15 February 2022 - Zaina is a 10-year-old girl from the Gaza Strip, who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in June 2020.

After her initial diagnosis, Zaina received chemotherapy at Rantisi Hospital in the Gaza Strip. It was a difficult time for Zaina and her family.

"Zaina suffered with pain and with side effects from the chemotherapy," her father commented. "When she lost her hair, she kept asking me to buy her wigs. We bought several, but she didn't like them, she kept saying that her hair is better. Every time I took her out with me, she would ask for a new one – she has at least twenty! It was very tough for us as a family and for my wife especially. She used to ask what we had done to deserve this. Luckily our families were really supportive." Zaina is the oldest of five children and her family lives in Gaza City, where her mother works as to keep the family home and her father works in a mobile phone store.

Zaina completed the course of chemotherapy in November 2020, after showing early improvements. However, during her follow up in December, doctors found that the tumour was still there. She needed a special type of scan called a PET scan, to assess the activity of the tumour, and decide the next steps for treatment – including potential radiotherapy. Neither the scan nor radiotherapy is available in the Gaza Strip, so Zaina was referred to Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) in East Jerusalem for an appointment in February 2021.

From February to October 2021, Zaina's family submitted four applications for appointments for her to receive investigations and treatment at AVH. None was approved in time for her appointments.

Appointments

Referral hospital

Israeli permit response

7 February 2021

Augusta Victoria Hospital

Delayed: under study

28 February 2021

Augusta Victoria Hospital

Delayed: under study

19 April 2021

Augusta Victoria Hospital

Application not submitted

3 October 2021

Augusta Victoria Hospital

Delayed: under study

31 October 2021

Augusta Victoria Hospital

Delayed: under study

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