CUBA 2.0 · HEALTH SYSTEM

# Health System.

> **Health will be a universal service of the utmost quality, guaranteed to every citizen at no cost, at every level of care.**

Pay the people who heal. Stock the pharmacies. Rebuild the hospitals.

**That is the CUBA 2.0 commitment — from the family doctor to the operating room.** Today the system is far from it. Cuba trained more doctors per person than almost any country — 9.5 per 1,000 in 2021 (World Bank), yet a physician earns about $10 a month, pharmacies cover a fraction of the essential-medicines list, and the official count of doctors has fallen by more than 34,000 since 2021. NL05 set medical pay in dollars. This issue sets out the rest.



Illustration — CUBA 2.0 health professionals.

**71,635**

Doctors in 2025, down from 106,131 in 2021.

Source: MINSAP AES 2025; ONEI AEC 2024.

**9.9**

Infant deaths per 1,000 births in 2025 (official), up from 4.0 in 2017.

Source: MINSAP AES 2025, Cuadro 11.

**$700–$1,500**

Monthly physician band (M5), paid in USD.

Source: CUBA 2.0 Salary Structure (NL05).

**$28B** TENTATIVE

Health reconstruction envelope, Phases I–II.

Source: CUBA 2.0 estimate — derivation in 07 / 07.

**Working draft. Not an offer.**

02 / 07 · THE WORKFORCE

# A system losing its doctors.

Cuba counted 106,131 physicians in 2021. In 2025 the Ministry of Public Health counted 71,635 — a third fewer in four years — and 134 residents per doctor. Official counts include doctors serving abroad, so fewer are treating patients on the island.

## Physicians in Cuba, 2021–2025

Headcount · official figures




Source: ONEI, Anuario Estadístico de Cuba 2024 (2021–2024, as reported by Diario de Cuba); MINSAP, Anuario Estadístico de Salud 2025 (preliminary), Cuadro 103 (2025).

Cuba today in red, CUBA 2.0 in blue, others in gray.

## Physicians

Monthly USD midpoint · own scale




Source: CUBA 2.0 Salary Structure (NL05, cuba20.net/salary.html). Cuba today = 2026 state base pay (MTSS Res. 17/2026) at 780 CUP = 1 USD.

**Sequential, not all at once.** Health pay raises begin about 18 months after the CUBA 2.0 program starts. Workers then move to the Medical bands M1–M8 gradually, one group at a time, each after a performance evaluation.

