



**TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL**

Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare Programme

REAL LIVES TRUE STORIES: HEALTH

**Ebola Sto
with M**



Transparency International is a global movement with one vision: a world in which government, business, civil society and the daily lives of people are free of corruption. Through more than 100 chapters worldwide and an international secretariat in Berlin, we are leading the fight against corruption to turn this vision into reality.

The Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare Programme is a new global initiative based in Transparency International UK. Applying Transparency International's strengths and expertise, the Programme's overall goal is to improve global health and healthcare outcomes for the benefit of all people of all ages. It aims to achieve this by reducing corruption and promoting transparency, integrity and accountability within the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors.

ISBN: 978-1-910778-52-4

© Cover photo: Flickr.com/DfID

© Stethoscope Icon: Made by Freepik from flaticon.com;
Heart: Vecteezy.com; lavarmsg
CPI Logo: Transparency International

© Photos (in order of appearance): Flickr/Ernest Duffoo, Flickr/Photo Unit, Flickr/Khowaga, Flickr/David Ortmann, Flickr/DfID, Flickr/Whoisthatfreakwiththecamera, Flickr/Flickr/Greencolander, enki22/Foter/CC BY-ND, Flickr/Samm Cox, Flickr/USAID, Flickr/Jason Pratt

Every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of the information contained in this report. All information was believed to be correct as of April 2016. Nevertheless, Transparency International cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of its use for other purposes or in other contexts.

© 2016 Transparency International. All rights reserved.

Printed on 100% recycled paper.

Designed by Philip Jones - Transparency International UK




11 TRUE STORIES


...about very different people, in very different contexts.
But with one common message: change is always possible, even when the odds seem stacked against you. From India to Zimbabwe, these are stories about standing up and fighting back against corruption in health.



HEALTH HAZARD

HONDURAS

 73.1 years is the national life expectancy

 31 / 100

• • •

In Honduras, where 60 per cent live in poverty and corruption in the health industry has serious repercussions for people in need. That's why, in 2013, when a state-controlled medical warehouse was accused of corruption, immediate action was crucial.

The warehouse in question handled around US\$24 million worth of drugs yearly that are bought by the government and is supposed to service the public hospitals and health centres in Honduras. According to reports, however, corruption in the sales and distribution of pharmaceuticals was endangering the lives of untold numbers of Hondurans.

Responding to the allegations, our partner in Honduras, Asociación por una Sociedad más Justa (ASJ), started an investigation.

They found proof that millions of dollars' worth of medicine were being siphoned off from the state-controlled warehouse, possibly to be sold on the black market. Beyond the missing drugs, counterfeit and expired drugs were making their way to hospitals undetected due to a lack of control on medication entering the depot.

One week after ASJ presented the report and formal complaint, the

Minister of Health ordered a raid on the warehouse, which was put under military control. This measure was taken to prevent employees of the warehouse or other actors from removing or destroying evidence.


The raids were swiftly followed by thorough investigation of the case and resulted in the arrest of six people, including warehouse employees, pharmaceutical suppliers and civil servants. As part of the investigation, one state pharmaceutical supplier was found to be hiding 200 boxes of stolen medicine stashed away in her home.


Importantly, the system itself has changed. Thanks to ASJ's efforts, the president announced that civil servants would no longer be in charge of buying and distributing medicines in Honduras given the obvious risk of conflict of interest. From now on there will be an independent trust responsible for the buying and distribution of pharmaceuticals to state-run hospitals, and ASJ is one of three civil society organisations tasked with keeping watch over the trust's work.


The work of ASJ and its coalition partners in this case required a great deal of persistence, meticulous investigative skills and a strong ability to work with reform-minded actors for change.

But above all it required a great deal of courage to speak out in a country as violent as Honduras. The results, however – new laws, criminal convictions and lives saved – are real and immeasurable.

ZIMBABWE

 57.5 years is the national life expectancy

 65% think health and medical services are corrupt

 21 / 100

Accompanying her 84 year old mother, Rudo* entered a municipal clinic in Harare.

Established to increase health access for Zimbabwe's poor and vulnerable, clinics like these are supposed to offer a range of free services to children and the elderly; and affordable treatment for others.

But the reality can look different. After waiting for five hours, the two women reached the front of the queue, only to be told by the nurses that they'd have to pay before they could be seen—US\$5 for the check-up, US\$3 for the medication.

