Alethea de Guzman said the department is conducting a study on the current situation and will submit the appropriate recommendation to the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases.

The sub-technical working group on data analytic, she added, is looking into whether Metro Manila will still be placed under general community quarantine or downgraded further.

Aside from the number of cases, the DOH unit is also taking into consideration the health care utilization rate among other indicators before coming up with a

recommendation.

This as Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chairman Benhur Abalos expressed confidence that a majority of the population in Metro Manila could be vaccinated by the end of September, if a sufficient supply of vaccines is assured.

"If the jab numbers are sustained and further increased with a steady supply of vaccines, we can have the majority of Metro Manila's population protected by the end of September this year or hopefully earlier," Abalos said.

As of June 22, he noted, about 3.6 million of 14 million Metro Manila residents have been vaccinated. Of that number, at least 866,958 have already received their full two doses.

Abalos said the region posted an average of 114,000 doses a day. — **Mayen Jaymalin, Ralph Edwin Villanueva**