

to prepare them to protect the territorial integrity of the country. (Frank Jean Okot)



At work. Doctors carry out surgery on a patient at Adjumani Hospital recently. PHOTO BY MARTIN OKUDI

Fear as patients are discharged prematurely over lack of space

Precaution. Administrators say for fear of catching other ailments, they send recovering patients home.

BY TOBBIAS JOLLY OWINY
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ADJUMANI. Due to the overwhelming numbers of patients that seek medical treatment at Adjumani Hospital, medical officials at the facility now discharge patients before they are fully healed to create space for new admissions, *Daily Monitor* has learnt.

Constructed in 1998, with a capacity of 100 beds, the hospital is faced with challenges of space with the number of patients tripling due to the influx of South Sudan refugees camped in Adjumani who seek treatment at the facility.

Currently, Adjumani hosts more than 200,000 South Sudan refugees

across 18 settlements.

When *Daily Monitor* visited the facility, the wards were crowded with some patients sleeping in the corridors and others on the floor under other patients' beds.

Although they (medical staff) are aware of associated dangers of premature discharge, they are left with no option other than sending some patients home before they recover fully to create space for new admissions.

In an interview with *Daily Monitor*, Dr Joseph Idoru Atia, the hospital deputy medical superintendent, attributed the premature discharge on fears of patients contracting other diseases such as Cholera due to overcrowding.

"The situation is worrying. The wards are overcrowded as many continue to seek medical help. At times we have to discharge 'better' ones to create space for others," Dr

ISSUES

Big numbers. Currently, there are about 250 to 300 patients admitted, a number much higher than the hospital's capacity. According to Dr Idoru, this number doesn't match with the staff ratio.

Under staffed. The hospital only has six medical doctors out of the required 11.

Idoru said.

He added: "When they are discharged prematurely, it is also dangerous as more complications can arise and they fail to show up at the facility."

Ms Grace Adiya, a resident, who interacted with *Daily Monitor* said she had returned to the facility after developing serious abdominal pain.

Ms Adiya had been discharged a week ago after receiving treatment for haemorrhagic fever although she had not fully recovered.

"While discharging me, I was directed to buy some tablets from a pharmacy. The doctors said I would be fine but that did not happen," she said.

Ms Adiya said she now feels worse than before and wants to be re-examined and treated of her condition.

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briefly

Boda boda rider injured

GULU: A 25-year-old boda boda rider is nursing injuries at St Mary's Hospital after he was attacked by a suspected iron bar hitman. Mr Fred Omony was allegedly attacked as he dropped off a man to Christ the King College from Lacor Trading Centre. The attacker also made off with his motorcycle. Aswa River region police spokesperson Jimmy Patrick Okema, confirmed the incident and said police are investigating the matter. [James Owich]

Police stranded

GULU: Police in Gulu are stuck with 10 suspects charged with aggravated defilement as the strike by the state prosecutors intensifies. The current industrial action by state lawyers, which has entered its second month, has paralysed activities at Gulu High Court. Jimmy Patrick Okema, Aswa River Region Police Public Relations Officer, said among the suspect include a 17-year-old P7 pupil who defiled a four-year-old girl. "Some suspects were arrested three weeks ago and they are still in police cells," he said. [James Owich]

Adjumani Hospital lacks space for inpatients

Voices

FROM PAGE 11

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Currently, there are about 250 to 300 patients admitted, a number much higher than the hospital's capacity.

According to Dr Idoru, this number doesn't match with the staff ratio.

The hospital that has only six medical doctors out of the required 11 serves the town, refugee camps (referral cases) and the neighbouring villages.

However, Mr Godfrey Manga, the assistant district health officer, says besides the big numbers of refugees referred to the facility, there are no health centre IIIs or IVs within the town to offer alternative outpatient services.

"Adjumani hospital now serves as the primary care facility in the district. Ideally, not all patients should come to the hospital except referral cases but because there are no health centre IVs, patients are left with no option," Mr Manga noted.

Earlier this month, Resilient Africa (Makerere Institute of Health Sciences) donated two outdoor medical wards worth Sh60 million to Adjumani district health department to help decongest the facility.

Ms Grace Nakibala, a senior officer at Resilient Africa, said: "The tents are designed with automated temperature adjustments, they are water proof, connected to electricity and are built to last for 15 years. We call upon government and other agencies to give us the necessary support required in providing more tents to this district."

The Adjumani Resident District Commissioner, Mr Oyaa Awua Nahori, said: "I am writing to the Office of the Prime Minister to intervene and make sure more health centres are put in place to help decongest the main hospital."

He added: "The hospital administration should effectively use this facility to their benefit. These tents are direct benefits for our local people and refugees. Health service here has been strained and space has really been a big challenge."

UNHCR through its various partners is also providing assistance to the hospital such as equipment, infrastructure development and financial support, although it is inadequate.

briefly

Youth rallied to reject Bill

LIRA: The Lira woman Member of Parliament, Ms Joy Atim Ongom, has rallied youth to reject the removal of the presidential age limit.

Police arrest wo

PADER: Police in Pader are holding a 28-year-old for alleged...