
Statement from the Ministry of Public Health

19/01/2015



Yesterday, January 18 at 7.00 a.m., Cuban time, 12.00 p.m. in Sierra Leone, the Cuban collaborator and nurse, Reinaldo Villafranca Antigua, from Los Palacios municipality in Pinar del Río province, died aged 43, after suffering from malaria with cerebral complications.

The collaborator formed part of the Henry Reeve Medical Brigade, currently fighting the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone. He arrived in the country on October 2, 2014, and was working in the Ebola Treatment Center located in the capital, Kerry Town.

On the morning of January 17, he presented the first symptoms of diarrhea, which he associated with a digestive problem, by the afternoon that day he had a fever of 38°C. A test for malaria was taken and resulted positive, and the patient began to receive anti-malarial treatment orally. Hours later he was unconscious of his surroundings and continued to suffer from a high fever.

He was transferred to the British Navy Hospital, located in Kerry Town. A second test for malaria was taken which again was positive, as well as a test for Ebola, which proved negative.

The latest intravenous anti-malarial treatment was applied. The patient continued to progressively deteriorate, suffering from respiratory difficulty he was connected to a ventilation machine under the care of British specialists.

During the early morning his clinical state deteriorated further and he was unresponsive to treatment until ultimately passing away. Reinaldo Villafranca Antigua worked in the health sector for ten years and volunteered to form part of the group of collaborators traveling to West Africa.

We are grateful to the authorities of the Sierra Leone Health Ministry, representatives of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the British Mission in the country, for their attention and monitoring of our collaborator. To the family of our compañero we extend our sincerest condolences.

