

Cuban Doctor Diagnosed with Ebola in Sierra Leone



Havana, November 19 (RHC) — A doctor from the 165-member Cuban medical team fighting Ebola in Sierra Leone has been diagnosed with the disease, according to Cuba's Public Health Ministry.

The official statement, issued Tuesday in Havana, says Dr. Felix Baez Sarria is being treated by British doctors in Africa, but he will be transferred to a special unit in Geneva at the recommendation of the World Health Organization.

Baez, an internal medicine specialist, came down with a fever of more than 38° C on Sunday and was diagnosed with Ebola the following day, the statement added.

Meanwhile, the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health said in another statement that the Cuban doctor is being evacuated from Sierra Leone by a private American carrier, with the help of the World Health Organization (WHO).

"The University Hospital of Geneva, where he will be brought, is ready to admit him in accordance with long-established procedures that will ensure the security of all staff and patients," the Swiss statement said.

A Geneva doctor specializing in infectious diseases is organizing his care in a special hospital room separate from other wards and outpatient clinics at the downtown hospital, it said. "The Swiss population is not at any risk."

Hospital staff have been trained and rehearsed procedures to put on and remove protective gear, the Swiss statement said.

Switzerland has offered to treat international health workers being evacuated with the virus in Geneva, home of many international organizations, including the WHO.

Geneva has one of two Swiss hospitals conducting trials of experimental vaccines against the virus, which has killed 5,177 people in eight countries. The NewLink vaccine, developed by Canada, is being tested in Geneva, while the GlaxoSmithKline vaccine is being tested in Lausanne.

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