



Salig Bangsamoro
(Trust Bangsamoro) is Rooted in Trust Philippines' biweekly rumor bulletin for humanitarians. Rooted in Trust is a global and local humanitarian response run by Internews to fight the spread of rumors on COVID-19. In the Philippines, the focus is on the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

This week's bulletin answers three concerns we have heard from the ground. People questioned the implementation of a stricter quarantine rule in Lanao del Sur while they believe that Metro Manila had returned to normal. In Maguindanao, people said getting tested will tag them as positive from virus and believe that taking home remedies can cure COVID-19. The bulletin provides answers to counter these rumors and to see what people can do next.

RUMOUR #1

Self-medication

People say that paracetamol can treat COVID-19 and that when COVID-19 symptoms are observed, one is not encouraged to get checked or medically diagnosed but just fight it with antibiotics. At the start of quarantine, some people have also shared that egg, garlic, and banana could cure COVID-19.

Feedback from peer-to-peer sharing via word of mouth in Maguindanao

ANSWER

At present, there are no medicines that have been shown to prevent or cure COVID-19. Traditional or home remedies may provide comfort and treat symptoms, but they are not the answer to cure the virus.

The World Health Organization (WHO) does not recommend to self-medicate. Since there is still no cure for COVID-19, relying on what we think we know is too risky and might compromise your health.

There are ongoing clinical trials of both western and traditional medicines and the WHO is coordinating efforts to develop vaccines and medicines to prevent and treat COVID-19. Paracetamol can manage fever which is one of the COVID-19 symptoms, but it does not treat the infection.

Foods like egg, garlic and banana will not prevent you from catching the virus. Home remedies for COVID-19 are not advised and might even worsen your condition. If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, call a medical expert by phone first if possible and give information on your pre-existing health condition. Follow the instructions of the medical expert and monitor your symptoms regularly.

RUMOUR #2

Stigma on Testing

A lot of people do not want to get rapid test or swab test as they develop a perception that getting checked for COVID-19 tells that a person is positive for COVID-19.

Feedback from peer-to-peer sharing via word of mouth in Maguindanao

ANSWER

Testing is caring. When you decide to get tested, you choose to protect not just yourself but also your family and the entire community. The World Health Organization reminds the public that the virus does not discriminate, so neither should we.

Testing for COVID-19 helps protect especially the young and the elderly. It is the only way to confirm if you or your loved one has COVID-19. Getting tested will not put your personal health information at-risk, personal identifiers and health status will only be available and shared among health care providers.

To date, Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) is still considered as the gold standard for the detection of COVID-19. This is usually done through collecting swab samples from the nose or the throat. It is an important tool as it:

- Helps control the spread of the virus
- Detect and isolate people who have COVID-19
- Ease up the contact tracing process

RUMOUR #3

Metro Manila is back to normal; Lanao del Sur is under stricter quarantine status as people still believe in COVID-19

"In Manila, their local government has let their people to go back to normal... surprisingly, our province Lanao del Sur is still getting stricter because they still believe in COVID-19, even if the pandemic is now over."
(Male, 26-35 years old)

This Facebook post garnered 755 reaction, 181 comments, 214 shares in span of four days from October 3 to October 6. The post was now deleted but given the large engagement, the rumor has the potential to be passed on to the community.

ANSWER

Metro Manila is not back to normal. It has been under general community quarantine (GCQ) since June 1 then returned to a two-week stricter quarantine in first half of August to help the medical frontliners and facilities cope with the rising cases.

Under the GCQ status, few public transportations can operate, most industries are permitted to open but curfews, social distancing, and wearing of both face shields and masks in public are still in effect to this day. Lanao del Sur's stricter quarantine until October 31 has a reason.

It was done to save lives and not to restrict lives. BARMM alone has only 23 hospitals responding to COVID-19 patients unlike the 161 hospitals in Metro Manila. With the rising cases, hospitals can only accommodate based on its capacity.

By overloading the hospitals healthcare workers are more likely to experience fatigue as they work around the clock, putting them in more serious risk to getting infected. The stricter measures will help to contain the spread of COVID-19.



**SAVE YOUR LOVED ONES. GET TESTED.
DON'T SELF MEDICATE. CONSULT A MEDICAL EXPERT.**

There is nothing wrong with getting treated for COVID-19, you not only help your community fight the spread of the virus, but you also protect your loved ones. If you or your loved one is experiencing any flu-like symptoms and needs COVID-19 testing, please contact anyone from your Barangay Health Emergency Response Teams (BHERTS) or call the following:



BANGSAMORO EMERGENCY HOTLINE NUMBERS

Globe: 09663018777
Smart: 09363395221



COTABATO SANITARIUM

064 429-0082



Amai Pakpak Medical Center Teleconsult:

Smart: 09991909488
Globe: 09955632722
Internal Medicine: 0927 480 8255
Pediatrics: 0927 382 2382
Ob-Gyne: 0927 480 7019
Surgery: 0961 418 4618
or 0967 315 1891

Testing is caring.

