

No patient wants to face a hungry doctor

EDITOR: Country men, almost all media houses are reporting daily on the inefficiency of Uganda's health sector, especially the public health sector. The Government through the health ministry has laboured to improve health services in Uganda, by building and equipping hospitals and health centres, recruitment and employment of health workers and supervising them. Despite all that, there is no palpable quality services, yet a lot of money has been spent with the aim of improving health service delivery especially in public health facilities.

As a front-line medical officer and a citizen who loves my country and who would like to see a change for the better, I will point out one bottleneck

that has failed the health sector. This is the low salaries of public doctors/health workers. You may not be aware, but your medical doctor, the one who treats you daily, earns less than sh1m. How do we expect such a doctor to concentrate on his/her profession?

The government has always given the excuse of not paying good salaries to the fact that Uganda is a low income country. Rwanda with a GDP of \$8.376b (2016) is able to pay its junior medical doctor approximately sh2m. Why is Uganda with a higher GDP of \$25.53b (2016) pay low salaries?

It is no longer news that medical doctors in public hospitals earn less than boda boda riders. There is no way a medical doctor who is unable to pay school fees and feed his/her children

can concentrate and provide quality services to his/her patients.

The poor salaries affect us all direct or indirectly. We have seen prominent politicians after getting involved in accidents being rushed to nearby public hospitals to sort out their medical emergencies before they are flown out to fancy hospitals in the city centre. Let's think of what would happen to any of us who gets involved in an accident and is rushed to a public hospital where the doctor is hungry or is thinking of his/her children at home without food or school fees.

I believe no one would want to be treated by such doctor.

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