



Summary: April 2014

**Access**

- High need for access through Erez. In April the volume of patient applications to Israeli authorities to cross Erez checkpoint for health access (3,877 patients) was 88% higher than the monthly average in 2013. April was the second highest month for applications since the 2010 border-monitoring access. The increase in demand reflects the continuing problems of access through Rafah border to Egypt and out of Gaza, especially chemotherapy and out of medical diagnostics.
- 8% drop in permit approval rates. 79% of patient applicants received a permit in April 2014, down from 86% the previous month. 33 patients (28 females and 28 males, including 7 children) were denied permits (3.87%), 20.23% of patients who applied (239 patients: 220 females and 200 males, including 67 children and 30 elderly people over 70) received no response to their applications and their medical treatment was delayed as a result.
- 4 patients interrogated. 4 men, including one patient over 80 years, were requested to attend Israeli security interviews after applying for a permit to cross Erez. Two so far were granted a permit following the security interviews in April.
- A 9-month-old girl died in April while waiting for approval of permit to exit Gaza (see case study p.7)
- Patients access through Rafah almost stopped. Only 7 Gaza patients were able to travel to Egypt through Rafah in April, compared to more than 3,400 in April 2013, before the closure.

**Referrals**

- Increase in health referrals. Total health referrals of Gaza patients (3,882) to outside facilities were the second highest recorded and 54% higher than the monthly average in 2013.
- Medical reasons for referrals. The top ten specialties receiving referrals for treatment were: oncology—202 referrals (28.22%), surgery—179 (24.82%), nuclear medicine—120 (3.24%), heart catheterization—84 (22.27%), orthopaedics—110 (29.54%), orthodontics—118 (31.57%), neurology—84 (22%), paediatrics—89 (24.88%), haematology—69 (18.74%), general surgery—47 (12.68%). The remaining 23.55% of referrals were to 22 other specialties.
- Gender gap. The gender gap in referrals continued: 55.52% male patients versus 44.47% female patients. 23.23% of all referrals were children aged 0-17 years and 18.13% were patients aged over 80 years.
- Estimated cost of referrals for April 2014: 102 9,276 USD.

26 May 2014, Jerusalem – WHO has published its April 2014 monthly report on referral of patients from the Gaza Strip. Access to health services is a fundamental element of the right to health and obstacles to this right can compromise health status. International humanitarian law and human rights law both uphold the right to health as a basic human right, and particularly call for states to protect, respect and fulfil the right to access health care, especially during situations of conflict.

This report is directed to all duty bearers: United Nations agencies, humanitarian organizations, the international community, international nongovernmental organizations, the Ministry of Health and other concerned authorities.

The WHO occupied Palestinian territory office has been monitoring referrals of patients and access to health care outside the Gaza Strip since 2006, as well as annual data for both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Data on referrals, permits and crossings are analysed and a monthly report is produced to show the status of access to health care. The report shows monitoring data on referrals, permit procedures and humanitarian access out of Gaza Strip via the two crossings at the Erez checkpoint and Rafah border.

[April 2014](#)

[Monthly RAD reports](#)

[Annual RAD report 2011 and 2012](#)

[Annual RAD report 2010](#)

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