6-month dengue death toll: 63 in 3 regions

At least 63 fatalities were recorded from dengue in Cagayan Valley, Bicol and Zamboanga Peninsula in the first six months of the year and cases kept on rising, prompting health officials to raise the full alert on the mosquito-borne disease.

In Cagayan Valley and Bicol regions, at least 44 deaths each were recorded in the last six months while 19 others were reported in Zamboanga.

The provincial health office (PHO) in Albay province has raised the “code green” alert as dengue cases continued to rise. Under this alert level, health officials are asked to intensify the campaign to combat dengue and prevent its possible outbreak, according to Dr. Antonio Ludovice, acting PHO head.

Surge

Records from the Department of Health (DOH) in Bicol showed that 22 people had died of dengue since January. Albay and Camarines Sur provinces had the most number of fatalities with seven each, followed by Sorsogon province with five.

Camarines Norte, Catanduanes and Masbate provinces had recorded one death each.

Ludovice said that because of the surge in dengue cases, rural health units in the province were already running out of dengue testing kits.

In Tuguegarao City, Dr. Rio Magpantay, Cagayan Valley regional health director, said dengue cases climbed to 6,233 from January to June, a 177-percent increase from the 2,254 recorded in the same period last year.

Not epidemic level

Magpantay said 2,570 dengue cases were recorded in Cagayan province while 2,527 cases were tallied in Isabela province. Quirino had 638 cases, Nueva Vizcaya, 492, and Batanes, formerly a dengue-free province, six.

Dengue-related cases surge during rainy days as mosquitoes lay eggs in any space or container that holds clear and stagnant water, Magpantay said.

In Zamboanga City, health officials have stepped up the campaign against dengue as 19 people have succumbed to the disease since January, a 73-percent jump from 11 in the same period last year.

The city health office said 2,663 cases have been reported this year, compared with 995 in 2018.

Dr. Dulce Miravite, city health officer, said the cases surged in May and June with 672 and 704, respectively. “It is really increasing and we have reached our alert threshold, although we have not yet reached epidemic level.”