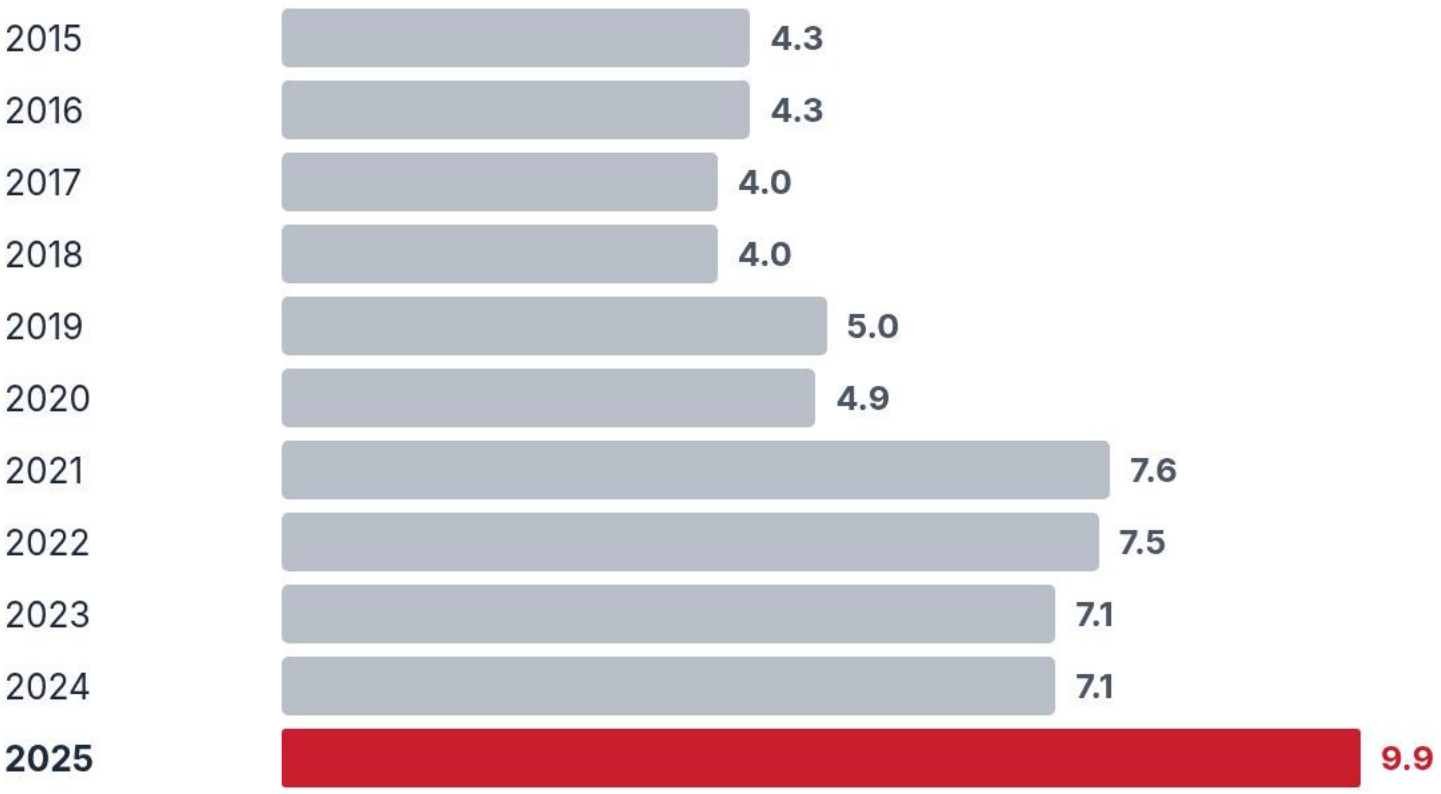
03 / 07 · OUTCOMES & SUPPLIES

# The numbers are slipping.

Officially, infant mortality fell to 4.0 per 1,000 live births in 2017 and 2018. In 2025 the Ministry reported 9.9, and maternal mortality of 44.1 per 100,000 births. A 2018 peer-reviewed study estimated that correcting for reclassified neonatal deaths would put a reported rate of 5.79 at 7.45–11.16.

## Infant mortality, 2015–2025

Deaths per 1,000 live births · official




Source: MINSAP, Anuario Estadístico de Salud 2025 (preliminary), Cuadro 11. Study: Berdine, Geloso & Powell, *Health Policy and Planning* 33(6), 2018.

## Medicines on the shelf

**651**

Medicines on Cuba's basic list (250 imported, 401 made locally).

Source: Government report via ACN, Sept 2025.

**364**

Of those out of stock — 56% of the list.

Source: Government report via ACN, Sept 2025.

**32%**

Of demand met by pharmacies (Health Minister, July 2025).

Source: National Assembly session, as reported by Periódico Cubano.

**0**

Private pharmacies open, three months after they were authorized.

Source: EFE via DW, Oct 2026 (36 projects under review).



Illustration — a stocked pharmacy.




Illustration — a re-equipped operating room.

04 / 07 · HOW CUBA COMPARES

## Cuba and its neighbors.

Cuba still reports more doctors per person than any neighbor. But people in Costa Rica and Puerto Rico live longer, and a Cuban physician earns a fraction of a Dominican one.

| Indicator | Cuba | Dom. Rep. | Costa Rica | Puerto Rico |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Life expectancy, 2024 (years) | **78.3** | 73.9 | 81.0 | 81.9 |
| Infant mortality per 1,000, 2024 (UN modeled) | **6.8** official 2025: 9.9 | 27.7 | 9.1 | 7.1 2023 |
| Physicians per 1,000 | **9.5** 2021 | 2.4 2023 | 2.7 2022 | — |
| Health spending, % of GDP, 2023 | **9.4%** | 4.6% | 6.9% | — |
| Physician pay, monthly USD | **$10** | $2,075 | $6,525 | — |

Source: World Bank WDI (life expectancy, infant mortality, physicians, health spending); Puerto Rico infant mortality: PR Dept. of Health via March of Dimes PeriStats; physician pay: CUBA 2.0 Salary Structure (NL05). — = no comparable series.

