



NEWS RELEASE

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Cuban leader to take part in annual meeting of Minnesota Public Health Association

*Dr. Marilyn Hernández Gómez will discuss social factors
affecting health, role of community health workers*

A noted public health leader from Cuba, Dr. Marilyn Hernández Gómez, will be a featured guest at this year's annual conference of the Minnesota Public Health Association (MPHA).

Dr. Hernández Gómez will take part in a discussion of the social factors that influence and affect the health of individuals within communities, and the role of community health workers in the Cuban public health system.

The MPHA annual conference will take place May 25-26 at the Continuing Education and Conference Center on the St. Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota. The theme of this year's conference is "Health Equity: Many Voices. Shared Vision."

Dr. Hernández Gómez's session is scheduled for 9:45 a.m. on May 26.

Dr. Hernández Gómez is President of the Villa Clara Provincial Chapter of the Cuban Society of Public Health. She also serves as Vice Dean of the Medical Faculty at the University of Medical Sciences in Villa Clara. Her presentation at the MPHA conference will include discussion of how community health workers function within the public health system of Villa Clara Province.

Dr. Hernández Gómez has also been working with MPHA officials on a formal partnership between MPHA and the Villa Clara Chapter of the Cuban Society of Public Health. A formal memorandum of understanding between the two organizations will be signed at the conference, to provide a framework for information sharing and potential joint projects.

"We hope that this visit by Dr. Hernández Gómez can mark the beginning of a fruitful partnership between public health in the U.S. and public health in Cuba," said John Oswald, Co-Chair of the MPHA Global Health Committee. "We hope it will lead to the development of innovative new strategies and approaches for protecting, promoting and improving the health of our communities."

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The MPHA conference will be one of a series of scheduled appearances by Dr. Hernández Gómez in the Twin Cities during the week of May 23-28. In addition to MPHA, she will be visiting Hennepin County Medical Center, the Minnesota Department of Health, the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, and LaClinica community health clinic in St. Paul. She will take part in a community forum sponsored by the Minnesota Cuba Committee (www.minnesotacubacomittee.org) on May 28.

A visit by Minnesota public health officials to Havana and Villa Clara Province has tentatively been scheduled for Jan. 28-Feb. 4.

Other presenters at the MPHA conference will include Assistant Commissioner Jeanne Ayers, Minnesota Department of Health, and Assistant Commissioner Anne Barry, Minnesota Department of Human Services, also on May 26. Other conference sessions will cover topics like substance abuse and mental health, gun violence, climate change, access to healthy food, sexual violence prevention, institutional racism in health care and public health, disparities in oral health, and community health.

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The MPHA conference brochure, including the complete conference agenda, is available at:
[www.mpha.net/resources/Documents/MPHA%202016%20CONFERENCE%20brochure 5.4.16.pdf](http://www.mpha.net/resources/Documents/MPHA%202016%20CONFERENCE%20brochure%205.4.16.pdf)