Cuban Experience in Prevention, Care and Treatment of Diabetes and its Relevance for US Public Health

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Presenter Disclosures
Dabney P. Evans, PhD, MPH
(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:
No relationships to disclose

What does Cuba evoke for you?

Maybe you think of...

But do you think of...

Overview of the Cuban Public Health System
Timeline

- **1960’s**: Development of polyclinic system
- **1970’s**
  - Medicine becomes focused on prevention and public health
  - Cuban physicians begin to serve abroad
- **1980’s**: Family doctor/nurse program begins
- **1990’s**: The Special Period creates new challenges
- **2000’s**: Living like poor people and dying like rich ones

Cuba achieved “Health for All by the Year 2000” and in 2015 was the first and so far only country to eliminate the mother to child transmission of HIV and Syphilis

Three-Tiered System

- Universal coverage
- Public health and medicine are intertwined
- Three “tiers”:
  - Primary: community groups, family doctors/nurses
  - Secondary: polyclinics
  - Tertiary: hospitals

Facts and Figures

- One doctor-nurse consultorio serves up to 600 people (around 150 families)
- One polyclinic serves about 30–40 consultorios
- There are 58 M.D.s and 74 nurses per 10,000 people (1 MD per 170 people)
- 63% of M.D.s are women

Cuba vs. Neighbors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Cuba</th>
<th>Dom. Rep.</th>
<th>US</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population in millions</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>321.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality Rate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths/1,000 pop.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fertility Rate</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
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Health Indicators

- Infant mortality as the gold standard (US differences by race)
- Major causes of death are the same as in the U.S. Mortality per 100,000:
  - Cuba: Heart Disease; Stroke; Cancer (Diabetes is 9th)
  - US: Heart Disease; Cancer; Chronic respiratory Diseases (Diabetes is 7th)

Percent Gross Domestic Product dedicated to Public Health

- Cuba: 8.8% GNP per capita
- US: 17.1% GDP

Per capita health expenditure:
- Cuba: $1,828
- US: $9,148

Key Health Care Question

- In the US, how to get a bigger piece of the pie?
- In Cuba, how to make the pie better?

How? Guiding Principles

- Health as a government responsibility & citizen’s right
- Universal & free healthcare
- Emphasis on preventive care
- Participatory approaches to population health
- Scientific advancement
- Medical cooperation with other nations

Primary Health Care
Family Doctor and Nurse Program and Community Organizations

Polyclinics and Surveillance
Diabetes in Cuba

- Diabetes Centers
  - Foot care clinics
  - Educational strategies
    - Week-long courses
    - Family training

The world needs the globalization of solidarity

References

- Evans, DP. My long night with Fidel Castro, Pacific Standard, August 20, 2015
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  • http://www.who.int/country/usa/en/