



Ministry of Health

PRESS STATEMENT BY THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR HEALTH, NAKHUMICHA S. WAFULA, EGH.

Thursday, January 4th, 2024.

Ministry of Health Cabinet Secretary, Nakhumicha Wafula, has condemned instances of assault on healthcare workers, saying perpetrator of such acts will face the full force of the law. This follows a recent incident recorded on video and shared widely across online and social media platforms where a healthcare provider at Port Victoria Sub County Hospital in Busia is seen to be verbally and physically assaulted by a member of the public.

Commenting on the incident, the Cabinet Secretary said:

“Act of violence against our healthcare workers are not only reprehensible but intolerable. Healthcare workers deserve our utmost respect as they are the backbone of our healthcare system. They work tirelessly – sometimes under challenging conditions to ensure the well-being of all citizens across different hospital levels.

“This recent case of assault on a healthcare worker is not just an attack on an individual; it is an assault on the entire healthcare system and the principles that guides it. Assaulting a healthcare worker not only endanger their lives but also disrupt the vital services they provide to other patients and the community.”

The Cabinet Secretary commended the healthcare worker for remaining calm and composed during the incident, urging healthcare seekers to maintain civility whilst interacting with healthcare workers.

“I want to commend the medic involved for displaying such remarkable composure and professionalism during the incident. We cannot understate the importance of maintaining civility while interacting with healthcare workers. They are our frontline heroes who work under high-demanding environments to deliver standard healthcare services to patients from all walks of life. To have this dedication met with violence is disheartening and erodes the fabric of our healthcare infrastructure,” she said.

A recently published study by researchers from, among other institutions, Aga Khan University titled *Violence Against Healthcare Workers: ViSHWaS a Cross-Sectional Sub-analysis across the Kenya Region*¹ found that approximately half of healthcare workers in Kenya reported experiencing violence; with the most common forms of violence being verbal and emotional abuse, with a small percentage reporting online harassment.

The study which sampled 1,458 healthcare workers in Kenya found that approximately half (49.9%) reported experiencing violence, with verbal violence (80.6%) and emotional abuse (78.6%) being common. Patients or their relatives were the most common aggressors (44.7%), while supervisors accounted for 12.5%.

CS Nakhumicha cautioned against continued violence on healthcare workers, calling for mutually respectful engagements between the public and healthcare works.

“Violence against healthcare workers will not be tolerated and any person culpable of such an act will be apprehended and face the full wrath of the law. The government remains resolute in its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of our healthcare professionals across the country. Going forward and considering this incident, I call for mutually respectful engagements between members of the public and healthcare givers as we continue to build and maintain a robust health system,” she said.



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CABINET SECRETARY