

No patient would want to be treated by a hungry doctor

Countrymen, nearly every media reports daily about the inefficiency of especially the public health sector in Uganda. The government through the Ministry of Health has laboured to improve health service delivery by building and equipping health facilities and recruiting health workers and supervising them. Despite all this, there is still no quality service provided.

As a frontline medical officer and a citizen who loves my country, and who would like change to better services in the public health sector, I will point out one bottleneck - low salaries for health workers - that has failed the health sector. Fellow countrymen, you may not be aware that a doctor who treats you earns less than Sh1 million. With such low pay, how do we expect such a doctor to concentrate on their work?

The government has always given an excuse of not paying good salary that Uganda is a low



income country. Yet Rwanda with a GDP of \$8.376b (2016) is able to pay its junior medical doctor nearly Shs2m. Why is that Uganda with a higher GDP of \$25.53b (2016), pays her doctors poorly? The salary paid to a health worker is not adequate given the high cost of living.

There is no way a medical doctor, who is not able to pay school fees and feed their children will concentrate and provide quality

services to patients. Let us be realistic at least for once.

The problem of low pay for medical doctors in one way or another directly or indirectly affects all citizens whether they are rich or poor, and whatever their political inclination. We have seen prominent people being rushed to nearby public hospitals after getting involved in accidents for emergency attention.

Let us think of what would happen when we get involved in an accident and are rushed to a public hospital where the doctor is hungry or is distracted by the lack of food or fees for their children. I believe no one would want to be subjected to such a doctor.

Countrymen, let us support doctors in their quest for better pay to prevent such a scenario. Let us not indirectly neglect our lives by ignoring the conditions under which they work.

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