

ZAMBÉZIA PROVINCE

Patients without food for four months at the Rural Hospital of Gurué

- The complaint came from the district director of Health in Gurué who described the situation as regrettable, in a meeting with the Governor of Zambézia, Pio Matos. “The food situation at the Gurué District Hospital is deplorable. If His Excellency (Governor) visits the hospital today, he will notice that we don’t have lunch to give to the patients. We have been without a state budget since December. It is not easy to manage the hospital without food and hygiene material”, described the director in a report shown by Stv on Monday night¹.



¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EctNvYVZQ_I



The situation is so critical that the nurses even make contributions with their own money to help the sick with at least one meal. “I don’t know what’s going on. I have already shared several times with the provincial director of Health in Zambézia and with the Administrator of the district of Gurué”, continued the district director of Health. At the same meeting, the Administrator of Gurué explained that the district government has not been receiving funds from the State Budget since December 2022, a situation that most affect the Health and Education sectors.

“The money was placed (district government account) on the 28th of December 2022, but it was not available until the 31st of December. This dictated the return of funds once the financial year had closed. We couldn’t pay off debts to suppliers or buy food. We’ve been asking for support and we’re still asking today. This also affects boarding education centers. A few days ago, we had to contribute and we bought three bags of maize and delivered them to boarding centers”, explained the Administrator of Gurué.

Whatever the reasons of an administrative nature, the fact is that the State is violating the human rights of hospitalized patients by subjecting them to inhuman and degrading treat-

ment. The right to medical and health care that all citizens enjoy (article 89 of the Constitution of the Republic) also implies the provision of decent food to patients hospitalized in health centers and hospitals of the National Health System.

The Charter of the Patient’s Rights and Duties approved by Resolution No. 73/2007, of December 18, of the Council of Ministers, establishes that the patient has the right to be treated with respect for human dignity. This is a fundamental human right, which acquires particular importance in a situation of illness. This is a right that “must be respected by all health professionals involved in the care process, both in terms of technical aspects and in terms of welcoming, guiding and referring patients”.

The Charter makes it clear that “existing resources must be fully put at the service of the patient and the community, within the limits of availability. It turns out, however, that the Government is not putting existing resources at the service of patients hospitalized at the Rural Hospital of Gurué, subjecting patients to food deprivation that could worsen their clinical condition.

Gurué district government has been without funds since December 2022, a situation that

affects the health sector the most, with local hospitals without funds to feed hospitalized patients.

The food situation at the Gurué district hospital is deplorable. If His Excellency visits the hospital today, he will notice that we don't have lunch for the in-patients. Since December we have had no State budget... it is not easy to manage the hospital without food and hygiene materials. Even the nurses make contributions to help the sick with at least one meal. The Government must intervene immediately, making resources available to the hospital for the purchase of food and hygiene materials.

The Health Policy and the Strategy for its


Implementation approved by Resolution n.º 13/2021, of April 16, recognizes that access to food in quantity and diversification contributes to the growth of the human body and the maintenance of vital functions. The balance in the consumption of nutrients is vital to ensure health. Nutritional imbalances, whether excess or defect, are closely associated with conditions and diseases such as malnutrition and cardiovascular disease. The same Government that defends, through the Health Policy, the increase in food availability and the diversification of the diet, is not providing basic food to patients hospitalized in a hospital of the National Health System.



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