

# COMMUNITY HEALTH WATCH

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



**NIGERIA  
HEALTH  
WATCH**

Informed commentary, intelligence and insights on the Nigerian health sector



**COMMUNITY  
HEALTH  
WATCH**

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# Gwarjiko PHC in Niger State Needs Rehabilitation, Medicine and More Health Workers

3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2021

Gwarjiko Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC) in Gwarjiko community, Wushishi Local Government Area (LGA) in Niger State has several challenges. Even though the PHC has staff quarters, which are not often found in health facilities of



There are no drugs at the facility, all patients would have to buy drugs at Wushishi, far from there

this kind, the health facility suffers from poor infrastructure and lack of essential medicines. According to Abdullahi Muhammad, who is a health worker at the facility, there are only two health workers providing services to the community members. Muhammad added that "There is no toilet in the facility, and both male and female patients have to share the only ward available in the PHC". Muhammad also reiterated that even the staff quarters needs repair as the structure is completely dilapidated. "It is totally inhabitable", he said.

Rakiya Garba, a community member said that the most challenging issue for women in the community is that the delivery room of the PHC is not well equipped, and that discourages women from going to the health facility to give birth. In Niger State, only 25.8% of women give birth in health facilities.

For Muhammed Muhammed, another community member, the fact that they always must go to Wushishi town to get medication prescribed by health workers at the Gwarjiko PHC is worrisome for the community. "They don't have drugs. Anytime you come here, they write the drugs, and we have to go and get them at Wushishi and it is far from here".



Gwarjiko PHC has a staff quarter, which is rare in PHCs in Nigeria. However, the quarters need repair themselves

Health facilities can only function well when the necessary medication is available at the point of need and the necessary health workers are available. In addition, adequate water and sanitation provision, as well as toilets and basic infrastructures are necessary for a functional PHC to provide minute care for users. These are some of the needs of any health facility in addition to a well-equipped and functional delivery rooms to ensure that women giving birth are guaranteed quality care. Wushishi LGA and the Niger State government need to rehabilitate Gwarjiko PHC and ensure the provision of the necessary equipment required, to deliver care while ensuring there is a consistent supply of quality medicines, reducing the need for users to go to Wushishi town. Universal access to quality health services is a basic right for all citizens.



The delivery room of Gwarjiko PHC is not well equipped, and that discourages women from going to the health facility to give birth. In Niger State, Only 25.8% of women give birth in health facilities in Niger State, according to the 2018 National Demographic Health Survey



Among many other challenges, Gwarjiko PHC suffers from broken ceiling

## What the community wants

1. Wushishi LGA and Niger State government should rehabilitate Gwarjiko PHC in line with the NPHCDA Minimum Standard for PHCs in Nigeria and ensure it is well-equipped and functional to take delivery and provide other vital health services in the community.
2. Employ staff that should include a Community Health Officer (CHO), Nurse/Midwife, Community Health Extension Worker (CHEW), and Junior Community Health Extension Worker (JCHEW), as recommended by the NPHCDA Minimum Standards for PHCs in Nigeria.
3. Ensure constant availability of essential and basic medicines at the facility.
4. Provide adequate and gender equitable toilet facilities for staff and patients in the PHC based on recommendation of the Technical Guideline for WASH in PHCs in Nigeria.
5. Rehabilitate the staff quarters to enable the health workers to perform their duties in a serene dignified environment.

# Nuwonkota PHC: A Shadow of a Health Facility

10<sup>th</sup> November, 2021



Nuwonkota PHC has no toilet, no water source and is not fenced. Both patients and health workers must go to the nearby bushes to ease themselves.

Nuwonkota is an agrarian community in Gbako Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State. The community has a Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC) which provides healthcare services to the people. The PHC has however been in a bad shape for several years.

According to Umar Aliyu, the in-charge of the PHC, the facility lacks essential infrastructure and commodities that will enable it to function optimally. "There are often no drugs, and that makes us purchase locally to administer to patients. Besides drugs, there is no medical equipment at the PHC. The building is almost collapsing as there are noticeable cracks on the walls. The ceilings have caved-in, and the backyard has also fallen down already," Aliyu said, adding that plastic bags are used to cover some parts of the PHC walls that are very damaged. He lamented that patients admitted to the health facility often must lie on mats, because there are only two beds in the health facility.

Zainab Muhammad, a resident of the community, lamented that the health

facility has no toilet or source of water and as such, both patients and health workers must go to the nearby bushes to ease themselves.



The backyard of Nuwonkota PHC has also fallen down and plastic bags are used to cover some parts of the PHC walls that are very damaged.

Health facilities can only function and meet the healthcare needs of the local population if they are stocked with the required World Health Organization (WHO) essential medicines. In addition, water and sanitation facilities are some of the basic requirements any health facility should have, in order to provide patients with a safe and hygienic environment. It is also important that health facilities are properly staffed, so that patients have access to health workers whenever they visit the health facility. Gbako LGA and the Niger State government should ensure that Nuwonkota PHC and all other health facilities in the state are well equipped with the necessary medication, infrastructure and facilities to provide quality services to the local community.



Patients admitted to Nuwonkota PHC often must lie on mats, because there are only two beds in the health facility.



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## What the community wants

1. Urgently rehabilitate Nuwonkota PHC and ensure that it is well stocked with essential medicines, beds and medical tools to provide quality services to the community.
2. Employ more health workers to meet the healthcare needs of the community, the delivery of basic healthcare services like maternal and infant care.
3. In line with the Technical Guidelines on WASH in PHCs in Nigeria provide adequate and gender equitable toilets for the health workers and patients, to guide against the spread of infectious diseases.



Nigeria Health Watch is a not-for-profit health communication and advocacy organisation that seeks to advocate for better health for Nigerians. We have worked to actively engage and support the government in raising awareness and increasing knowledge on a wide range of health issues in Nigeria. We aim to hold duty bearers accountable for delivering affordable and quality healthcare to Nigerians. The unique capacity of Nigeria Health Watch lies in the combination of its communication and health expertise, which enables the organisation to provide solutions for evidence-based communications and advocacy in the health sector.