Unable to pay, Rudo showed the nurses her mother's health card, proof that she was entitled to free healthcare as a senior citizen. Yet Rudo says the nurses dismissed it, and turned the two women away.

More than 250 kilometres away, Shona* was also being turned away from her local municipal clinic. As an expectant mother, she had saved money to register with her local centre three months into her pregnancy, entitling her to routine check-ups throughout her pregnancy.

Arriving at the clinic for her first appointment, she was confronted with new demands. If she wanted to be examined, she was told, she would have to pay an additional US\$3 in "consultation fees" each time she visited.

Unable to raise the money, she left without being seen, and later gave birth at home without medical supervision.

When she returned to the clinic to have her baby vaccinated, she faced another unexpected payment. Giving birth at home was not permitted, she was told. She would be fined a as punishment.

Our anti-corruption legal advice teams met Rudo and Shona at outreach events in 2012. Their stories were two of many – and we've heard more since.

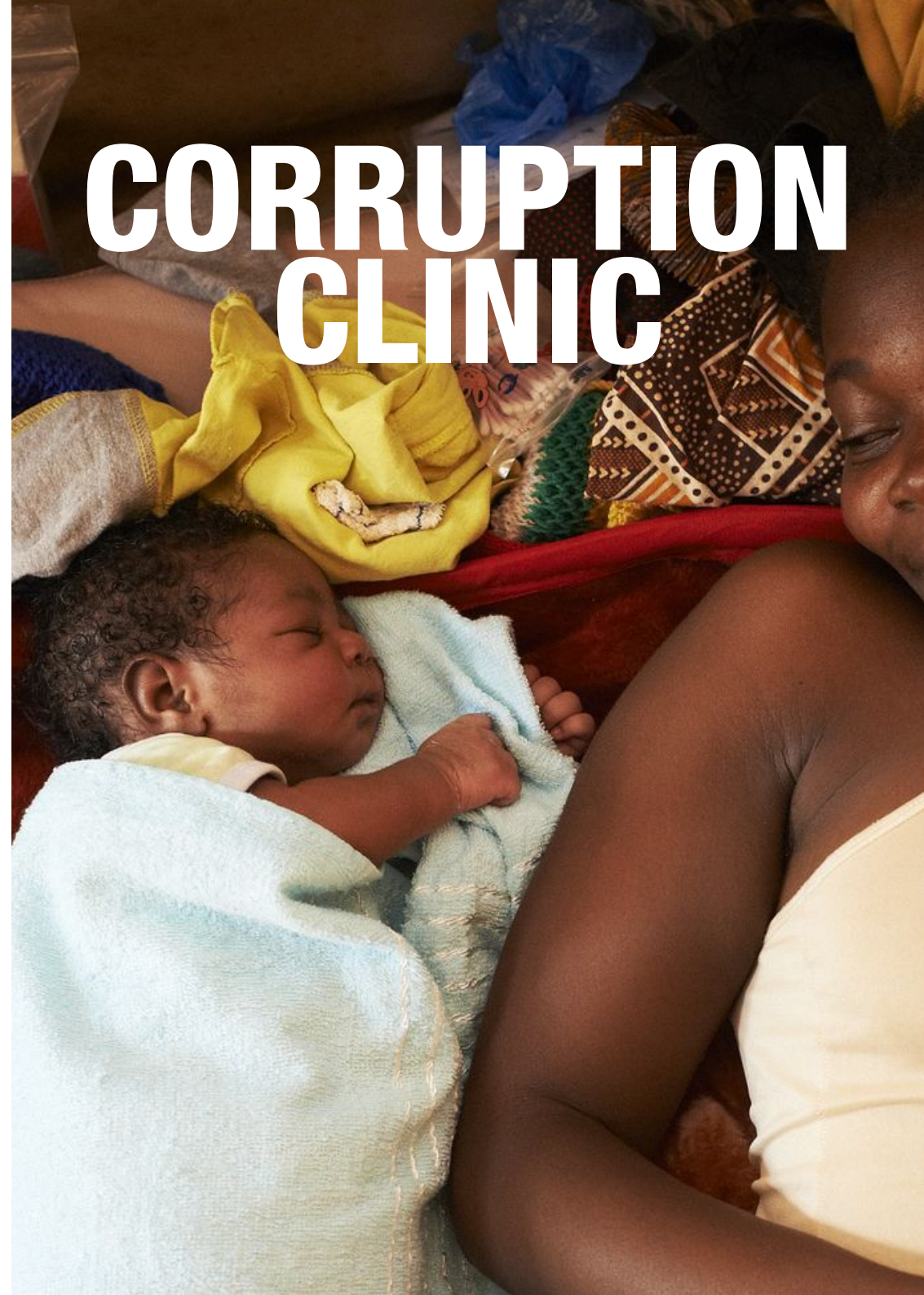
"We were told that children under five were denied treatment if their parents failed to supply consultation fees – despite the fact that they're supposed to be treated for free," said Danai, Legal Officer at our anti-corruption legal advice centre. "Other people reported that HIV drugs meant for free distribution were being sold at a fee by local nurses."

