

Warns ic on iotic tion

EMMANUEL AINEBYOONA
ebyoona@ug.nationmedia.com

National Drug Au-
is issued an alert on
mycin injection, an
as registered severe
g patients.
s used to treat seri-
tions.

ig journalists yes-
headquarters, the
roduct safety, Ms
said the authority
l complaints from

sides are docu-
effects following
1, NDA has reg-
the frequency
reactions," Ms

ffects include;
daches, dizzi-
ting, rash and

batch
mlaints

Govt to spend Shs960m to burn drugs

Action. Officials appeal to any individual or facility with expired drugs to surrender them to their respective district health officers.

BY MISAIRI THEMBO KAHUNGU
mkthembo@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. The government has authorised the National Drug Authority (NDA) to spend Shs960m to destroy 1,500 metric tons of expired human and veterinary medicines, *Daily Monitor* has learnt.

Health Minister Jane Ruth Aceng gave a nod after NDA board chairman, Dr Medard Bitekyerezo, on March 28, 2018 sought authorisation for the agency to re-allocate money from its 2017/18 budget to incinerate pharmaceutical waste from public, private and private-not-for-profit health facilities.

"This is to inform you that authority (to re-allocate funds) has been granted. Ministry of Health will require a comprehensive report on the exercise undertaken," Ms Aceng wrote.

The current financial year ends in the next five weeks.

Officials said the expired drugs accumulated over six years and they are appealing to any individual or facility with a stock to surrender it to the respective district health officer (DHO).

Neither NDA nor the Health ministry has provided a break-down of the quantities and



Explains. The National Drug Authority executive secretary, Ms Donna Kusemererwa, addresses journalists in Kampala yesterday. PHOTO BY MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

value of medicines to be destroyed or stock distribution by region.

There is also no explanation why drugs continue to expire in a country

that registers perennial medicines stock-outs at government hospitals.

Dr Bitekyerezo said gathering pharmaceutical wastes from all parts

of the country, transporting and burning them centrally in Nakason-gola District will be their corporate social responsibility activity.

The authority's executive secretary, Ms Donna Kusemererwa, said destroying the drugs is justified because it protects the public from pharmaceutical waste.

Each health facility is ordinarily supposed to inform the DHO in writing and pay a fee to National Medical Stores (NMS) to withdraw and incinerate expired drugs.

Kasambya MP Gafa Mbwaterakmwa, who sits on House Health committee, questioned the expenditure.

He wondered how drugs get expired when patients are being turned away because of lack of supplies.

Mr Dan Kimosho, the NMS spokesperson, said although they supply drugs on request, mismanagement can result in expired stock alongside cases where anticipated epidemics do not break out.

OVER DUE

The NMS spokesperson, Mr Dan Kimosho, said "this [burning expired drugs] has been long overdue and the Auditor General and Parliament have been recommending for this to be done". "We are doing this because if kept long, expired drugs may be abused through re-labelling [and resale], which is dangerous," he said.