

Continuing Educational Activities in Bioethics Can Improve Public Health Systems

The Editor,

Sir,

All countries want to meet the health and medical needs of their populations without bankrupting themselves or draining resources that serve other human needs and purposes (1). This comment is particularly important in Cuba because the Ministry of Public Health makes deep effort to reach those goals facing a context characterized by privation of economic resources.

In 2011, the Cuban health system began a process of sectoral reform to maintain and improve the health of Cuba's population, in response to new challenges and demands in the health sector and population health status (2). Maintaining the fundamental basic principles of public health in our country (the state and social character of medicine, access and universality as well as the implementation of the latest scientific and technological advances according to the conditions of a low-income country) the government and different national and international institutions-organizations and individual initiatives has been positively influencing the process.

The Cuban National Health System is highly structured, prevention-oriented and gives special attention to continuing medical education so the results on this area reflect of an intensive and humanitarian work (3).

In a paper published by Lancet (4) the author's evidenced one good example of apolitical efforts among US-Cuba Bioethics Communities providing possible roads to make more easily the way to entrench bioethics practice and at the same time contribute

to the improvement of official relations between the countries. This paper agree with others (5, 6) and recognize the archives of the Cuban Public Health System.

The Centre of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology, in Matanzas city, is a second level institution created on the second half of the twenty century with a history of goals on its mission and a well gained prestige national and internationally so the authorities agree with national standards is involve in an intensive intervention to become more effective, reducing costs and increasing scientific production.

An important component of the intervention was a continuing medical education programme in ethics and public health addressed to 120 professionals of the area of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology (7). All courses (one week each) and the activities associated are still running with an updated version and a vast and new audience from all public health institutions and community leaders of the province, receive materials and advises from bioethicists from all over the world and is open to collaboration with others inside and abroad Cuba.

As result, bioethics practice has been entrenched and public health professionals and students has been empowered with moral tools to face their activities and modify behaviors that finally make more humanitarian our actions. Community involvement and personal responsibility create a collaborative environment and serve as guide for future interventions and response for health emergencies.

Full agree with the Lancet editorial when wrote “Despite the severe constraints on resources that Cuba has had to endure, the country provides an interesting example of what can be achieved by prioritising health and education” (5).

Keywords: Bioethics, education, public health

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