

Molecular biology laboratory is built

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The installation of a molecular biology laboratory will make it possible to respond to the rapid treatment of those infected with COVID-19 in Isla de la Juventud, a territory with a complex epidemiological situation.

Israel Velázquez Batista, director of the Public Health Sector, commented that this work of national interest will join the network of laboratories in Cuba and will be equipped with state-of-the-art technology for in situ analysis of Polymerase Chain Reaction tests (PCR for its acronym in English).

The doctor pointed out that they are currently working on changing the use of a premises, located in the Municipal Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology Center (CHEM), containing four departments: reception of samples, extraction, PCR and autoclave, which will save time waiting for the results.

He added that with the operation of the novel diagnostic system that enables the detection in 12 hours of positive cases to SARS-CoV-2, the cause of the pandemic, resources will be saved by concept of air transportation of the samples to the Institute of Tropical Medicine "Pedro Kourí" (IPK). Precisely to the IPK, we will send a group of microbiology specialists and laboratory graduates to receive training there in matters of sample processing and biosafety protocols, commented the highest health authority in the territory.

This project prioritizes the hazardous waste evacuation system, for which a reinforced concrete septic tank is built adjusted to biosafety requirements, which will respond to the needs of the new work and the

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~~CHEM laboratory, where other pathologies are processed, clarified. The~~

Municipal Defense Council in reduced composition insisted on the need to redouble efforts and work long hours to have the molecular biology laboratory in the shortest possible time, due to the health emergency caused by COVID-19, with an incidence rate of 143.75, the fourth highest in the country.

The local authorities indicated to establish the work contracts, ensure the quality of the execution, comply with the schedule and that the suppliers guarantee the resources in order to avoid interruptions or delays in the work rhythm.

Velázquez Batista, underlined the importance of this type of installation for the premises capable of processing some 450 samples in 12 hours. Of the 522 samples analyzed yesterday, 11 were positive and we had to regret the death of a 79-year-old patient due to pulmonary thrombolism, the second death since on April 2, 2020, the first patient infected by the new coronavirus, he stressed.

He said that this will be the second laboratory of its kind in the special municipality, the first was built in Cayo Largo del Sur, in order to carry out epidemiological surveillance of foreign travelers who arrive at that pole, which reinforces the guarantee of Cuba as a destination safe tourist.