

Better pay builds morale – nurses

By Cecilia Okoth

Nurses want improvement in their welfare to entail better pay that would enable them work efficiently and effectively.

According to the nurses, the perception by the public that they are rude and negligent could be the result of frustration arising out of a heavy workload, with little pay.

“We face enormous burdens that people do not know about. For example, in a government hospital where I work, a nurse attends to more than 30 patients on one shift. It is hard for one to accord quality care to all patients in such a setting as compared to private hospitals where a nurse usually has a maximum of one to three patients,” a nurse at Naguru Hospital said.

The above notwithstanding, the nurse who preferred anonymity topped her class with a 4.88 GPA for the diploma in general nursing at Aga Khan University. She, however, also encouraged colleagues to handle patients with respect, saying some of the patients who come to hospitals are just psychologically tortured.

Fauza Nabagereka, a nurse at Kibuli Hospital, also said a nurse’s attitude depends on



Dr Ruth Aceng

the environment they operate in. She acknowledged that to some extent, nurses in public hospitals suffer most because of low levels of supervision.

A total of 103 students, graduated in the fields of diploma in general nursing, bachelor of science in nursing, midwifery and master of education at the Aga Khan University’s 15th convocation ceremony.

Motivation

Juliet Nabossa, a nurse at Mulago Hospital who also topped her class (bachelor of science in midwifery) with a 4.8 GPA, asked the Government to set up a fund to motivate all health workers mainly in the maternity and neonatal section that, she said, would lead to reduction in

maternal mortality.

Be of honour

Speaking at the graduation ceremony, guest of honour health minister Dr Jane Ruth Aceng, reminded the graduates of their national and moral duty to uphold the highest levels of ethics, integrity, patriotism and timeless values.

“Be men and women of honour, no matter the circumstances. Let the humility and discipline which may be required of you, become your lifetime companions.

Highlighting the contribution that universities play in developing a skilled workforce of doctors, nurses and educators, Aceng said the Government would continue encouraging investment in the higher education sector.

“Nurses and midwives are asked to ensure that more women give birth safely and that children grow up healthily. Educate the public to adopt healthier lifestyles and demand higher quality health-care. You must also respond to the growing burden of non-communicable diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease,” Firoz Rasul, the president of Aga Khan University, stated.