



# Excellent Health Services Initiative

In August 2007, GFO launched this initiative aimed at improving services in health centres. Despite impressive achievements, notably in the areas of maternal and child health, recent years have witnessed a sharp rise in the number of visits to UNRWA health centres, which is not being matched by increased donor funding.

Based on consultations and statistical data gathered, this initiative will: create more time for patient consultations, computerise data management, prevent the preventable through an increase in health education, improve prescription practices, improve health centre management and governance and improve school health service – including full screening of all children in grades 1 and 4 in 2007-2008 and providing all children in need with eyeglasses and hearing aids.

- Establish area level mechanisms for the safe collection and disposal of medical waste.

### Action Point 4 – Improve Community Relations and Health Education

- Prepare outreach activities that involve health staff into the community; interact regularly with community and camp leaders.
- Prepare educational materials that explain:
  - i) why repeat visits have negative effects on the quality of services;
  - ii) why respecting the appointment time decreases the waiting time for patients;
  - iii) why often a patient does not need medicine prescribed;
  - iv) why antibiotics are dangerous if used improperly.

### Action Point 5 – Improve Prescription Practices

- Prepare detailed guidelines on prescriptions including prescriptions from non-UNRWA clinics, prescriptions in absentia and prescriptions to unaccompanied minors.
- Review treatment protocols for antibiotic use and enforce them; hold Senior Medical Officers accountable for excess antibiotic prescription.
- Improve home visits for chronic patients to avoid in absentia prescriptions.

### Action Point 6 – Improve Management

- Empower Senior Medical Officers to fully manage health centres and their staff from every point of view.
- Focus on good management practices in health centres including: regular management meetings between Senior Medical Officers and Field Health Programme, open dialogue and feedback.
- Recruit administrative assistants to relieve the administrative burden on medical and nursing staff, freeing up time to be spent with patients.

### Action Point 7 – Improve School Health

- Increase the distribution of hearing and visual aids to all children in need.
- Add two mobile dental teams to provide necessary dental care to all children in need.
- Strengthen screening programmes with tutors.
- Improve mental health programmes in schools.



*'Karen Koning AbuZayd, Commissioner General, at Beach Camp Health Centre'*

## Action Plan

### Action Point 1 – Implement Annual Excellence Awards

- Best health centre.
- Best staff in each category.

### Action Point 2 – Increase Consultation Time (first visit in particular)

- Equalise the workloads for all staff and all health centers; re-deployment of staff and revised catchments areas are key.
- Improve the flow of patients in health centres.
- Hire additional medical staff to ensure equality in work loads; recruit any necessary staff through the Job Creation Programme.
- Improve working efficiency in all health centres and pilot a triage nurse system in two health centres.

### Action Point 3 – Improve Infrastructure and Support Services

- Connect all health centres to the internet, increase the number of computers and provide computer training for all health staff.
- Improve waiting areas.



*Filippo Grandi, Deputy Commissioner General, at Shifa' Hospital*

## About UNRWA

UNRWA provides education, healthcare, relief, social services, micro-credit loans and emergency aid to more than 4.4 million Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. UNRWA employs more than 28,000 staff, the vast majority of whom are Palestine refugees, including 20,000 educational staff and 4,000 health workers.