

# QC opens shelter for abused women, children and LGBTQ

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QUEZON City Mayor Josefina Belmonte has announced the opening of one of the first local government unit ( LGU)- run shelters for abused women, children and LGBTQ ( lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer).

Belmonte said the launch of Bahay Kanlungan also highlights the city's commemoration of the 18- Day Campaign to End Violence against Women. The facility will serve as a temporary shelter for victim- survivors of gender- based violence and abuse, she said.

Those admitted to the shelter shall be processed at the hospital- based QC Protection Center in Barangay Bahay Toro, and if needed, referred to the shelter for up to 12 weeks, according to the mayor.

"Our protection center provides all forms of assistance to them like medical and legal assistance and counseling but where can we bring them if they feel they are not safe from their homes and that's the purpose of our Bahay Kanlungan," Belmonte said.

With 60 beds dedicated for women, children and LGBTQ, the facility has an activity area, reading hub, and playing room for kids. It also has Wi-Fi and a learning area for children who need to attend online classes and a livelihood training center for women and LGBTQ. Aside from the physical abuse, Belmonte said victims also experience emotional, economic and financial abuse from their perpetrators. She noted that domestic abuse has been frequent this time of the pandemic with the children forced to stay at home.

Belmonte said the city has further strengthened its QC Helpline 122 capabilities with its operators now trained to handle and process concerns of victims.