

Lula signs law to resume More Doctors Program with Cuban medical personnel in Brazil



The Government plans to increase the number of SUS basic care physicians by 15,000. Jul. 14, 2023. | Photo: Twitter/@_Roberto_Lopes_

Brasilia, July 15 (RHC)-- Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva signed on Friday the law that resumes the More Doctors Program, which seeks to expand public health care.

The move will increase the number of doctors working in the basic care of the Unified Health System (SUS), especially in the most vulnerable regions. "SUS is not only great, it is the best public health system in a country of more than 100,000 inhabitants," Lula said during the ceremony held at the Planalto Palace, the seat of government.

The Brazilian president pointed out that "money earmarked for health cannot be seen as an expense but as an investment." "More Doctors is, in essence, bringing to the most distant corners of this country and to the great abandoned peripheries the citizen's right to be decently served by health professionals and

specialists," said Lula.

The government plans to increase by 15,000 the number of doctors in SUS basic care through the National Strategy for the Training of Health Specialists. "More Doctors for Brazil" will serve about 96 million Brazilians, with the number of professionals doubling from 13,000 to 28,000.

The licensed professionals will enter into a four-year labor agreement, which is renewable. Under the program, the government will pay an additional 20% to physicians who remain for four years in "high vulnerability" areas.

The training scholarship granted by the program will be about R\$ 12,300 (about US\$ 2,560) per month for 48 months, renewable for the same period. With the new resumption, professionals who are people with disabilities and who belong to ethnic or racial minorities will be considered to fill the vacancies. Lula said that the priority of this program will be doctors trained in Brazil, but that if necessary, professionals from other nations will be hired.

The More Doctors Program was created in 2013 by then-President Dilma Rousseff (2011–2016) to bring medical professionals to the periphery of large cities and to municipalities in the interior. The program was reduced and its rules altered during the government of Jair Bolsonaro (2019–2022).

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