

# *Presidency of Cuba meets with Experts and Scientists on Health issues*

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Havana, November 1 (RHC) -- Headed by Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, the usual Meeting of Experts and Scientists on Health Issues took place on Tuesday at the Palace of the Revolution. The topic of the meeting was the Mother and Child Care Program on the island, and proposals aimed at adapting it to the current circumstances of Cuban society.

In a place in Cuba, a mother gives warmth to her newborn child. The picture of stillness and love has behind it a thrilling story that speaks of our professionals: according to the testimony offered to three reporters by Doctor of Sciences Danilo Nápoles Méndez -head of the National Group of Gynecology and Obstetrics-, in that episode there was a chain of successes that was only possible due to an admirable

expertise.

The professor said that, while in labor, the patient suffered arterial hypertension and went into cardiac arrest. It was then that an intensivist began resuscitation maneuvers; and without wasting time, a cesarean section was performed to remove the baby, in order to facilitate the mother's resuscitation. Other interventions followed to stop bleeding, stabilize parameters and bring the mother back to life. Only knowledge and daring made a happy outcome possible.

Such stories are not unique and are part of a greater purpose that the Doctor of Science commented to the Press Team of the Presidency of the Republic: "I must mention the support that the specialty of Gynecobstetrics has had in the care of critical patients, with intensive therapies, intensive therapies in the country that have also made a great effort, in the midst of limited resources, to save these women".

His reflection took place after the conclusion of the usual Meeting of Experts and Scientists on Health Issues at the Palace of the Revolution on Tuesday afternoon, whose theme was the Maternal and Infant Care Program on the island, and proposals aimed at updating it and adapting it to the current circumstances of society.

As reported at the meeting, Cuba recorded an infant mortality rate of 7.5 per 1,000 live births in 2022, after it was 7.6 in 2021. So far this year, this sensitive rate stands at 7.3, which means that 55 fewer children have died. Although these data are still far from those achieved in other years when the rate was around four points, a discreet improvement is becoming evident, after the impact of the COVID-2019 pandemic and under the effects of the tightening of the U.S. blockade.

Dr. Katherine Chibás Pérez was in charge of the central presentation on this topic of special human value, in a day that was headed by the President of the Republic of Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, and that also counted on the presidency with the deputy prime ministers Inés María Champan Waugh and Jorge Luis Perdomo Di-Lella.

The expert emphasized that the infant mortality rate is an expression of a country's state of well-being, hence the tremendous importance that the Maternal and Infant Care Program has always had for Cuba. And she paved the way for the analysis by telling, among other ideas, about particularly relevant moments in which medicine grew in a big way -such as 1970, which was the year of the first program to reduce infant mortality; or 1981, when the epidemic of Hemorrhagic Dengue led to the improvement of pediatric intensive therapies; or 1984, when the family doctor and nurse were born-.

A woman marked by passion and knowledge, Longina Ibargoyen Negrín, who today works in the Cuban Ministry of Public Health as Advisor in the Maternal and Child Care Program, spoke at the meeting. Once the day was over, she explained to reporters that this Program "was implemented in our country in 1980 and covered a large group of tasks; but it had not been updated. What we were doing was working, working, incorporating things". At present, he said, a large group of professors has gathered to update this particularly important tool.

The Program -she pointed out- has 16 aspects with significant changes, and 17 that are totally new, such as the one referring to assisted reproduction: "With this updating work, at the moment we have incorporated -and this is what we have come to present today- 27 technological innovations, all of them of tremendous importance to advance our tasks".

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