

# Bukedea residents shun vaccination

## BUKEDEA

By Emmanuel Opio

A batch of over 10,000 Hepatitis B vaccine doses is lying redundant in Bukedea district after health facilities failed to absorb it.

The district received over 15,000 Hepatitis B doses from the Ministry of Health in November last year, but only 5,000 have been used.

Steven Ikodet, the Bukedea district health officer, said a few people went for vaccination, leaving more vaccines lying at the district health office. Ikodet said the district health committee had resolved to return the vaccines to the National Medical Stores fearing they may get spoilt.

"We decided to return the vaccines to benefit those in need of them," Ikodet said.

Malera Health Centre III, Kabarwa Health Centre III, Kolir Health Centre III, Kachumbala Health Centre III, Kidongole Health Centre III and Bukedea Health Centre IV have been the facilities handling vaccination with 9,000 people reportedly vaccinated.

Mike Okwi, the secretary

health and technical services in Bukedea district, said although the district may still need the drugs, there are storage challenges.

"People may still need to get vaccinated, but we at times find our coolers running out of power for three days, which puts vaccines at risk," Okwi said.

The first batch of 15,000 doses received by the district in August 2017 was all absorbed because locals viewed Hepatitis B as a major killer. However, Kokas Maling, the LC1 chairperson of Kachonga village in Malera sub-county, said a number of people had become reluctant to seek vaccination despite rushing for the exercise when it had just started. He believes this could be the reason for the lying idle of the second consignment of the vaccine at the district health office.

Last Monday, only 20 people turned up to seek help regarding Hepatitis B-related conditions at Kabarwa Health Centre III, according to records at the facility.

Ojeke said: "I do not want to speak for others, but we still need these drugs for those who may turn up."