



## Student participation in the confrontation with COVID-19, experience of the University of Medical Sciences of Cienfuegos

### Participación estudiantil en el enfrentamiento a la COVID-19, experiencia de la Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de Cienfuegos

Claudia Díaz-de la Rosa<sup>1</sup> , Luis Enrique Jiménez-Franco<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de Cienfuegos. Facultad de Ciencias Médicas “Dr. Raúl Dorticós Torrado”. Cienfuegos. Cuba.

Dear Editor:

The epidemiological situation caused by COVID-19 led the Cuban Government and the Ministry of Public Health to the consequent application of a plan of measures, which prevented the spread of the virus and the increase in positive cases. Complying with national guidelines, the Universities of Medical Sciences adopting a new study system, moving from face-to-face modality to Distance Education and implementing active research as an activity as a practice, <sup>(1)</sup> detecting in time the main symptoms of the disease ; what made possible an early diagnosis and, with it, the opportune treatment.

Given the increase in suspicious and positive cases in the province, it was decided to create isolation centers for the care of these patients, being located in different institutions of the territory with accommodation capacity, <sup>(2)</sup> highlighting the student residences of the University of Medical Sciences of Cienfuegos; Using as a human resource the students of the house of higher studies, who to date carry out tasks of messengers, fumigators, pantrists, nursing assistants and, also, support in medical assistance, thus creating the FEU Brigades, made up of between 10 to 14 students; led by the University Student Federation and the Union of Young Communists of the institution.

With the dispersion of the cases, new brigades of young people were created in the rest of the

Cienfuegos municipalities, to work in isolation centers in their locality, in the Guard Corps

consultations for Respiratory Symptoms and the preterminals for assistance , in conjunction with the family doctor of the community patients. It is worth highlighting the conformations of the HGAL and HPU

Brigades, distributed in the provincial health centers Hospital Universitario “Dr. Gustavo Aldereguía Lima ”and“ Paquito González Cueto ”Pediatric Hospital, respectively. Later, he joined other areas, such as the Hospital Pharmacy in conjunction with students from the University of Cienfuegos “Carlos Rafael Rodríguez”.

World stages also had the participation of students, mainly from the Medicine career. According to Aquino, <sup>(3)</sup> the support of the university community of Medical Sciences was an option to combat the spread of COVID-19, in facilities where there was a disproportionate increase in the demand for health personnel. In the United States, several medical schools joined the early graduation initiative. Similar measures are adopted in countries that make up the United Kingdom. The Government of Spain approved that the health authorities may hire sixth year / year medical and nursing students in order to strengthen their health system; In addition, the State Council of Medical Students opened a registration form for volunteers. <sup>(3)</sup>

The anti-COVID19 vaccination in recent months has begun in many countries, with Cuba being one of the main ones in vaccinating its adult and pediatric population with the Abdala, Soberana 01, Soberana 02 and Soberana PLUS vaccines. When initiating the

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immunization of the Cienfuegos population, first in the main municipality and then in the rest of the municipalities, it has transferred the students of Medical Sciences to the vaccination centers, carrying out vital signs checks, where many acquired practical skills by supporting the Nursing.

They have also worked together with Geocuba on the “Andariego” platform, entering data from COVID-19 patients from epidemiological surveys; According to Peláez Batista et al., <sup>(4)</sup> said platform facilitates work from the health area, with geospatial data, and geographically


referenced information, 0 for the detection of outbreaks, monitoring and epidemiological analysis.


The measures designed and applied in Cuba during the confrontation with COVID-19 brought together young university students, mainly from the universities of Medical Sciences, in impact tasks, which allowed the control of the disease in the territory, despite the health consequences of being in direct contact with suspicious and positive patients, there was no negative response, constituting an indelible mark in the course of the pandemic.

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## CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS

Díaz-de la Rosa C |  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6210-476X>. Conceptualization, data curation, formal data analysis, research, methodology, project management, writing – original draft, writing – reviewing and editing.

Jiménez-Franco LE |  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6760-8884>. Data curation, formal data analysis, methodology, visualization, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no.

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