

Over 1,000 interns deployed

By Geoffrey Mutegeki

At least 1,170 medical interns have been deployed in health facilities across the country.

The interns include medical doctors, pharmacists, dentists, nurses and midwives fresh from universities. They are required to undergo the mandatory one-year hands-on medical training before acquiring a practising licence. Of these, 529 are female.

The Ministry of Health senior spokesperson, Emmanuel Ainebyona, said those who were to undertake internship had to apply for temporary registration to their respective professional bodies.

"They applied through their respective professional bodies and their names were sent to us for deployment," Ainebyona said.

He said the interns were randomly deployed to various health facilities across the country. The facilities include mainly government regional hospitals with a few private health facilities, including Nsambya, Virika, Kagando Hospital, Kisizi, Kitovu, Lacor, and Kiwoko hospitals.

Most of the interns are doctors and nurses totalling 554 and 331 respectively.

Pharmacists are 177. Midwifery and dental have the lowest number of interns with 76 and 28 respectively.

The training is a pre-requisite for one to be registered by the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners' Council (UMDPC) for medical practice in Uganda.

BETWEEN THE LINES

■ Mulago Hospital with 167 is taking most of the interns followed by Mbarara Hospital with 77. Naguru Hospital, with 52, has the third highest number of interns whereas Kawempe and Kiruddu hospitals have 45 and 44 interns respectively.

During the one-year of internship, newly qualified doctors work under direct supervision of specialists in hospitals, where they put their mainly theoretical knowledge into practice.

This is mainly to help them gain experience and empower them with practical skills.

Most interns are from Makerere University with at least 238 interns and Kampala International University with

about 219. Others are from Gulu, Busitema, Mbarara, Lira and Uganda Christian University, Aga Khan University, Bugema University, International Health Science University (IHSU) and Bishop Stuart University among others.

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The deployment of interns comes as relief to some overstretched health facilities which have few health workers.

Under the guidelines introduced in 2016 by the health ministry, medical interns are expected to rotate in four major areas of internal medicine, general surgery, paediatrics and child health and obstetrics as well as gynaecology for a period of three months each.

Each intern training centre is expected to have at least two supervising specialists in each discipline. The period for internship training shall be one year.