

# Free maintenance meds for QC'S 300,000 senior citizens

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Expect more people to flock to Quezon City which is offering more benefits to residents, especially the elderly. This year, more than 300,000 senior citizens in the city will receive free maintenance medicine for ailments like hypertension, diabetes, etc. Mayor Joy Belmonte has increased the yearly allocation for medicine and medical supplies to P2.2 billion, up by 400 percent. "I am looking at ways senior citizens can get their medicines either from their barangay health center or receive them in their homes," she said in an interview on dziq Radyo Inquirer 990AM. City employees will have a health maintenance organiza(47.88 or HMO allocation of P90 million this year. Every family can avail themselves of a P5,000 medical assistance for sick members, up from P3,000 last year. Belmonte also hiked to up to P25,000 the city's burial assistance for residents. "This is for everybody, rich or poor, in Quezon City," from interment to burial or cremation, she said. Considering that Belmonte has been in office for only a little over six months, the benefits seem impressive, considering that Quezon City has a population of 2.9 million and a land area of 166 square kilometers. The city is almost twice as populous as Manila (1.8 milder lion), thrice more if com pared to Taguig (804,000) and five times more in relation to Makati (583,000). In terms of land area, it is almost five times larger than Manila (38.55 sq km), four times more than Taguig sq km) and seven times more than Makati (27.38 sq km). Around 45 percent of the city's budget this year has been allocated for social ser vices, indicative of Belmonte's objective to really balance the city's growth with the welfare of residents.

- As of this writing, the city's revenue collection was up by P600 million compared to last year. Congratulations to Mayor Belmonte and her finance team.

-----Complaints have been piling up since Psahelpline.ph stopped processing applications for birth certificates, marriage certificates and other official documents untion the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) on Jan. 4.

I was informed that PSA Undersecretary Claire Dennis Mapa issued a notice of termination to the online application provider on Dec. 20, 2019, citing “numerous complaints” from the public, thus ending their 20year online partnership. In response, the online provider said that the complaints only represented 0.5 percent of the total applications it served in 2019. After the shutdown, it claimed to have gotten more than 5,000 calls and 40,000 website visits demanding the resumption of its services.

Both Mapa and Psahelpline.ph are unable to meet and thresh out their differences in the interest of public service. Why was the termination “abrupt”?

-----The talk of the town is the newest and most modern “sabungan” (cockpit) called Manila Arena. It is operated by United Association of Cockpit Owners and Operators of the Philippines at 2694 New Panaderos Street in Barangay 888, Sta. Ana. The new operator also has “off-site cock fight betting stations” with live broadcast and live streaming capabilities in bars, clubs and restaurants. Is it true it was issued a 15-year franchise by the city council?