29 December 2016 – Health workers in camps hosting internally displaced persons in Qayyarah, south of Mosul, are struggling to cope with the growing numbers of patients seeking health services.

Dr Saleh Mohammed is a medical doctor working in a primary health care centre in Jaddaa camp, which serves a total population of more than 11 000 people. He treats an average of 150 patients every day. According to Dr Saleh, the 2 leading causes of disease among internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Jaddaa camp are acute respiratory tract infections and urinary tract infections. Other conditions include scabies and leishmaniasis.

“Over the past few months, we have received basic lifesaving medicines from WHO, the Ninewa Directorate of Health and other health partners, including International Medical Corps (IMC), and International Organization for Migration (IOM). However additional basic lifesaving medicines are needed, mostly for women and children,” added Dr Saleh.

“The high patient case load and limited number of medical doctors available at the health facility makes it difficult to meet the basic health needs of many people,” said Dr Saleh.

Dr Saleh also says that the lack of female doctors, obstetricians and gynaecologists creates challenges in responding to health needs of women who may not be comfortable consulting with male doctors.

Qayyarah sub district currently hosts more than 25 000 people fleeing the fighting from Mosul, all of whom live in camps. As more IDPs arrive daily, the Ninewa Directorate of Health is struggling to keep up with health needs as a result of limited health partners in the camps, shortages of health workers, including medical doctors and nurses. Lack of laboratory services in the camps is compounding the situation.

Since October, health services in Qayyarah subdistrict have been overstretched. Lack of security has caused many health workers to flee, while several health facilities have been damaged as a result of the violence. WHO has provided medical supplies to the Ninewa Directorate of Health to support the response in Qayyarah, as well as provided 2 mobile clinics, an ambulance and 2 caravans positioned at Jadaa camp.

Establishing a comprehensive primary health care facility in Jadaa camp, run by the United Iraqi Medical Society (UIMS) with support from WHO is expected to reduce the pressure on the current facility. WHO, Ninewa Directorate of Health and UIMS plan to construct 18 consultation rooms that will cater for the needs of 10 000 IDPs.

http://www.emro.who.int/irq/iraq-news/health-workers-struggle-to-cope-with-the-growing-number-of-internally-displaced-people-in-qayyarah.html