

**The Lutheran World Federation  
August Victoria Hospital  
Jerusalem**

**TALKING POINTS ON THE AVH CASH FLOW CRISIS**

**For use in relation to advocacy toward the U.S. Administration and U.S. Congress**

Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) and other East Jerusalem hospitals receive and treat patients referred to them by the Palestinian Authority (PA). They rely on the PA to pay on a regular basis for the patients it refers to them. Unfortunately, the PA has delayed paying its bills and owes AVH alone over 20 million USD. This has created a cash flow crisis for the LWF's Augusta Victoria Hospital and is putting patients' lives at risk.

The US Government can relieve this crisis by releasing humanitarian funding for the benefit of patients served by Augusta Victoria Hospital and the other East Jerusalem hospitals. So that there is no delay, this humanitarian funding should be separated from the overall cash transfer to the PA already appropriated by Congress and should be released for disbursement by USAID, either directly to the hospitals or to the hospitals through the PA.

**Key talking points** (*updated 2 August 2014*):

- The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has managed Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) for over 65 years. AVH provides life-saving care, including cancer treatment that is not available elsewhere in Gaza or the West Bank. AVH is part of a network of East Jerusalem hospitals that provide a wide range of specialty services within the Palestinian health care system.
- A large percentage of AVH patients are referred to AVH by the Palestinian Authority, so AVH relies heavily on the payments from the PA. AVH is carrying the largest debt among all East Jerusalem hospitals. The PA has not paid its bills to AVH for the last quarter of 2013 and all of 2014. AVH is now owed over 20 million USD. Since the PA continues to refer patients to AVH, the amount owed by the PA to AVH is increasing by over 2 million USD each month. Other East Jerusalem hospitals are in a similar situation, but to a lesser degree.
- East Jerusalem hospitals, already under strain due to the lack of payments from the PA, are now under even more strain with an influx of emergency patients from Gaza. In July 2014, AVH opened a new emergency care unit, with 12 surgical and 4 ICU beds, to treat injured from Gaza. AVH is also sending medical teams and supplies to Gaza; the first AVH team left for Gaza on 1 August 2014.
- AVH will continue to carry a heavy responsibility for the on-going treatment of cancer patients from Gaza and the West Bank, and at the same time will care for wounded and injured from Gaza.
- When the fighting in Gaza is over, or at times when a humanitarian truce or ceasefire is in effect and access to Jerusalem is easier for Gaza patients, AVH will receive more cancer patients and sicker cancer patients due to delays in treatment.

- 200 million USD has already been appropriated by Congress to support the PA, but Congress is delaying release of the funds that would normally be disbursed through the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Funding for Augusta Victoria Hospital and the other East Jerusalem hospitals is *urgent*. **Our request is that the U.S. Government *separate humanitarian funding from the overall cash transfer to the PA and release humanitarian funding in the amount of 50 million USD as soon as possible for the benefit of the patients served by Augusta Victoria Hospital and the other East Jerusalem hospitals.*** This funding, released for disbursement by USAID, will help to save lives and ensure that there is no interruption in the AVH treatment of West Bank and Gaza cancer patients and others needing life-saving care.

#### **About AVH:**

Videos: <http://lwfjerusalem.org/news/videos/>

2013 LWF Jerusalem Annual Report: <http://lwfjerusalem.org/files/2014/04/LWf-2013-Low-for-Website.pdf>

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