
Cochlear implant stands out among achievements of the Cuban health system

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The Cochlear Implant program, which has been promoting Cuba since 2005, is one of the achievements of the National Health System, said the head of the Ministry of Public Health, José Ángel Portal.

On the occasion of the International Day of the Cochlear Implant, Portal commented on the social network of Twitter that this project, started in 2005, is also a sign of the constant concern of the country and the authorities for their children, especially those with disabilities.

Coinciding with the ephemeris, dedicated to this medical procedure and to the World Hearing Day, on March 3, the island performed on Tuesday the 500th cochlear implant in the pediatric hospital Borrás-Marfan, an action that benefits people for free, the most of them children, with severe to profound hearing loss.

A cochlear implant is a small electronic device that helps the human to listen, which is placed in the inner ear by surgery to patients with sensorineural deafness.

Through physical impulses the sound is transformed into electrical energy that directly stimulates the fibers of the cochlear nerve from the snail.

Once the operation is carried out, rehabilitation is offered with an organized and progressive program of activities, which makes possible from the identification of sounds, to recognition and understanding.

The Cuban program includes the neurophysiological and plasticity study of patients, the replacement of devices (whose minimum costs amount to 16 thousand euros), since these are technologies that are becoming more complex, and are constantly updated.

In total, the surgery of a cochlear implant is between 30 thousand and 60 thousand dollars, however, in Cuba it is completely free and with a vision that includes a screening program in newborns to detect early risk factors of hearing impairment.

Both children and adults can be candidates for this high-tech process, either because they were born deaf or acquired after learning to speak, although the criteria are slightly different for each other and are based on similar patterns.

This February 25 marks the introduction 62 years ago of the first of the devices that makes it possible to listen to more than 325 thousand people with bilateral profound sensorineural deafness worldwide.
