

*Hospital manager describes
catastrophic situation at southern
Gaza health center*

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Rafah, December 5 (RHC)-- The situation in health centers in southern Gaza is catastrophic, the manager of one of the few hospitals still operating in Rafah told Reuters in an interview on Monday.

Marwan Alhams, of the Al-Najjar Hospital, said that doctors were unable to treat patients because of a lack of medicine and personnel. "The situation in Al-Najjar hospital reflects the situation in all Gaza hospitals — the situation is catastrophic, we look at cases and do not know what [to do]", the doctor said in an interview filmed at the hospital.

Alhams said the hospital is completely overwhelmed, having to attend to a growing number of up to 800,000 people who have been displaced, and medical teams expect that number to increase. "We do not know where to put those refugees," he said.

"First aid clinics are struggling to provide assistance to those with chronic illnesses, and in those shelters, like schools, we have sent doctors to and nurses, but there is no sufficient medicine to treat the refugees," Alhams said.

Alhams also said he is concerned about the spread of diseases like cholera due to the absence of drinking water, the damaged sewage systems and the lack of available bathrooms. "Hospitals started receiving cases of chronic diarrhea, chronic vomiting, high fever, spread of skin diseases, like chicken pox and scabies... The queues to bathrooms in shelter centers are hours long queues," he told Reuters.

The doctor also reported that cases of anemia are growing among children due to "malnutrition and dehydration."

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