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### COVID-19: Cuban Psychologists also Battling

By: Vladia Rubio / CubaSi

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A few days ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned about how the pandemic that ravages the world is already making an impact on mental health and called on governments not to underestimate these damages.

Although in Cuba, thanks to the well thought-through strategy, COVID-19 infections are decreasing; in the world, and especially in the Americas, the situation remains very complicated.

Hence the WHO's request to which Cuba seems to have anticipated because shortly after the first cases were reported on the Island, health professionals associated with mental health added their knowledge to the confrontation against the new coronavirus.

Consequently, psychiatrists, psychologists, psycho-pedagogues and other personnel in this field designed ways of acting that range from telephone help to community and online consultations. Protocols based on experience and scientific knowledge, not at all tainted by improvisation, distinguish this job.

Either prolonged social isolation as having the disease or just being classified as a suspect are factors that can negatively impact the emotional state, especially in the case of vulnerable groups.

Hence, the elderly, pregnant women or those who are in isolation centers are the focus of attention of these personnel.

In Cuba, psychology for emergencies and disasters, integrated into the actions of the Civil Defense and seen from a multidisciplinary perspective, is one of our forte.

This can be corroborated by patients who have benefited from the help received from Psychology professors and students, as a result of the telephone dialogue, or by contacting WhatsApp with any of the Cuban psychologists

online.

There are not many psychologically affected; the majority, as reported, are characteristic behaviors in times of crisis such as stress.

Dr. Alexis Lorenzo Ruiz, professor at the University of Havana and president of the Cuban Society of Psychology, said so at the Round Table TV program: "... in Cuba it's much more normal and customary because we have experienced many critical situations and we have training". We have it, and also a health system whose *raison d'etre* is the human being.

**Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff**

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