

EMT



World Health  
Organization

occupied Palestinian  
territory



# EMERGENCY MEDICAL TEAMS (EMTs) IN THE GAZA STRIP

MARCH - MAY 2025



The ongoing escalation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip has placed immense strain on the health care system, leading to a severe shortage of critical medical services. The blockade of more than 80 days, started from 2 March 2025, on the entry of all goods, including medical supplies, has further disrupted health service delivery and put people’s health at serious risk.

Since December 2023, with support from WHO, the national and international Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) have played a vital role in the health response, delivering high-quality care despite operating in extremely constrained and insecure environments.

Since the resumption of hostilities on 18 March 2025, EMTs have faced major challenges — including blockade on entrance of medical supplies, denial of EMT staff entry into the Gaza Strip, and serious obstacles to safe movement. After 11 weeks of full aid blockade, what has been allowed to enter into Gaza is a drop in the ocean. That trickle must become a lifeline without delay.

EMTs are organized groups of health professionals who provide direct clinical care during emergencies, serving as surge capacity to support overstretched health systems. They respond both nationally and internationally, strengthening health services during disease outbreaks, natural disasters, conflicts, and displacement crises.

**EMTs deployed** since 18 March 2025



**22 International partner organizations**



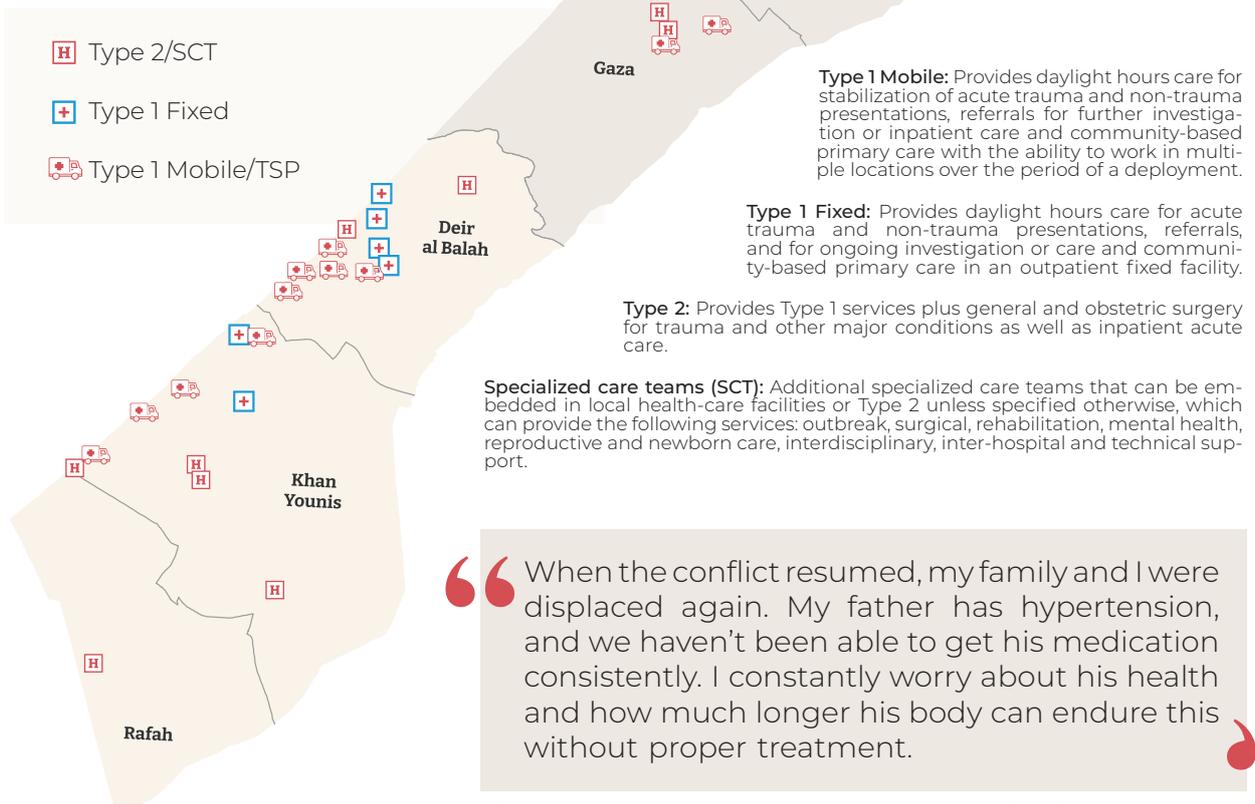
**37 Teams deployed**

- 2 National
- 35 International

## EMT medical activities (Jan 2024 – May 2025)

 <b>Medical consultations</b>	 <b>Emergency surgeries</b>	 <b>Trauma patients</b>	 <b>Deployed field hospitals</b>	 <b>Referrals</b>
2,787,870	39,232	102,492	5	18,096

### Cumulative EMT deployments after resumption of hostilities (18 March 2025)



“In the last weeks, getting help to the sick, injured, or dying has become incredibly dangerous. Local [medical teams] can’t safely do their jobs because of the constant intensity of hostilities. That means it’s often up to family members or bystanders to try and move the wounded. Sadly, this has led to even more lives being lost.”

~ Testimony of medical staff – international EMT deployed to the Gaza Strip

## Health system at breaking point

The conflict in the Gaza Strip has reached a critical stage in its impact on public health. Attacks on health facilities have severely disrupted the delivery of medical care. Growing medical needs are going unmet due to lack of entry of medical supplies during the total aid blockade of over 80 days, a shortage of specialized local health workers, delays in patient referrals, and persistent security threats. The overall quality of care is further compromised by the lack of essential medicines, medical consumables, and equipment. During the recent ceasefire period, the World Health Organization (WHO) successfully distributed 707 pallets of medical supplies to EMT partner organizations. However, since the resumption of hostilities on 18 March 2025, only 134 pallets, from WHO stocks in Gaza, have been delivered to them.

