

Press release: UK aid to support struggling hospitals “near breaking point” in Gaza

Struggling hospitals across Gaza will receive critical support through a new package of UK aid announced today (28 March), which will provide urgently needed medicines and surgical supplies.

The funding, confirmed by the International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt, will help to keep Gaza’s hospitals functioning as they face increasing demand from the number of trauma patients.

Hospitals in Gaza are under extreme pressure, after trauma patients requiring treatment increased month-on-month to more than 29,000 over the last year. Rising demands on hospitals have reduced general access to healthcare, with consistent shortages of medicines and supplies leading to increased rates of infection, and a growing risk of amputations and antibiotic resistance.

UK aid will support the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) to deliver urgently needed surgical equipment, medicines, wound dressing kits, prosthetic limbs and post-surgery physiotherapy. It will also help to provide physical rehabilitation services for up to 3,000 disabled people.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

The UK is deeply concerned by the crisis in Gaza and the pressure it is putting on hospitals, which are now near breaking point. The UK aid funding announced today will help treat the growing number of emergency patients and provide urgently needed medicines, surgical supplies and rehabilitation.

Our support has consistently provided assistance to meet the basic needs of people in Gaza. UK aid has helped prevent the spread of disease, and given people access to healthcare, clean water and sanitation. It also recently provided a package of emergency food supplies for more than 62,000 Palestinian refugees at risk of going hungry.

We are also working to address some of the underlying causes of the humanitarian situation in Gaza through an economic development programme, which includes increasing the sustainable supplies of water and electricity. The UK supports a return to negotiations to find a lasting political settlement for Palestinians and Israelis.

Notes to editors

- DFID will provide £2 million to the International Committee for the Red

Cross's (ICRC) 2019 Israel and Occupied Territories (ILOT) Appeal. UK aid will contribute to the delivery of surgical equipment, drugs and disposables, wound dressing kits, rehabilitative prosthetics, and post-surgery physiotherapy through the Artificial Limb and Polio Centre.

- The work of the ICRC is based on the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols, its Statutes – and those of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – and the resolutions of the International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.
- The ICRC is an independent, neutral organisation ensuring humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. It takes action in response to emergencies and at the same time promotes respect for international humanitarian law and its implementation in national law.

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