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DOH LAUNCHES NEW COVID-19 TRACKER AND DOH DATACOLLECT APP PRESS RELEASE /13 APRIL 2020

The Department of Health (DOH) launched yesterday its new COVID-19 Tracker in line with its commitment to promote transparency and accountability.

The revamped tracker features additional information on the epidemiology of COVID-19 in the country, COVID-19 testing, health facilities, and availability of personal protective equipment (PPEs). The public can now view data on the laboratory testing capacities of the DOH accredited laboratories including the total number of tests and unique individuals tested. Likewise, the public can now have a snapshot of our health system's capacity in responding to the pandemic based on data collected from the DOH *DataCollect* application.

The *DataCollect* app gathers daily data from hospitals and stakeholders such as essential resources and supplies, availability of hospital beds, isolation rooms, ICU beds and mechanical ventilators, and human resource needs. The application will also be able to accurately calculate the projected need of PPEs, and link to our logistics offices for delivery of supplies. This will facilitate easier and faster tracking of reports between DOH offices. Under the "Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Health Concern Act" or RA 11332, all our partner hospitals are mandated to implement this system of data collection.

"The new COVID-19 tracker is not perfect and we hope to add more information in the succeeding days, but it is our fervent hope that this responds to the information needs and the call for transparency from our citizens," Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said. "Right now, health facility data is only limited to around 550 reporting hospitals and infirmaries so we call on our hospitals to submit information through our *DataCollect* App to help us protect our healthcare workers in beating COVID-19," the Secretary added.

The DOH was assisted by epidemiologist Mr. Nel Jason Haw and data science consulting firm Thinking Machines in the creation of its new COVID-19 tracker.

Nel Jason Haw is a faculty of the Health Sciences and Development Studies Programs of the Ateneo de Manila University. He holds a Masters of Science degree in Global Health from Georgetown University, USA and is an incoming PhD student in Epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA. He has been assisting the DOH for the last two months in improving its reporting systems for COVID-19 cases. “I volunteered because good quality health data *literally* saves lives in the middle of an outbreak,” Jason explained.

Thinking Machines Data Science Inc, is working closely with DOH and the Department of Science and Technology in delivering quality insights to government agencies and the public to best respond to the pandemic. Filinvest City Foundation powers Thinking Machines, the leading data science company in the country. “We believe data plays an increasingly important role in both the public and private sectors in the fight against COVID-19. We hope to contribute to our country's fight against COVID-19 by making sure that our country's key decision-makers have access to accurate and timely data.” L. Josephine Gotianun Yap, president of Filinvest City Foundation said.

“We believe in the effectiveness of data,” Thinking Machines CEO Stephanie Sy said. “And we are humbled to be working with the public, civic and private sector in the months ahead to ensure access to timely and comprehensive analytical insights.”

“We thank our partners for helping us improve our information systems - proof that public-private partnerships can beat COVID-19!” Secretary Duque concluded.

The New COVID-19 Tracker can be accessed through this link: <http://www.doh.gov.ph/covid19tracker> (<https://www.doh.gov.ph/covid19tracker>).

DOH encourages the public to send queries and comments on the new COVID-19 tracker to **covidtracker@doh.gov.ph**.