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The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs

The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

The Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department

Public letter

5th September 2025

Dear Foreign Secretary, Health Secretary and Home Secretary,

As organisations dedicated to the health and wellbeing of adults and children in the UK and globally, we welcome the recently announced Government scheme to evacuate critically ill and injured children from Gaza to the UK for treatment “in the coming weeks”. We write to impress upon you the urgency with which this must be implemented and safeguards which must be in place.

As institutions representing UK healthcare professionals, we stand ready to provide the urgent care that these children need.

The collapse of Gaza’s healthcare system – under relentless military bombardment, Israeli government blockade-induced famine and rapid spread of disease - has created a health and humanitarian catastrophe of unimaginable scale. Healthcare infrastructure has been systematically destroyed; civilians, including children, are being killed and injured daily; and access to life-saving care is almost entirely cut off. Suffering is extreme and universal. According to the WHO more than 14,800 civilians – including critically ill and injured children – urgently require medical evacuation abroad. It is medically indefensible that children have [died](#) waiting to be evacuated out of Gaza for treatment due to [delays](#) in securing approval. The Government has previously demonstrated its ability to act quickly and compassionately, as with the emergency evacuation of [Ukrainian](#) children with cancer. That urgency must be matched now. Lives depend on it.

We therefore call on the Government to ensure the following:

1. All effort must be made to ensure that there are no further delays

The gravity of the medical situation in Gaza means that every minute of inaction and delay increases the risk of mortality for children selected for treatment in the UK. The scheme cannot be hampered by bureaucratic obstruction or setbacks.

2. Publicly funded and NHS provision

The evacuation process, all medical treatment, care and other support must be publicly funded and provided through the NHS. Decisions related to children and their families’ care must be driven solely by clinical urgency rather than by political or financial considerations.

3. No pre-departure biometric requirement

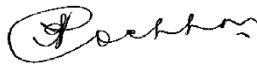
It is currently impossible for biometric data to be taken in Gaza. It is therefore imperative that biometric data collection must be deferred or delayed until the children and their caregiver(s) arrive in the UK. Self-imposed administrative requirements by the Home Office cannot be allowed to block life-saving care.

4. Family separation must be avoided at all costs

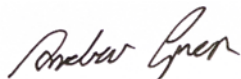
It is crucial that evacuated children are accompanied by parents, close family members or other appropriate caregivers. Clinical evidence demonstrates that family presence positively impacts the recovery and outcomes of sick and injured children. The evacuated children and their attending family/caregiver(s) must not, under any circumstances, be relocated by force back to Gaza or another unsafe third country after their treatment is complete, in compliance with the international obligation of *non-refoulement*. Equally, the right of all evacuees to return to Gaza must also be protected.

We urge the Government to act now.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Amit Kochhar – British Medical Association Representative Body Chair



Dr Andrew Green – British Medical Association Medical Ethics Committee Chair



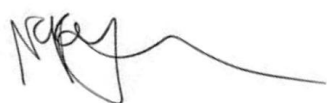
Dr Kitty Mohan – British Medical Association International Committee Chair



Dr Helen Brotherton - Convenor, International Child Health Group, special interest group of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health



Dr Rachael Craven – President and Chair of Board of Trustees, Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders, UK



Professor Nicola Ranger - General Secretary and Chief Executive, Royal College of Nursing