



Tamer is a 39-year-old photojournalist from Rafah in the south of the Gaza Strip, working for the Associated Press (AP).

His sight has been deteriorating since he was diagnosed with a congenital eye condition in 2017. Tamer has required extensive treatments and investigations, not all available in the Gaza Strip.

Before May this year, Tamer had received permits from Israel to reach health care in Jordan and at Hadassah Ein Karim Hospital in Jerusalem. While in Jordan, he saw his mother for the first time in nearly 20 years. She is Palestinian and lives in Al-Lydd but has been unable to visit her family in Gaza because of having Israeli citizenship.

“At Hadassah, they told me I would need surgery for my right eye as well, but it would only be possible after my left eye improved... I had smooth access to Hadassah up until May... After that, I lost four appointments. My last application for 1 August was not approved in time for my appointment.”

Table 1: History of Tamer’s applications for an Israeli medical permit and outcomes

Date of application

Hospital

Response

21/02/2019

Hadassah Ein Karim

Denied

09/09/2019

Hadassah Ein Karim

Denied

07/10/2019

Jordan by Shuttle

Approved

31/08/2020

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

01/11/2020

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

04/01/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

08/02/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

14/02/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

01/03/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

22/03/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

18/04/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

26/04/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Approved

24/05/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Delayed

13/06/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Delayed

27/06/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Delayed

01/08/2021

Hadassah Ein Karim

Delayed

Tamer talked about how his illness and the uncertainty of accessing treatment has affected his health and his family life during these past years.

"I want to go back to what I had before, even half the vision I had before. I've gained weight and it hurts to stay at home and not be able to move like I used to. I'll apply as many as needed to get a permit to reach treatment... The AP [Associated Press] is trying and won't stop until we get good news. I need the treatment; I can't stay at home like this. I've had to bear this for three years.

My children are young, and my wife has supported me through all this. The kids see their father stay home rather than the active father they knew before – who was working, who took them out, who took them down to the beach. I'm not able to do any of those things with them now."

As a photojournalist, Tamer worries about his work and his future.

"I'm so afraid of losing my sight. If I lose that, I won't be able to work, and my work is like the air I breathe. The wait is unbearable."

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