National and international EMTs cannot meet the growing health needs unless the reliable and sufficient entry of essential medical supplies is ensured. Without this, scaling up an effective health response remains extremely difficult.

### EMTs urgently call for:

- **Immediate and unimpeded entry** of medical supplies, clean water, food, and other life-saving essentials.
- **Restoration of quality of care**, by ensuring consistent access to essential medicines, medical equipment, and consumables.

“ We’re lacking all the essential surgical consumables at the hospital. We have to rationalize gauzes for dressings and wound care for our post-operative patients. Right now, we can only change dressings twice a week. Considering the living conditions in the community, we’re deeply concerned about the risk of wounds infections and complications. ”

~ Testimony of medical staff – national EMT deployed to the Gaza Strip

### Items in rupture

(zero-stock) in health facilities warehouses in Gaza (May25)

**56%**

### Pallets of medical supplies distributed

**-81%** to partners and EMTs by WHO (during ceasefire VS after ceasefire)





## Attacks on health care

Since the resumption of hostilities on 18 March 2025, hospitals and other health facilities across the Gaza Strip have increasingly come under attack, severely disrupting patient care and the overall functioning of health services. Both national and international health workers, including EMT staff, have been exposed to insecurity — including reported attacks on their workplaces and accommodations.

Attacks on ambulances and paramedics have created such insecurity that pre-hospital care providers often require to be escorted by international agencies to carry out missions safely in high-risk areas. Since 18 March 2025, WHO has recorded 56 attacks on health care in the Gaza Strip.

### EMTs urgently call for:

- **Immediate cessation of attacks** on health care including medical facilities, staff, and ambulances.
- **Preservation of medical services.** Health care must not be targeted, obstructed or militarized.
- **Ensuring safety of EMTs and healthcare workers,** including protection of referral pathways.

**-15%**  
**Internal referrals facilitated** by EMTs (during ceasefire VS after ceasefire)

**-43%**  
**Patients accessing EMT facilities for safe deliveries** (live births) (during ceasefire VS after ceasefire)

“We are treating injured people here with our bare hands and loading whoever we can into whatever ambulances are remaining. Trying to transfer them to other hospitals, I can’t find any other doctors here”.

~Testimony of medical staff – international EMT deployed to Al Ahli Arab hospital in Gaza City during the attack on 13 April 2025

## Administrative and access restrictions undermine the response

Cumbersome procedures for international humanitarian personnel — including EMT staff — to access the Gaza Strip, compounded by the aforementioned security and operational risks, are having devastating consequences on the health response. Entry to the Gaza Strip is often granted at the last minute, delayed, or not approved, severely hindering efforts to coordinate and implement timely deployment plans aligned with the rapidly evolving public health needs on the ground.

Since 18 March 2025, entry to the Gaza Strip has been denied to 58 international EMT staff, while only 74 have been granted access.

The denial of entry for EMT medical professionals delays the delivery of critical specialized care and creates major barriers to life-saving interventions across all levels of health care — from primary to tertiary. These challenges are further compounded by the lack of a secure working environment for humanitarian personnel and the lack of a well-coordinated deconfliction mechanism to ensure safe movement within the Gaza Strip.

Collectively, these constraints jeopardize both the continuity of medical operations and the safety of international EMT staff.

### EMTs urgently call for:

- **Streamlined and transparent entry procedures** for all humanitarian actors, including EMT personnel.
- **Access for EMT staff**, without denials.
- **Functional deconfliction and movement coordination systems**, allowing for safe and timely access to health facilities.

“Our new rotation is not approved for the requested day. The request was sent in time, but they will now come two days later. The conditions in Gaza put constraints on how an EMT can be set up and operate. Once on ground, movement is difficult due to security constraints and safety concerns.”

~Testimony of medical staff – international EMT deployed to the Gaza Strip

**44%** Denial rate for entering international EMT staff (May25)

**+19%** International EMT staff denied entry the Gaza Strip (during ceasefire VS after ceasefire)

**-57%** Presence of international EMT staff deployed to the Gaza Strip (May24 VS May25)

“The complex access procedures have pushed our capacity for handling personnel entry and exit to its limit. Currently, fewer than 15 international EMT staff are entering Gaza each week — an extremely low number that still strains our capacity due to the burdensome administrative requirements.”

~Testimony of EMT Coordination Cell (EMTCC) staff



**EMTs are a core component of the health emergency response architecture in Gaza. Under WHO's coordination, EMTs have reached millions of patients, and their continued presence in the Gaza Strip is essential.**

**However, without immediate improvements in access and protection, their capacity to save lives will be further compromised, with severe consequences for health in the Gaza Strip.**

**WHO calls for the active protection of health care and calls on all parties to conflict to safeguard the right to health, including protection of health infrastructure and health workers and ensure uninterrupted access to health services.**

**Disclaimer:** This report includes testimonies, qualitative and quantitative data gathered from a range of sources, including patients and medical staff. All testimonies have been used with the informed consent of the individuals involved, with no identifying details to protect their safety, dignity, and privacy. Further data on EMT activities and WHO for the Gaza response can be found:

- EMT Dashboard: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6711b735edb44a02b6403dea20%20238437/>
- WHO: <https://www.emro.who.int/opt/priority-areas/occupied-palestinian-territory-health-crisis2023-.html>



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