Acting on behalf of the victims, the team sent written accounts of the alleged corruption to authorities, urging them to take action.

"This is a wake-up call to other officers within the health system that we will not sit and watch while efforts to improve the health sector are being derailed by a few selfish officials," says Danai.


*Names have been changed.


CORRUPTION CLINIC




EMERGENCY HELP

MOROCCO

 74 years is the national life expectancy

 77% think health and medical services are corrupt

 CPI 36 / 100



Kamal's* anxiety increased with the heat of the day. His 11-year-old daughter, who is partially blind, had injured her head and urgently needed a brain scan. It was a hot, sticky day in Casablanca, and they sat uncomfortably in the hospital, waiting for the doctor to arrive.

Eventually, the nurse in charge of brain scans spoke to them. He told Kamal that it would be several months before they would be able to find an appointment for his daughter. If he wanted her to be seen sooner, Kamal should return early the next morning with 500 dirhams (US\$60), on top of the standard 200-dirham (US\$24) scan fee. For Kamal, who is a vendor at a local market, paying the nurse would mean finding around a third of his monthly income overnight.

It's a dilemma that regularly faces too many parents around the world – pay an illegal backhand, or risk the health of your child. Fortunately, Kamal knew of an alternative. Calling our anti-corruption helpline, he reported what had happened to him.

When our advisors recommended that he file a complaint directly to the Attorney General's Office, he quickly agreed, and presented the complaint in person that day.

As a result, he wasn't alone when he arrived at the hospital the next morning. Unnoticed by the nurse, the two men who arrived with Kamal were undercover police officers. When the nurse arrived and asked for his money, the officers arrested him on the spot. After a fast-moving court case, the nurse was imprisoned for two months. In the meantime, Kamal's daughter received the scan she so urgently needed – free from any excess charge.


With help, more citizens could follow this example. "All Moroccans are legally entitled to call for police assistance when faced with bribery, but most people don't know about this right," says Ali Lahlou, coordinator of the legal advice centre who helped Kamal on his case.


"In addition, others are reluctant to act on it because they think the judiciary will simply ask for more bribes. They also fear retaliation by the authorities against which they file complaints."

Kamal agrees. "We need to make sure there is real protection and support for people who speak out," he says, "then more people in situations like mine can come forward and take action against corruption."

*Name has been changed.

PALESTINE

 72.9 years is the national life expectancy

 22% think health and medical services are corrupt



The difficult conditions facing many Palestinians, where almost a third are unemployed, means that the job protection and social benefits provided by a workers' union are vital.

When Salem* contacted his local union for advice on his health insurance, he was confronted with an unexpected charge of 80 New Israeli Shekels (€14) - more than the average daily wage in the West Bank.

Salem later discovered the service should have been provided for free.

Disillusioned by the experience, Salem promptly contacted Transparency International Palestine, AMAN.

He reported what had happened and sought advice on what steps could be taken to recover his money.

Concerned that other citizens might also be paying for a service that they were entitled to at no cost, AMAN reported the case to the Minister of Labour.

A committee was established to investigate whether Salem's case was an isolated incident or if similar discrepancies had occurred in the public service delivery at other unions.

The investigation revealed that other workers' unions in the West Bank had also unfairly charged for services that should have been free.


This discovery prompted the Minister of Labour to write to each of the unions and explain that such practices were illegal and that any unions found flouting these rules would do so at the risk of facing stiff penalties.

The ministry made sure that Salem got a fair deal on his health insurance and, in order to raise public awareness of the registration procedure, produced a publication on the health insurance system.


