

WANDEGEYA PHARMACY CLOSED

PHOTO BY EDDIE SSEJJOBA

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The National Drug Authority (NDA) has halted operations of Friecca Pharmacy in Wandegeya, a city suburb, saying it has been operating without a licence.

The directive to cease operations was communicated in a public notice dated April 19.

"Friecca Pharmacy located in Wandegeya, Kampala, has been operating without a licence issued by the Authority, contrary to section 14 of the National Drug Authority Act chapter 206 of the laws of Uganda. We wish to reassure the public that the pharmacy will open as soon as the 2018 licence is obtained," read the notice.

A person who carries on the business of a pharmacist without a licence issued under this section commits an offence, and is liable to a fine not exceeding shm or imprisonment not exceeding five years, or both.

The pharmacy is known for selling all kinds of drugs. It is the first reference point for the Mulago National Referral Hospital, in the event of inadequate drug supply.

Its strategic location in the bustling city suburb of Wandegeya made it a popular supplier of drugs to other pharmacies.

Speaking to *Sunday Vision*, Helen Ndagije, the head of product safety at NDA, said the Authority is committed to ensuring that safe, efficacious and good quality drugs are available to Ugandans.

The operation to close the



Employees and customers stand outside Friecca Pharmacy in Wandegeya, following its closure on Thursday

pharmacy was effected by the Police commanded by Joseph Nsabimana, the district Police commander (DPC), Wandegeya, who was tasked to ensure it did not open until it fulfilled the required conditions.

Nsabimana told *Sunday Vision* that NDA officials informed him that the pharmacy had been operating for a year without a licence and, therefore, followed the instructions to close it and ensure it did not open, until cleared by the Authority.

"The DPC went back this morning (Saturday) to crosscheck whether the place was still closed

as they left it and has confirmed that it is closed," said the Kampala Metropolitan Police spokesperson, Luke Oweyesigyire.

When *Sunday Vision* visited Friecca Pharmacy, located on Plot 160 Hajji Musa Kasule Road, overlooking Wandegeya Police barracks, the ever busy place was deserted, save for a few workers and managers who stood outside the building.

The metallic doors of the pharmacy, which occupies the entire ground floor of the storeyed commercial building, were locked with padlocks.

A few bodaboda riders outside the pharmacy were discussing the matter, but none of them seemed to know exactly why it had been locked for the entire day.

"We are yet to know, but we can see the owners standing outside. Maybe there is a problem with the owners. They all look sad," a rider stated.

They pointed at a lady who was making frantic phone calls outside the pharmacy.

A number of customers were seen parking their vehicles, but later leaving after finding the place locked.

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