

Treat patients with kindness – Muhanga

KYENJOJO

By Jonan Tusingwire

The state minister of primary healthcare, Margaret Muhanga, has called on health workers to prioritise kindness, empathy and dignified care in their daily interactions with patients.

Speaking during the celebration of the upgrading of St Thereza of Lisieux Rweibale in Kyenjojo district from a health centre IV to a hospital on Monday, Muhanga emphasised that compassionate care remains a cornerstone of quality healthcare and must be upheld at all levels of service delivery.

She said while health professionals face heavy workloads and resource constraints, maintaining empathy can significantly improve patient outcomes and restore public trust in the health sector.

“Every patient deserves to be treated with humanity,” she said.

“A kind word, a gentle explanation, or even a moment of patience can make a tremendous difference in someone’s experience,” Muhanga said.

She urged health workers to adopt a patient-centred approach, stressing that many people seeking treatment



PHOTO BY JONAN TUSINGWIRE

Muhanga (right) with Bainomugisha (centre) and Fort Portal Diocese bishop, the Rt. Rev. Dr Robert Muhirwa, during the celebration of the upgrading of St Thereza of Lisieux Rweibale in Kyenjojo district

are already vulnerable, anxious or in pain. Muhanga said acts of kindness should never be viewed as optional.

The minister also encouraged facility managers to foster supportive working environments that allow health workers to perform their duties effectively and respectfully.

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She said the addition of the health centre expands access to maternal

BETWEEN THE LINES

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and child health services in Rweibale and surrounding communities, where long distances to health facilities have contributed to preventable deaths.

“The upgrading of St Thereza

of Lisieux Rweibale by the health ministry is not just another building in our health system; it is a lifeline for mothers and babies,” Muhanga said.

“Every facility we add brings us closer to our national goal of drastically reducing maternal deaths by 2030.”

She said the Government continues to prioritise maternal health through improved infrastructure, investment in skilled birth attendants and strengthening referral pathways.

The minister said reducing maternal mortality requires collaboration between the Government, faith-based organisations and private partners. She commended the facility’s founders for complementing national efforts and urged them to maintain high standards of care.

The minister also commended the Daughters of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus, commonly known as the Banyaterese Sisters, for their commitment to expanding access to quality healthcare through the establishment of the facility.

Muhanga praised the sisters for what she described as a visionary and compassionate act of service, saying their initiative is helping to bridge critical healthcare gaps in the region.

“This is a true reflection of visionary leadership and hard work,” she said.

The Archbishop of Mbarara Archdiocese, Lambert Bainomugisha, who was the chief guest, re-echoed the minister’s remarks, calling on health workers to uphold a sense of brotherhood in their service, even when faced with difficult and disheartening medical cases.

He praised medical professionals for their tireless commitment, especially during periods when the weight of their work can test their faith in humanity.

“Have humanity even when you are treating cases that might make you believe it does not exist,” he said. “Brotherhood is still alive.”

Bainomugisha said health facilities are a reminder that the gospel is not only preached in word, but also demonstrated through acts of compassion.

Sr Dr Priscilla Busingye, a gynaecologist at the facility, praised the continued growth and impact of the hospital, saying the achievements seen today reflect the dreams and mission envisioned by its founding pioneers.

She said the hospital’s progress, from improved maternal care to expanded community outreach, stands as proof that the founders’ vision of compassionate, accessible healthcare is being fulfilled.