This case is one of thousands processed by Transparency International's Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres. The centres, now in more than 60 countries, provide free assistance to victims and witnesses of corruption, helping them to pursue their complaints.


*Name has been changed.


DIAGNOSING ABUSE



INDIA

 68 years is the national life expectancy

 56% think health and medical services are corrupt

 CPI 38 / 100



It was not like any other day at the maternal health centre. Four hundred people were gathered - villagers, the media, senior staff, even the village council. At the front of the crowd stood a woman with a microphone. She read the centre's records aloud. One by one, women in the crowd stood up to verify they had received the items assigned to them. It's what is known as a social audit, and one woman was behind it all.

Rashi* is the designated specialist at this "Anganwadi" centre - local maternal health clinics created as part of a national Indian programme to cut maternal and infant mortality. Their name is derived from the Hindi word for courtyard ('angan'), which in rural India is the social heart of a house. Just as a courtyard is a centre buzzing with activity, an Anganwadi centre is a hub for mothers and babies in communities across the country.

Rashi had been running the centre since 2003, providing food and nutritional support to pregnant women and new mothers.

Yet in 2011, it looked as if her work might be cut short. Visiting the centre

for a routine inspection, the regional supervisor refused to sign-off on the centre's work. The reason, Rashi says, is that she would not pay a bribe.

Rashi persevered in opening the centre daily, despite the fact she had now lost much of her funding. Yet without the monthly signatures, her work went unrecorded. In reality she was working daily. On paper, it looked as if she had shut up shop.

Then a new supervisor started. She offered Rashi a choice: pay 70,000 rupees (US\$1,550) and the centre would be re-registered, no questions asked. If she didn't pay, she'd lose her job - the supervisor claimed the payment would be a penalty for "absenteeism" - the money was roughly the same as her salary during the months the centre had not been signed for.

When Rashi approached Transparency International, we suggested she clear her name with a "social audit" - a public event where all those who had benefitted from the centre during the supposed months of closure could stand up and make their voices heard.

Hearing about the plans shocked her seniors in the office. They visited her centre and released the money due to Rashi for the running of her centre. Still Rashi went ahead with the audit. Together with Transparency International, she gathered the women at the centre of the village, inviting the supervisor to watch. As client after client confirmed Rashi's honesty, the case closed with a public reconciliation between her and the supervisor.


*Name has been changed.


SPEAKING OUT




BIRTH RIGHTS

NEPAL

 69.6 years is the national life expectancy

 37% think health and medical services are corrupt

 27 / 100

Childbirth can be a dangerous prospect in much of Nepal's remote mountainous regions. Following custom, most women give birth at home, without medical equipment or supervision. When there are complications, treatment is administered by a local birth attendant with little if any formal training. As a result, as many as six Nepalese women die giving birth every day. Many of them are teenagers.

Looking to improve the situation, the government started a new incentive programme that offers small cash allowances to women who gave birth in hospital. It's the kind of initiative that is desperately needed, and yet in one district local officials failed to promote it among their constituents. Instead, they created lists of fake mothers, and pocketed the money themselves.

"In one district local officials failed to promote the scheme among their constituents. Instead, they created lists of fake mothers, and pocketed the money themselves."


When a whistleblower rang our centre to report the situation, we helped him break the story to the media. Making national headlines, the case helped bring the plight of rural women into the public sphere. Exposed, the officials admitted their wrongdoing, and returned the money to the state coffers to be redistributed where it's needed most – among expectant mothers. We're keeping watch to make sure it stays that way.


*Name has been changed.


This is just one example of our work around the world. Active in more than 100 countries, we've already helped thousands of citizens to stand up and challenge corruption. With your support, we can do even more.

Find out how you can get involved: www.transparency.org.uk/pharma-and-healthcare

KOSOVO

 71.1 years is the national life expectancy

 70% think health and medical services are corrupt

 33 / 100



With price tags running into millions of dollars, health contracts mean big money for winning companies and high risks of corruption – particularly when deals are kept from public scrutiny.

In Kosovo – still in a transitional phase – it's vital that public money is well spent. With limited resources, adding one drug to the state essential medicines list can mean removing another. That's why our centre keeps watch over new procurement contracts. Consulting with experts, we help ensure contracts go to the best bidder, at the best price. In late 2012, one item started to raise alarm bells.

