

High: 26C  
Low: 19C



# Private hospitals register more patients amid doctors' strike

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**KAMPALA.** Several patients, who ordinarily seek treatment from public health facilities where doctors are currently on strike, have since resorted to private hospitals.

The patients have to dig deeper into their pockets to pay for medical consultation, treatment and drugs, as well as beds for admitted patients unlike in most public hospitals where they access free services

for all.

At Kibuli Muslim Hospital in Makindye Division, the waiting rooms were yesterday flooded with out-patients, lining up in long queues, which is not usually the case especially in the afternoon when outpatient clinics have closed.

Dr Mahmoud El-Gazar, the hospital director, confirmed the upsurge in numbers, saying they have been forced to increase the number of doctors to manage the situation.

"There is an increase [of

patients] by around 25 per cent," Mr El-Gazar said, adding that they are not bothered though, "It is our responsibility to serve the people."

Doctors in public hospitals on November 6, went on strike following the government's refusal to raise their salaries and related remunerations.

The patients' upsurge has also been reported at St Francis Hospital, Nsambya, in Kampala where patients were seen waiting in long lines to be attended to at the hospital's

private wings.

A nurse at the hospital told *Daily Monitor* on condition of anonymity, because she is not allowed to speak on behalf of the hospital that she has noted a slightly higher increase in the number of patients they receive compared to the ordinary number.

"I think there are more patients," the nurse said.

However, Dr Edward Ddumba, the medical director of St Francis Hospital, said there is no notable increase in the number of patients at the hospital so far.

Several talks, first between the President, and later the Ministry of Health officials and doctors have since born no fruits as no consensus was reached by the parties.