

Florida: Alarming Public Health Panorama

21/04/2015



Although hard to believe, the public health in its south region seems to have shifted to the Third World.

A journalist from Miami Herald, Daniel Chang, asserted this Sunday that there are about 850 000 Floridians lacks of official medical care.

He speaks of the federal-state health program (Medicaid) that alleviates the lack of care to the poor and handicapped.

From Washington were proposed funds to enhance it and benefit other millions of its inhabitants, but they rejected it.

Who? The state parliament and its republican governor, Rick Scott, both with a far-right orientation.

An excuse? The possibility this budget disappears in the future and expenses fall on them.

A republican senator of the state, René García, said that it's hard to deny money with visible needs in your district.

The Miami Herald quotes as an example, Isabel Betancourt, 31 years old, a patient suffering rheumatoid arthritis (incurable) which is equal to:

Rigidity for long hours in the elbows and knees, almost paralyzing pain in the bones of her feet.

As she hasn't been accepted by Medicaid, as soon as she feels relief she quits the injections and pills that take care of her joints.

According to the Herald, this fact can damage them, as well as other parts of her body.

Isabel Betancourt takes the warning, but explains that it's necessary to do it when you live without a public health program.

She can only work four hours a day and she studies at the Florida International University.

She is pushed to rationalize her one-month medicines to extend them to two "or more."

The journalist from the Herald Daniel Chang includes her among the more than 800 000 Floridians "caught in no man's land."

What does that mean? The victims of a decision taken by the Supreme Court of United States that made "optional" the extension of the Obamacare (Affordable Care Act).

Hence the Floridian parliament has been rejecting for 24 months the money promised by the White House.

Daniel Chang commented that it's more important in a territory inhabited by the largest number of people living without medical insurance".

The Miami Herald gained very special attention with the following article:

It said to have seen those caught in no man's land creating their own systems of medical care, "mostly inadequate".

The article continued, they go to free clinics, visit community health centers with discounted prices they can pay.

It added, when they have nowhere else to turn, they end up in the ER of a hospital, "which can bring as a result a heavy debt".

They cut pills in half, borrow money, withdraw their retirement funds and wait for months or a year to see the doctor."

Everything worsens even more so now because in Florida Medicaid only covers poor children, disabled grown-ups, and pregnant women.

This explains why Isabel Betancourt is out of that health plan:

She is not disabled, neither she has children depending on her, and she is not pregnant.

Most of those affected were hit for the first time when in 2008 the economic depression kicked in and it's not over yet.

The already mentioned senator René García declared once that he has seen women with breast cancer and men with different sort of illnesses taken cared in emergency rooms.

They are taken care of and stabilize, he said, afterwards they are sent home "without medicines, without a treatment plan, without follow-ups."

Here is the accusation to a system with steadily fewer arguments and solutions to the human needs.