

# *Martí in Cuban medicine*

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By María Josefina Arce

In Dos Ríos, in eastern Cuba, 128 years ago, one of Cuba's most illustrious sons, José Martí, a man of deep pro-independence, anti-perialist and social justice convictions, fell fighting for the independence of Cuba, and whose vast work left us valuable lessons in various fields.

In his writings there are important reflections, for example, on medicine and health, which are part of our health system and on which the academic training of our doctors and nurses is based, with values such as altruism, selflessness and solidarity.

Cuba's National Hero pointed out that true medicine is preventive, and that Martí's maxim is the one that governs a health program created almost four decades ago at the initiative of the historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, a faithful follower of the Apostle's ideas.

Since its inception, the Family Doctor and Nurse Program has had a clinical, epidemiological and social focus, providing care to the individual, the family and the community.

During all these years, it has been a pillar in the conception of Cuban public health, which prioritizes

preventive medicine. It was created with the purpose of reaching new health levels and to prevent risk factors and promote healthy lifestyles.

Its participation in vaccination campaigns throughout the country has been essential and has made it possible to eradicate several diseases and prevent others from becoming a health problem.

It was also present in the immunization against COVID 19 and in the follow-up of the recovery of the sick in each neighborhood.

We are currently working on its improvement to increase the quality of life of the population and their satisfaction with this service, which is an essential part of primary health care.

To this end, fifty actions are being modified or incorporated, eleven of which are aimed at streamlining the documentation work in medical offices and reducing the number of people to be attended, among others.

There are more than 11,000 doctor's offices throughout Cuba, including in rural areas. Those located in the mountains stand out, included in the so-called Turquino Plan, which bets on the integral and sustainable development of those areas and the improvement of the living conditions of their inhabitants.

Today, May 19, on a new anniversary of José Martí's fall in combat, it is valid to highlight his wise reflections on medicine, since it is also the International Day of the Family Doctor, an appropriate occasion to highlight the role and contribution of these professionals, who in Cuba occupy an essential place in primary care in our health system and in the care of the population.

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