

Fight against cancer unites scientists from Cuba and the United States



By María Josefina Arce

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death in the world and it is estimated that by 2040 there will be 30 million new cases. The fight against this disease has united scientists from Cuba and the United States, determined, even in the midst of obstacles, to increase bilateral cooperation for the benefit of patients in both countries.

The U.S. scientific community highlights the advances made by their Cuban colleagues in the fight against this disease, despite the limitations imposed on Cuba for decades by the economic, commercial and financial blockade.

Dr. Robert Win, director of the Massey Cancer Center at the University of Virginia, said in Havana that U.S. doctors have a lot to learn from Cuba, so they seek to take advantage of their experience and knowledge to advance in this fight.

And on that path, a memorandum of understanding was signed in Havana in recent days between the center headed by the U.S. specialist and the Institute of Oncology and Radiobiology of the Caribbean nation.

This will make it possible to extend collaboration in research, academic and personnel exchanges and the carrying out of joint clinical trials.

Mutual respect and a common desire and interest in working for a better quality of life for cancer patients is what unites scientists from the two countries, who have shown how much more could be done if Washington's hostile policy towards the Cuban people did not exist.

Cuban and U.S. researchers already maintain a fruitful exchange in this field. That is the case of the relations that have been established between the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in the United States and the Center for Molecular Immunology in Cuba.

The U.S. institution based in New York is conducting a second study of the Cuban vaccine CIMAVAX against lung cancer, which has already proved its safety and whose combined use is now being explored in several indications of this disease.

This trial in the northern territory seeks to treat smoking patients at high risk of developing lung cancer and those with malignant cells in early stages at risk of relapsing into the disease.

Although it has not been without its difficulties due to the web of blocking laws, this collaboration is an encouraging step in favor of health.

The desire to save lives has united scientists from Cuba and the United States because, as Dr. Robert Win, director of the Massey Cancer Center at the University of Virginia, stated, it is a matter of bringing health to everyone, regardless of where they live, how they live or how they think.

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