

# *U.S. blockade causes problems for Cuban children with cancer*

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Havana, February 8 (RHC)-- "The economic, commercial and financial blockade tightened by the U.S. government against Cuba is a weapon that causes terrible harm because it prevents us from having access to medicines, which are needed, especially for children with cancer," said Dr. Néstor Njeda Cabrera.

Doctor Nérido González Fernández, Head of the National Oncology Group and of the Head and Neck Service of the National Institute of Oncology and Radiobiology, said: "We cannot have access to those drugs, nor to the raw materials that make them. We have a serious problem with spare parts for linear accelerators. Even if we have the money to buy them, in the banks, they won't let us use that money to buy the parts. This is the reason why several pieces of equipment are NOT working at the moment in the country, with the serious consequences that this has on patient care."

Dr González affirms that cancer is a health problem, the second cause of death of Cubans and the predictions are that it will increase a lot, due to the aging of the population. "We join risk factors and lifestyles, which we have to modify, he considers, such as smoking, as there is a lot of smoking in Cuba, as well as the ingestion of alcoholic beverages. "And we add exposure to solar radiation and obesity, a series of factors and lifestyles that we have to work on and modify in order to reduce the incidence of cancer in the country."

According to Dr. Gonzalez, Cienfuegos is a province that is working hard on the development of its human capital for cancer treatment, an important place from the point of view of National Oncology. He specifies that this is due to its large and aging population, where the incidence of the disease is higher.

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