



Gaza, November 2012.

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Referral of Patients from the Gaza Strip

Ref: RAD 11 (Dec. 18, 2012)

Summary

Palestinian casualties in the Gaza Strip as a result of the eight days of hostilities, November 14-21, 2012:

- 182 persons killed in Gaza; 24 (13%) females and 158 (87%) males; 47 (26%) were children. More than 88% of the fatalities had sustained multiple injuries.
- 1,399 persons injured in Gaza; 392 (28%) females and 1,007 (72%) males; 516 (37%) were children. Type of injuries: one third of all casualties suffered moderate to severe injuries; 483 required urgent surgery; 65 were admitted to intensive care units.

- **Interrogated:** 13 Gaza patients (2 F; 11 M) who had applied for permits in November to cross Erez checkpoint were requested to appear for Israeli security interviews.
- **Delayed:** 91 (29 F; 62 M) patients did not receive a response to their permit application and missed their hospital appointments.
- **Referrals to Egypt:** The number of regular referrals to Egypt increased during November despite the on-going physicians strike. 42 persons with war-related casualties crossed Rafah for treatment in Egypt, and several patients were transferred through Egypt to hospitals elsewhere in the region.
- **Referrals to Jordan:** Only two patients received financial coverage from the Ministry of Health for treatment in Jordanian hospitals.
- **Medical reasons:** Most November 2012 referrals were for: oncology (16%), nuclear medicine (10%), ophthalmology (8%) and urology (8%), paediatrics (7%), haematology (6%), neurosurgery (6%), orthopaedics (5%) and heart surgery (5%), and heart catheterization (4%). The estimated cost was NIS 9.6 million.
- **Humanitarian access during hostilities:** 45 out of 62 patients with approved permits crossed through Erez terminal during the 8 days of escalation, only one of which, a young girl, was a casualty. All other patients needed treatment abroad for other issues. 24 went to hospitals in the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and 21 were referrals to Israeli hospitals.

Improved number of referrals

The total number of Gaza patients referred by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in November was 913, an increase over the number referred in October of 798, but still below the monthly average for 2012 of 1,157. According to Gaza Referral Abroad Department data, of the 913 MoH referrals, 337 (37%) were referred to hospitals in East Jerusalem, 224 (25%) to Egypt, 150 (16%) to Israel, 106 (12%) to West Bank hospitals, and only 2 (0.2%) to Jordan (**Table 1**).

The number of referrals inside Gaza to non-MoH facilities increased significantly in November compared with the previous 4 months. The need for Gaza referrals to private facilities inside Gaza increased because the lithotripsy machine in the European Gaza Hospital (MoH) for treating kidney and gall stones was out of order. Gaza referral data for November show a significant gender gap: 59% of referrals were males and 41% were females. 30% of all the referrals were children aged 0-17 years.

Table 1: Palestinian MoH Referrals in 2012, by destination, exit route and month of hospital appointment

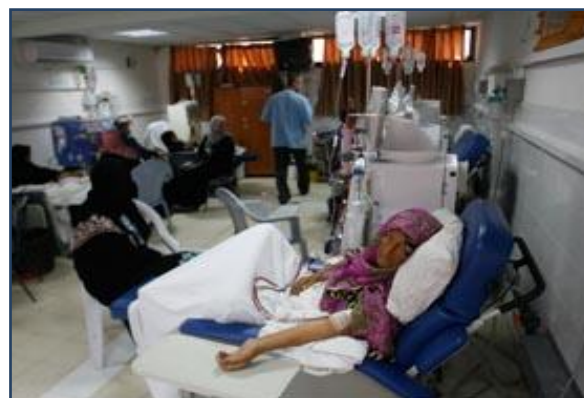
Referral Destination	MoH Referrals											Total 2012
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	
Within Gaza: 1,968												
Gaza (non-MoH facilities)	289	258	284	301	265	290	76	28	33	50	94	1,968
Exit via Erez/Israel: 7,607												
West Bank (MoH and non-MoH)	110	101	94	115	134	120	88	99	111	131	106	1,209
East Jerusalem	374	301	359	344	416	420	313	336	398	338	337	3,936
Jordan	47	53	41	30	21	5	2	0	0	1	2	202
Israel	254	237	247	252	304	173	117	164	181	181	150	2,260
Exit via Rafah to Egypt: 2,911												
Egypt	319	240	270	296	358	328	237	209	333	97	224	2,911
Total	1,393	1,190	1,295	1,338	1,498	1,336	833	836	1,056	798	913	12,486

Source: MoH RAD Gaza

Table 2. Common Medical reason for MoH referrals November 2012

Specialty	Number of referrals	%
Oncology	141	15.4
Nuclear medicine	91	10.0
Ophthalmology	77	8.4
Urology	74	8.1
Pediatrics	67	7.3
Hematology	56	6.1
Neurosurgery	51	5.6
Orthopedics	45	4.9
Heart surgery	43	4.7

Source: MoH RAD Gaza



Nasser Hospital, Khan Younis.

