

## **St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus: So much is riding on a new ambulance**



*"No safe and operational ambulance?  
No Accreditation.  
No Hospital."*



*Both the years and the mileage have taken  
a toll on St. Luke's ambulance.  
We are grateful for your help.*



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In 2003 St. Luke's Hospital put an ambulance in service to provide emergency transport for thousands of patients in Nablus and the surrounding towns and governates. In 2017 alone, according to St. Luke's Director Dr. Walid Kerry, the hospital was called upon to make more than 2,100 emergency trips.

The vehicle's wear and tear after 15 years of daily use, break-downs and disruption of service required St. Luke's to divert an additional 2,000 calls to other medical service providers to ensure the safe transport of patients to treatment.

However, not until this year, when the Palestinian Ministry of Health announced tighter standards in its annual hospital accreditation review, did the liability of using an aging ambulance rise to the level of concern. The Ministry of Health requires each hospital to demonstrate that it can deploy a well-equipped, safe, and operational ambulance as a condition for annual accreditation. No safe and operational ambulance? No accreditation. No hospital.

For the people in the five governates of northern Palestine - Nablus, Tubas, Salfit, Qalquiya, and Tulkarem - who seek care at St. Luke's because it offers the region the highest level of patient care - the possibility of losing access to medical treatment due to an elderly ambulance is frightening. For donors of AFEDJ, who have been long-time supporters of the mission of St. Luke's by providing for nurses' salaries and staffing clinics in outlying villages, the prospect of St. Luke's losing its accreditation should be of deep concern.

Other services are also vulnerable: St. Luke's ambulance offers the best possible medical transportation of patients who are referred to MRIs or advanced CT scans in Ramallah and elsewhere.

A new Volkswagen van is listed at \$59,000. The conversion process, estimated at \$20,000, emergency equipment and supplies - \$28,000 - and about \$4,000 in insurance and licensing fees, bring the total cost to \$110,000. The price tag on a new ambulance dwarfs the cost of losing safe and reliable medical transport and, because of lost accreditation, access to a wide range of services provided by a crucial institution serving thousands of people in the region.

Your support will ensure that St. Luke's will remain a place of welcome and healing to the people of the region irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, or ability to pay.