Examining the medication on the state's essential drugs list, we found an anti-nausea drug listed under treatments for cancer. And it wasn't only that it had been misclassified – the drug also seemed to be mispriced.

“Two years earlier the state had purchased two different kinds of anti-vomiting medication at a cost of just €7,920,” says Merita, who led the monitoring initiative. “Now, the two previous brands had been cancelled

in favour of a new alternative, and the total price had skyrocketed to €1.2 million.”

Put another way – there had been a 15,000 per cent increase in the bill. It wasn't only that this new medication was almost 60 times more expensive per unit, the quantities on order had more than doubled.

We asked pharmaceutical experts if there were any medicinal benefits to this new alternative. They couldn't find any. We also looked to see if any neighbouring countries chose to rely exclusively on this alternative. No examples were found.

When we released our findings to the media, the health minister swiftly organised a committee to look into the charges. As the final authority for signing high-value contracts, the minister has the power to refuse a deal. Following consultation with the committee, he publicly accepted our analysis, and refused to sign off. The medication was removed from the essential drugs list, and reclassified as an anti-nausea treatment.


“One item started to raise alarm bells.”


Taken up by the state prosecutor and the local economic police, an investigation is ongoing into how the case came about. While there have been no official results so far, one message is clear already, says Merita. “Health procurement is too important to be kept in the shadows. For both our budget and our safety, the public has to be able to keep watch.”


DRUG DEAL

HEALTH PROBLEM

AZERBAIJAN

 70.8 years is the national life expectancy

 44% think health and medical services are corrupt

 29 / 100

While other children were learning to read and playing outside, six year old Ayan* was left behind. Blind in one eye, and visually impaired in the other, she urgently needed an operation to correct her vision. Yet when her mother took her to the hospital, the answer was always the same: pay US\$1,200 (illegally) or no treatment.

Unable to afford the illegal fees, her mother had repeatedly contacted the Ministry of Health for assistance, but they had never responded.

“It’s a common problem in Azerbaijan”, says Kanan from our centre, “institutions are often reluctant to help people who don’t have money or powerful connections.”

Ayan’s mother heard about our centre from a neighbour who had attended an outreach event. She contacted us asking for help.

Working with her to write another letter to the ministry, we also submitted an application on her behalf. Seeing she was not alone, the ministry started to act.


Officials contacted the family, saying they would send Ayan to hospital to operate on her blind eye. A year later, she underwent her second operation, successfully treating both eyes. Today, she can see without any difficulty.


“Ayan urgently needed an operation to correct her vision. Yet when her mother took her to the hospital, the answer was always the same: pay US\$1,200 or no treatment.”


“We want to make sure that all citizens – regardless of their position – get the treatment they deserve,” says Kanan. “We’re campaigning for better health funding to reduce the temptation to request bribes, and continuing our outreach events to help citizens understand and uphold their rights.”

*Name has been changed

CZECH REPUBLIC

 78.3 years is the national life expectancy

 43% think health and medical services are corrupt

 CPI 56 / 100



On taking the Hippocratic Oath a doctor swears to treat a patient as best they can. But what would it take to break that vow?

One Canadian pharmaceutical company seemed keen to put this to the test. It reportedly offered a group of Czech physicians an expenses paid week at a luxury beach resort in Kenya for their annual Czech Urological Society meeting at a cost of around €2,000 per head.

One of the invited doctors was concerned that this generosity would come with implicit conditions; that he would be encouraged to prescribe the company's drugs regardless of their suitability for patients. In doing so he would be compromising the integrity of his patient-doctor relationship, and potentially even his patients' health.

The doctor contacted Transparency International (TI) Czech Republic, who then approached the police. The case drew widespread public criticism, prompting the pharmaceutical company to renege on the Kenyan trip and relocate the meeting to a Czech hotel.

TI Czech Republic has reason to believe that coercive practices like these are not uncommon. Indeed, the doctor who approached the organisation claimed that many Czech doctors saw such gifts as mere perks of the job, and failed to reflect on the ethical implications of accepting them.


Capitalising on the publicity surrounding the case, TI Czech Republic initiated working groups with the International Association of Pharmaceutical Companies (IAPC) and the State Institution for Drug Control. The pharmaceutical company was ordered to pay a fine for unethical conduct, and the IAPC set about negotiating stricter and more comprehensive rules about gift-giving. The Ministry of Health also drafted regulations on medical advertisements and marketing campaigns.


