In this issue, we dig deeper into the implication of claims against vaccines and testing centers. We also provide resources and suggestions on what local media can do.

Two rumors from social media are featured this week. First, a claim said that COVID-19 vaccine has microchip and that a US business magnate is the one developing them. Second, a rumor jokingly said that closing the testing centers is the way to solve the pandemic.

USEFUL CONTACT FOR MEDIA
Visit the official DOH website at http://www.doh.gov.ph/2019-nCoV
If you see suspicious activities, please report them to the PNP.

Amai Pakpak Medical Center–COVID Hotlines
Smart: 09991969488
Globe: 09995563272

The Ministry of Interior and Local Government
Regional Headquarters: 09053524920
Maguindanao: 09177034075
Lanao del Sur: 09177909115
Basilian: 09976643779
Sulu: 09457236318
Tawi Tawi: 09177048927

Philippine National Police Hotlines:
Regional Headquarters: 09053524920
Maguindanao: 09177034075
Lanao del Sur: 09177909115
Basilian: 09976643779
Sulu: 09457236318
Tawi Tawi: 09177048927
Reporting tips

1) **Explain** clearly what is known and what is still unknown about vaccines. Don’t draw your own conclusions for a catchier headline.

2) **Humanize your story**
   - many people in the communities can’t wait to live their “normal” lives again. Vaccine and trials are more than about medical science development but you may also consider reporting on what it would mean for people’s livelihood, education and more. You may also consider telling the story of a trial participant who would be open to publicly talking about their experiences.

3) **Use of Terminologies**
   - if you have to use health and science terminologies related to vaccines, immediately explain it using simple language. Avoid using the terms “guaranteed” or miraculous as nothing in medical science is guaranteed and medicine is not a miracle.

4) **Explain** the vaccine production process and give examples that your audience can relate to. For example, the flu vaccine or other routine vaccines used to immunize people in your country, such as measles or polio.

5) **Ensure** your reporting responds to the questions and concerns your audience has. Develop and support channels that allow them to easily ask more questions. This should be an ongoing cycle of listening, responding and listening again. You may subscribe to Rooted in Trust Rumor bulletin to get updates on what the communities are saying around COVID-19 in BARMM.

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**Vaccines**

The global toll of the COVID-19 pandemic is enormous. As at 27 October 2020 more than one million lives have been lost, more than 43 million people infected with the coronavirus, hundreds of millions out of work, and trillions of dollars of wealth gone – and the numbers keep growing.

While multiple groups of scientists began working on developing vaccines, governments began working on behind-the-scenes deals with pharmaceutical manufacturers to secure access to these vaccines for their own people before any other country.

This is called vaccine nationalism and is of great concern because it can cause supply problems that could leave poorer countries without access to life-saving vaccines.

**TESTING**

Like in any other communicable disease, early detection is key. It leads to quick identification of cases, treatment and contact tracing and will further reduce potential spread. There have been substantial constraints in resources of the Department of Health compounded by other challenges with conducting adequate testing, as the testing capacity is overburdened. If there are more testing centers, public health officials will be able to plan mitigation efforts and manage infection risks.

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**USEFUL READINGS**

Click the titles to go to the link

1. [Coronavirus or COVID? A Glossary to Help Navigate Pandemic Vocabulary](#)
2. [The critical role that Philippine media play in covering COVID-19](#)
3. [Rooted in Trust Mailing List the locals in BARMM – Rumor Bulletins](#)

We welcome your feedback, questions, and suggestions to help local media produce reliable and accurate reporting on COVID-19.

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