



Back to life

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Photos by Servimed

Approximately three percent of the world population (some 185 million people) used drugs improperly in the past 12 months, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Some 13 million people made improper use of cocaine, while another 15 million used heroine, morphine and opium. The most commonly improperly used substance is cannabis (more than 150 million people consume it at least once a year), followed by amphetamine-like stimulants (with some 38 million consumers, eight million of whom used ecstasy).

Drug addiction is one of the scourges of the world population today and health authorities are greatly concerned about the grave consequences, including death, this problem causes.

Cuba, through its company, Turismo y Salud S. A. (SERVIMED), offers an addiction rehabilitation program called *Nuevo Día* (New Day). The basic



promise of the program is a new life for the former addict who successfully rehabilitates in these institutions.

The Cuban alternative for the treatment of drug and alcohol addictions, with several years of experience, is based on standards of the Cuban school of psychiatry and psychology, applied according to a therapeutic community model in which patients share their feelings, experiences, responsibilities and work.

This practice contributes to the maturation of the personality and behavioural encounters that guide the patient toward overcoming dependency and developing a drug free lifestyle, thus achieving the individual's full social reintegration.

According to statistics provided by Servimed, about 40% of patients treated under this regime in the institutions of the country achieved full recovery.

An experienced technical and professional team of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, physical education specialists and nurses reorient the addicted person to abandon dependence on the toxic substances. To this end, the functional structure of the Therapeutic Community rests on four basics: therapeutic, educational and occupational alternatives, self-governance and tourism and health.

Educational and cultural alternatives allow assessment of the intellectual and labour potential of the patients, testing skills and behaviours



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through work and guiding them to look toward the future.

Patients' self-governance is an essential element in the work of the therapeutic community. A group of patients acquire important responsibilities and, together with the therapeutic team, participates in the making of everyday decisions.

The health and tourism area favours getting closer to the natural and cultural sites in the vicinity of the therapeutic community, which patients enjoy as the treatment evolves.

To carry out these programs, Turismo y Salud S. A. (SERVIMED) offers its clients treatment villas in the eastern region of the country, mainly in Holguín, Granma and Santiago de Cuba Provinces, where the natural environment promotes relaxation, spirituality and the detoxification of patients.