

# *Public Health minister highlights importance of Maternal-Child Care Program*

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Havana, August 23 (RHC)—Cuban Minister of Public Health, Jose Angel Portal has stressed the importance of the island's Maternal-Child Care program as one of the top priorities of the island's health system.

During a tour of several of the country's provinces this week, Portal highlighted the need of working on the reduction of teen-age pregnancy, and the factors that still contribute to infant mortality rate, although Cuba exhibits excellent results on this indicator. The island ended 2018 with 3.8 deaths for every 1,000 live birth, the lowest in its history.

The minister commented on the decisive work of family doctors and all members of each household in the identification, follow-up and control of pregnant women, as well as the need for continuity of work until the mother returns home with a healthy baby.

During the meeting with local authorities factors influencing infant mortality rate were identified with an emphasis on the need for prevention and timely diagnosis of congenital malformations.

Regarding teenage pregnancy, the minister recalled it leads to complications in gestation and childbirth, and abortions which in turn, may cause future infertility problems.

In Cuba adolescent pregnancy is the cause of significant number of low weight new born, which is another major cause of infant mortality.

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