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Adopt Cuba's healthcare system

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THE Philippine Traditional and Alternative Herbal Medicine and Cosmetics Association (Philtahmca) in Mindanao urged the Duterte administration to benchmark the country's healthcare system after the model of Cuba.

Philtahmca-Mindanao and Davao Inventors Association president Virgilio Sangutan said that Philippines can learn from Cuba's move of integrating and institutionalizing the preventive and curative medicine.

"Cuba is now being looked at by many countries as the number one country with an excellent universal healthcare system," he said.

He also lauded President Rodrigo Duterte's directive to Health Secretary Dr. Paulyn Jean Rosell Ubial to visit Cuba to take a look on its healthcare system, which might be necessary in addressing the Philippines' problems on public health care access.

Sungutan also emphasized that "the government programs must be focused and anchored with research and development (R&D) and modernized equipment laboratories."

He cited that Cuba's healthcare system was focused on five programs.

These are the importance of preventive medicines, orientation, and teaching the public hygienic practices, implementation of education program teaching elementary pupils as early on how to conduct scientific studies on herbal medicines, integration of the natural and traditional medicine into the western medicine model and the health Department's required usage of the alternative medicines (nursing, medicine, and pharmacy).

Sangutan pointed out that the Department of Health has only recognized 10 herbal plants with therapeutic effect in the country. But he was quick to add that hundreds of herbal plants can be found here.

