

Update on Medical Referral Abroad- Gaza for the period from 1 – 31 July 2009

The Referral Abroad Department (RAD) has approved and issued a total of 1154 referral documents during July 2009, distributed to the following treating places; 30.9 % to Gaza NGOs medical facilities; 11 % West Bank; 17.8 % East Jerusalem; 24.7 % Egypt; 2.9 % Jordan; and 12.4 % to Israeli hospitals.

It has been noted that referrals to Israeli hospitals has increased 5.5% compared to last month and 8.7 % compared to May 09.

Cardiology, Oncology, Orthopedics and Ophthalmology are still the leading cause for referral outside Gaza and counted for 45 to 50 % of the total referrals.

The following table shows the numbers of referred patients distributed to the treating places in the period from January to July 09.

The Treating Place	No. of Referrals/ month						
	Jan 09	Feb 09	Mar 09	Apr 09	May 09	June 09	July 09
Gaza (Non MoH)	37	94	141	9	280	483	357
WB (MoH & NGOs)	14	84	74	20	110	157	128
Jerusalem	36	182	115	66	170	224	206
Egypt	102	354	364	143	440	361	286
Jordan	14	49	33	18	40	37	34
Israel	28	0	2	6	40	94	143
Total	231	763	729	262	1080	1356	1154

The District Liaison Office for Erez Crossing processed 735 applications for permits, entitled to cross Erez during July according to their hospital appointments, 70 % of them have been approved, 2.3 % denied and 27.6 % delayed.

The results of patients' applications desegregated according to age group and gender is shown in the following table

Age Group in years	Total		Approved		Denied		Delayed		Returned despite approved		Delayed for GSS interview	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 – 3	48	33	44	28			4	5				
4 - 15	74	51	62	43			12	4				
16 – 40	135	102	47	59	8	4	80	39			26	17
41 – 60	137	74	87	68	4	1	46	5			22	2
Over 60	45	36	43	34			2	2				1
Grand Total	439	296	283	232	12	5	144	59			48	20
	735		515		17		203		0		68	

68 patients (33.4 %) of the delayed patients, have been asked to be interviewed by the Israeli General Security Services (GSS) before giving answer to their request, 38 of them (25M & 13 F) did not go for the interview, 26 (20 M & 6 F) have been asked to submit new applications, 2 (F) have been approved after the interview and 2 (1 M & 1 F) have been denied.

The delayed patients miss the date of appointment with the health facility they have been referred to, and must submit new applications after obtaining another new hospital appointment.

The following table shows the delayed period in days exceeding the hospitals' appointments, where 69 % of them have been delayed for more than one week.

Period for studying the application in days	Male	Female	Total
01 – 07	40	23	63
08 – 14	49	14	63
15 – 30	16	10	26
More than 30 days	39	12	51
Total	144	59	203

However, a number of patients died, either before accessing the medical facility they have been referred to, or due to delay in accessing them, as they have reached them in a critical and poor condition. WHO confirmed the death of 20 patients since the beginning of the year: 3 patients died in February, 8 in March, 4 in April, 2 in May, 3 in June and none in July 2009.

According to the Liaison Officer at Erez, the actual number of patients who crossed Erez during July was 509 including 34 via back to back ambulances.

Rafah border has been closed for patients during July, so no patients have crossed to Egypt during this month.