

# *Bolivian hospitals close due to staff exposure to COVID-19*

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La Paz, June 23 (RHC)-- At least two hospitals in Bolivia have closed over the past several days as staff members were exposed to COVID-19 positive cases without proper protective gear and safety protocols.

"We closed the Viedma hospital because 90 people had contact with patients (who tested positive to the infections disease)," the Hospital Director Juan Jose Mendoza, told local media.

Viedma was designated to attend coronavirus cases but its closure came as the director of the Solomon Klein hospital, also in Cochabamba, resigned from their position after denouncing the health facility's "total abandonment."

"We do not have biosafety supplies, we have to buy everything to protect ourselves," said one of the nurses at the Viedma hospital in Cochabamba, central Bolivia, after the facility suspended its activities Saturday.

Viedma is not the only hospital in Bolivia to shut doors due to the risk of infections of health personnel. In the capital, La Paz, four hospitals have registered cases of Covid-19 and so far, one of them closed its doors for at least one week.

The landlocked country of around 11.7 million people registered its first coronavirus infections on March 10, and until Sunday has reached 23,512 confirmed cases.

The situation is especially worrying in Santa Cruz, the most populated region of Bolivia with just over three million people, concentrating the majority of cases and the highest number of deaths.

While the coup-regime led by Interim President Jeanine Añez allowed municipalities to relax the quarantine starting June 1, La Paz will reestablish this week, restrictions related to physical distancing and vehicle circulation in response to increasing infections.

In this context, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) has denounced that the multimillion-dollar resources given by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) to the Añez administration have apparently not helped in improving health care in this Andean country.

Latin America has become a global epicenter for the pandemic, with countries like Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile recording high numbers of cases.

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