

La bande de Gaza en manque de médicaments les plus essentiels - Médecins Sans Frontières

17 novembre 2011



Fin septembre, 36 des approvisionnements nécessaires manquaient contre 25% en 2010. La suite en anglais

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Health facilities in the Gaza Strip face a serious shortage of drugs and medical supplies. In late September, 36% of essential drugs were lacking. While MSF makes regular donations, no aid actor can meet the full range of needs.

The Israeli embargo of the Gaza Strip, which began in 2007, together with years of financial crisis within the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and the chronic lack of cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and Gaza authorities, have caused harm and threaten Gaza's health system and its patients.

Last spring, drug companies stopped supplying the Palestinian Authority. The situation, which had been worsening steadily for several years, deteriorated further in 2011 and has reached an alarming level.

As Israeli bombs struck the Gaza Strip in mid-August, local health authorities called on international aid actors working in the area for help. Since that time, they have asked for donations on a regular, long-term basis. However, no humanitarian actor – including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) – has the financial and/or logistical resources to provide the drugs and medical supplies needed by the Territory's health facilities.

164 essential drugs completely unavailable

Stock-outs represent a real threat to patient health. In late September 2011, 164 essential drugs (36% of necessary supplies, compared to 25% in 2010) were completely unavailable. Only 260 of the 900 required medical supply items (specifically, single-use items) were supplied. For now, UNRWA clinics, run by the U.N. relief agency for Palestinian refugees, provide patients with chronic illnesses access to treatment.

The medical areas most affected are :

- * surgery ;
- * intensive care (certain anesthetics are lacking altogether) ;
- * hemodialysis ;
- * treatments to prevent organ transplant rejection ;
- * oncology ;
- * hematology (no coagulants) ;
- * psychiatric medications (only 33 of the 46 essential psychiatric drugs are available) ;
- * ophthalmology (all eye surgeries have been halted) ;
- * maternity ;
- * pediatrics and catheterization laboratory procedures for the diagnosis and treatment of heart disease.

The five medical centers that treat kidney disease in Gaza will face drug shortages within a few weeks and their patients' lives will then be in grave danger.

Periodic donations cannot meet all needs

Throughout 2011, MSF made periodic donations when specific, urgent needs arose. Since 2008, the organization has regularly criticized the politicization of the Palestinian health sector and the impacts of the conflicts – both internal and external — on patients deprived of critical medications and medical care.

While MSF, an emergency medical aid organization, can establish an action and donation plan, it cannot provide the full range of drugs and medical supplies. We remain particularly concerned about the future of Gaza's patients and ill residents.

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