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Patient applications for Israeli-issued permits to cross Erez

In November 2012, 725 patients' applications were submitted to the Israeli District Liaison Office (DCL) for permits to cross Erez and access hospitals in the West Bank including East Jerusalem, in Israel or Jordan, 8% fewer than applied in October (789), probably owing to the period of hostilities (November 14-21, 2012), when the number of patients applying for permits to cross Erez and the number of patients accessing Erez dropped significantly.

Table 3: Patient applications by source of fund, November 2012

Financial coverage source	Number of applications	Percentage
Ministry of Health	635	87.6%
Self-funded	38	5.2%
NourAla Al-Alam	14	1.9%
Physicians for Human Rights-Israel	14	1.9%
Peres Center for Peace	12	1.7%
Others	12	1.7%
Total	725	100%

Source: Palestinian DCO in Gaza



Jordanian Field Hospital November 19, 2012
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In November, 88% of Israeli permit applicants were referrals financially covered by MoH. The rest were covered by different sources (**Table 3**). Out of the 725 patient applications, 87% (629 patients) were approved permits. 5 male patients were denied permits to cross Erez. Four of these patients had appointments in East Jerusalem hospitals and one in a West Bank hospital. Thirteen patients (2 females and 11 males) (1.8%) were requested to appear for security interviews with the Israeli GSS as a precondition to process their application; 2 of those requested were over 60 years of age). Of the 13, only 2 patients were issued a permit following interrogation (**Table 4**).

Table 4: Israeli District Liaison Office decisions on patient permit requests to cross Erez, by age and sex, November 2012.

Age group	Total		Approved		Denied		Delayed		Called for GSS interrogation	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
0 - 3	67	69	62	64	0	0	5	5	0	0
4 - 17	70	83	64	74	0	0	6	9	0	0
18- 40	73	91	64	57	0	5	9	29	2	8
41 - 60	72	83	67	68	0	0	5	15	0	1
Over 60	50	67	46	63	0	0	4	4	0	2
Sub-total	332	393	303	326	0	5	29	62	2	11
Total	725		629 (87%)		5 (0.7%)		91 (13%)		13 (1.8%)	

Source: Palestinian DCO in Gaza

12.55% (91 patients) received no answer to their applications and missed their hospital appointment date; of these 60 had appointments in West Bank hospitals including East Jerusalem, and 31 in Israeli hospitals. Of the 91 delayed patients, 24 (26.4%) had applied more than 2 weeks before their hospital date, and 8 (8.8%) had applied more than one month before their appointment. 26 of the delayed patients were children and 29 were females.

Table 5: Crossing data for treatment outside Gaza, November 2012

Point of exiting Gaza	Patients crossing	Ambulance transfers (back-to-Back)	Days open in month
Erez crossing (north)	571	36	Open: 26 days Closed: 4 days (4 Saturdays) Erez was open during the 8 days hostilities but limited number of patients arrived.
Rafah crossing (south)	548 (patients and companion)	43	Open: 30 days Closed: 0 days

Source: General Authority of Civil Affairs and Emergency Medical Services in the MoH in Gaza.

The Palestinian General Authority for Civil Affairs registered 571 patients and 572 companions travelling through Erez checkpoint towards Israel during November. 36 patients were transferred by ambulance through Erez. Since

Palestinian ambulances are not permitted to leave Gaza, patients must be transferred from a Palestinian ambulance, and carried on a gurney to an Israeli-plated ambulance at Erez crossing 200 meters away (**Table 5**).

According to the Emergency Medical Services of MoH in Gaza, their office coordinated the travel of 637 people to Egypt. 43 patients were transferred by ambulance with 46 companions. The remaining 548 were patients and their companions who travelled through Rafah terminal as regular passengers.

Table 6:
Israeli District Liaison Office decisions on permit requests to cross Erez, by response, sex of applicant (number and %)

	November 2011		November 2012		January – November 2011		January – November 2012	
Total	711 (F:338; M:373)	(%)	725 (F:332; M:393)	(%)	9,800 (F:4,359; :5,441)	(%)	8,435 (F:4,092;M:4,343)	(%)
Approved	662 (F:327;M:335)	93	629 (F:303; M :326)	87	8,756 (F:4,029;M:4,727)	89.3	7,179 (F:3,461;M:3,718)	85.1
Denied	12 (F:0; M:12)	1.7	5 (F:0; M:5)	0.7	233 (F:48 M:185)	2.4	80 (F:26; M:54)	0.9
Delayed	37 (F:11; M:26)	5	91 (F:29; M:62)	13	811 (F:282; M:529)	8.3	547 (F:223; M:324)	6.5
Out of which called for GSS interrogation (of total applicants)	27 (F:8;M:19)	3.8	13 (F:2; M:11)	1.8	172 (F:38; M:134)	1.8	169 (F:58; M:111)	2.0

Source: Palestinian District Coordination Office in Gaza.