

No diabetic patients left behind: UNRWA's emergency response to ensure diabetic care in north of West Bank of Palestine amid the escalations



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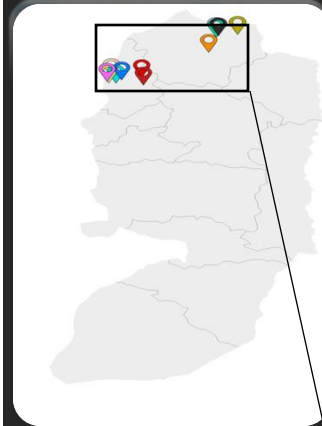
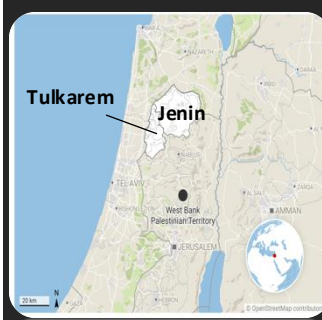
BACKGROUND:

UNRWA operates 43 primary health care centres (HCs) across the West Bank. The recent escalations and military operations in the northern area of the West Bank have resulted in displacement of over 40,000 people, who have settled temporarily in nearby villages and other sites across the area.

As part of the escalation from December 2024 to February 2025, Israeli military forces forcibly shut down three main UNRWA health centres—Jenin, Nur Shams, and Tulkarm—in the northern West Bank. In response, UNRWA established five emergency clinics and supported the Qabatiya Health Centre to sustain health services for the displaced population.

The three closed health centres provided diabetes care under well established NCD programme including insulin and other medications supply to 5273 patients. Depriving those patients from these services puts them under a significant risk of complications, deterioration of their overall health, mental health and potentially death.

This study aims to track the management of diabetic patients following the closure of the three UNRWA health centres where they were originally registered.



5273 Diabetic patients (63.2% females, 36.8% males) received insulin and diabetes care in the three forcibly closed UNRWA health centres. Of them, 62.8% aged 60 and above, and **78 persons** were **type 1 Diabetes (solely relying on insulin)**.

93% of all, received diabetes care in UNRWA health centres (emergency clinics and preexisting HCs) including doctor consultation, laboratory checks, health promotion, insulin, and medications.

89% through UNRWA emergency health clinics and mobile units: 86% of Jenin patients, 93.6 Nur shams, 92.7% of Tulkarm.

4% in other UNRWA health centres across the West Bank.

All with type 1 diabetes received health care in UNRWA health installations, with **two** newly diagnosed cases in 2025 through the emergency clinics and mobile units' teams.

The majority of diabetic patients who received healthcare by the emergency clinics were from Jenin, Nur Shams, and Tulkarm refugee camps.

METHODS

The analysis drew on real-world data extracted from UNRWA's Electronic Health System. Data catching patients' last attendance to clinics during 2024 and 2025 was extracted. Frequency analysis was performed using Excel.

DISCUSSION

- The health system, structure, and dynamic response of UNRWA health department can present an example for organizations operating in similar contexts and can guide future humanitarian research and practice.
- The results highlight UNRWA's dedication and commitment to sustaining health services for diabetic patients amid the crisis.
- Continued follow-up is needed for diabetic patients who did not attend any health center after the closures.
- UNRWA is the main holistic healthcare provider for Palestine refugees the West Bank. UNRWA should be adequately funded to sustain services.

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