05 / 07 · MEDICAL MISSIONS

## Doctors as an export.

Medical services are Cuba's largest source of foreign currency. Health and social-care services earned $4.88 billion in 2022 — 69% of all services exports. The U.S. State Department reports that the state keeps most of each worker's salary abroad.

**$4.88B**

Health and social-care services exports, 2022.

Source: ONEI, via NODAL.

**69%**

Share of Cuba's services exports, 2022.

Source: ONEI, via NODAL.

**22,000+**

State-contracted workers abroad (end-2023), 75% medical.

Source: U.S. State Dept., TIP fact sheet, 2024.

**75–90%**

Share of salaries retained by the state.

Source: U.S. State Dept., TIP fact sheet, 2024.

CUBA 2.0 POSITION

**Medical missions will be considered case by case.**

06 / 07 · THE PLAN

# Six moves to rebuild care.

1 **Pay in dollars — step by step.**

From about month 18 of the program, health workers move to Medical bands M1–M8 ($200–$5,000 a month) gradually, each group after a performance evaluation.

2 **Open the medicine supply chain.**

Duty-free essential medicines, licensed private pharmacies and importers, and fast registration of medicines already approved by recognized regulators.

3 **Rebuild hospitals and polyclinics.**

Re-power and re-equip the 148 hospitals and 451 polyclinics, starting where doctors are scarcest: Artemisa, Mayabeque and Isla de la Juventud.

4 **Universal care, private choice.**

Care stays free at every level. Licensed private clinics and insurers may operate alongside it, as an option, never a requirement.

5 **Count honestly.**

Independent health statistics, with every fetal and neonatal death published, so policy rests on real numbers.

6 **Bring doctors home — and connect them.**

A return path for Cuban doctors abroad, and national telemedicine on one digital health record.

Facilities and provincial doctor ratios: MINSAP, Anuario Estadístico de Salud 2025 (preliminary). Bands: CUBA 2.0 Salary Structure (NL05). Proposals under review.



Illustration — a rebuilt CUBA 2.0 hospital.



Illustration — a CUBA 2.0 polyclinic.

07 / 07 · THE BUDGET

# What it could cost.

In the CUBA 2.0 sequencing, hospitals and clinics are rebuilt in **Etapa 2 — Energy, Health & Infrastructure**: hospitals re-equipped and staffed to restore care. A first, tentative sizing:

| Component | Tentative |
|---|---|
| Hospitals rebuilt and re-equipped<br>47,417 beds × $345,000 per bed (IDB-financed regional hospitals, Guyana, 2025) | **$16.4B** |
| Polyclinic network<br>451 polyclinics × $5M (CUBA 2.0 working assumption) | **$2.3B** |
| Health pay raises, phased in from month 18<br>12.5% of 365,515 workers move to M-band midpoints each quarter, over eight quarters (months 18–42) | **$2.8B** |
| Medicines, supplies and upkeep, first two years<br>Dominican-level spending ($489 per person × 10.94M people) net of staff pay ≈ $2.9B a year | **$5.8B** |
| Power resilience and digital health<br>CUBA 2.0 working assumption | **$0.6B** |
| **Total — tentative**<br>Higher end of a $14–28B range · about 11% of the ~$250B program | **$28B** |

Source: beds, workers — MINSAP, Anuario Estadístico de Salud 2025 (preliminary); cost per bed — Guyana Ministry of Health (IDB loan, $79.7M for 240 beds); per-person spending (2023) and population (2025) — World Bank WDI; bands — CUBA 2.0 Salary Structure (NL05).

Tentative figure, sized at the higher end. Pay raises start around month 18 and reach full bands gradually. All projections are illustrative.

## Read the full Health System plan

Pay in dollars, medicines on the shelves, hospitals rebuilt, and a way home for Cuba's doctors. Explore the full program and its two phases.

**Read the plan → cuba20.net**

**Visit cuba20.net →**

Ask LISA anything about CUBA 2.0 — the program, investments and next steps: **(727) 620-6584**. Know someone who should read this? Forward this issue or subscribe at cuba20.net.


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Technology-first governmental reconstruction grounded in rule of law.

Data: MINSAP Anuario Estadístico de Salud 2025; ONEI; World Bank WDI; U.S. State Department; EFE/DW; ACN; IDB/Guyana Ministry of Health. Cuban official statistics have known gaps.


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