

CienciaPR, Puerto Rico Public Health Trust and Mercy Corps join forces to educate about COVID-19 ^[1]

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The **Puerto Rico Public Health Trust (PRPHT)** and **Ciencia Puerto Rico (CienciaPR)**, together with the humanitarian organization **Mercy Corps Puerto Rico**, dedicated to supporting communities and micro-businesses, started an alliance to educate young adults about the urgency of modifying their behaviors to stop COVID-19 infections in Puerto Rico.

With the slogan “Cuídate, Cuídame” (Take care of yourself, Take care of me), the organizations launched the educational campaign, which is made up of several efforts aimed mainly at the populations between 20 and 39 years old, which have the highest number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Puerto Rico.

The first effort is the virtual series "Conversations about COVID-19", which brings together renowned media and sports personalities and social media influencers, with experts in science and public health, to discuss various COVID-19 topics in an accessible and entertaining ways. The next conversation in the series will be September 16 ^[3], between former Major League Baseball player Carlos Delgado and Dr. Marcos Ramos Benítez, an expert in infectious diseases, who will discuss sports and COVID-19. The second effort is a social media campaign with

educational and prevention messages, based on data and scientific evidence, but in easily understood and culturally relevant language.

"In order to return to relative normality, it is necessary not only to know what to do, but to do it consciously and consistently. This initiative offers communities experts who are studying the behavior of the virus in Puerto Rico on a daily basis, so that together we can adopt prevention habits and be able to stop infections," said Karla Peña, executive director of Mercy Corps Puerto Rico.

"Young people and young adults are the population with the highest incidence of infections in Puerto Rico and this is worrying, since many are usually asymptomatic," said Dr. José F. Rodríguez Orengo, executive director of Puerto Rico Public Health Trust (PRPHT), a program affiliated with the Puerto Rico Science, Technology and Research Trust. The researcher explained that there is a false perception that this population is immune, which is not correct. "We are all at risk and we have to protect ourselves," he said. He also pointed out that an asymptomatic person can develop health problems weeks after being infected.

"Beyond emphasizing frequent hand washing, physical distancing and constant use of masks over the nose and mouth, it is crucial to promote practical strategies and behavioral changes that allow citizens to get on with their lives," said Dr. Mónica Feliú Mójér, director of communications for Ciencia Puerto Rico and expert in science communication. "We have to provide people with safer alternatives for socializing with loved ones, recreation or shopping. The "Cuídate, Cuídame" campaign seeks to offer people actionable information and strategies to help them live with the virus, while minimizing their risk of contagion and protecting themselves and their loved ones," added Feliú Mójér.

For her part, the executive director of Mercy Corps Puerto Rico highlighted the effect that the pandemic has had on the vulnerable communities to which they offer support. "We were already dealing with the economic crisis, hurricanes and earthquakes. Now, we are battling with COVID-19. We must address the pandemic or the situation in the country will become even more complicated for these communities," said Peña.

For more information on the conversations and "Cuídate, Cuídame", you can follow [Mercy Corps Puerto Rico](#) [4], [CienciaPR](#) [5] and [Puerto Rico Public Health Trust](#) [6] on social media.

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