Since these practices are not strictly illegal, curbing them will largely depend on change within the industry, and public pressure from outside it. TI Czech Republic continues to work to promote both.


CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

HEALTHCARE UNDER THREAT

MOLDOVA

 71.5 years is the national life expectancy

 70% think health and medical services are corrupt

 33 / 100



At an emergency clinic in rural Moldova eight nurses received an unexpected pay cut. The nurses asked their managers why they hadn't been paid in full, and were told that they'd been performing poorly, and wouldn't be compensated. The nurses protested, and their bosses threatened to fire them and close down the medical centre. Doing so would deprive 15,000 people of local emergency healthcare.

One of the nurses, Irina*, turned to Transparency International (TI) Moldova for help. She brought a petition with her, signed by 150 local residents who were concerned about the centre's potential closure. TI Moldova helped Irina draft a letter to the county prosecutor and the state medical authorities in the capital Chişinău. The county prosecutor claimed that there was nothing illegal in withholding a proportion of the nurses' salaries if they had been performing badly.

The health centre's upper management, however, was greatly concerned by the threat to close down the centre. It assured the nurses that this wouldn't happen, and saw to it that they were paid in full for the hours they had worked.

“The nurses protested, and their bosses threatened to fire them and close down the medical centre”


The medical centre was not only kept open, but it was assigned additional doctors and provided with much needed ambulance equipment. The local authorities have also assured all staff members that their salaries will not be arbitrarily withheld.


*Names have been changed


This is just one example of our work around the world. Active in more than 100 countries, we've already helped thousands of citizens to stand up and challenge corruption. With your support, we can do even more.

Find out how you can get involved: www.transparency.org.uk/pharma-and-healthcare

ARMENIA

 74.7 years is the national life expectancy

 66% think health and medical services are corrupt

 35 / 100

Parents Liza and Alex* were put in a situation any parent would dread when they took their newborn baby to hospital for medical treatment.

The family had travelled to Armenia's capital Yerevan, but on arriving at the hospital, they were informed that there was no room for them to stay in the hospital with their baby.

Nurses allegedly demanded money in exchange for allowing Liza to remain with her baby throughout the hospitalisation and threatened to remove her from the premises if they did not pay.

The family could not afford to pay any amount and had no place to stay in the capital.

Alex turned to Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center for help. While TI Armenia had never received any similar cases, the team believes that the practice of lower level employees handing over money to their supervisors is widespread.

TI Armenia immediately contacted the Ministry of Health and the hospital's Chief of Medicine to establish if there were grounds for requesting money.

Within two hours the Chief of Medicine responded. He insisted that there had been a simple misunderstanding and directed his staff to provide the baby's parents with accommodation at the hospital, free of charge and without delay, as required by law.

TI Armenia continued to remain in contact with Alex throughout the day to ensure that their baby received the necessary treatment.

*Names have been changed.

UNHEALTHY PRACTICES





THE STORY CONTINUES

From cities to rural villages, the voices speaking out against corruption are growing, both in number and in impact. They're getting children back into education, retrieving money from corrupt politicians and blowing the lid on backroom deals.

Find out how they're doing it:
www.transparency.org/stories



Transparency International's Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare Programme

Vision: a world where less corruption leads to improved global health and healthcare outcomes, benefiting all people of all ages

Values: transparency, accountability, integrity, solidarity, courage, justice and democracy

Mission: to achieve genuine change in the pharmaceutical and healthcare sector through reducing corruption and promoting transparency, integrity and accountability

Ultimately, the Pharmaceutical & Healthcare sector programme aims to tackle corruption and mitigate the economic and health impacts. This approach requires a holistic and multi-stakeholder approach, underpinned by the necessary political commitment.

NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO FACE CORRUPTION ALONE.

Working in more than 60 countries, our anti-corruption legal advice centres provide people with free confidential support against corruption, and the guidance to ensure their voice is heard.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

More than 140,000 people have contacted our centres so far. With your support, we could reach thousands more. Even a small donation can make a real difference.

WHAT'S NEEDED?

Your donation could support a range of activities, whether it's a toll-free hotline, community outreach, or legal support. Please donate today!

<http://www.transparency.org.uk/donate/>

<http://www.transparency.org.uk/pharma-and-healthcare>

 @TI_Health