

## **Medical Emergency Immigration: A Lifesaving Necessity for Gaza**

### **Maternal and Child Health Advocacy International (MCAI) | Policy Brief | 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

In armed conflict settings, where hospitals are destroyed, essential supplies are unavailable, and civilians—especially pregnant women, newborn infants, and children—are trapped without access to urgent care, medical emergency immigration becomes a necessity, not an option. Today, Gaza presents an unprecedented case where over 12,000 patients identified by the World Health Organization need immediate evacuation for lifesaving care that is impossible to deliver locally.

The majority of these patients include women with complicated pregnancies, premature and infected newborn infants, and children suffering from severe malnutrition, major trauma with life-threatening injuries, and cancers. Local hospitals have been rendered non-functional, staff have been injured or killed, and those remaining are overwhelmed. Food, water, essential drugs and medical supplies are minimally available. Post-hospital care is unavailable due to widespread destruction of homes.

We call for the activation of international Medical Emergency Immigration. This would allow safe and rapid transfer of patients—each accompanied by one close family member—to countries with available hospital capacity. **MCAI urges the UK government** to set an example by immediately committing to 500 hospital placements, thereby catalysing broader global action.

This response is not only a humanitarian imperative but also a legal one. The right to health under international law demands urgent cross-border support. Logistical solutions exist and can be mobilized through WHO, UN agencies, government partnerships, and humanitarian air and sea corridors.

MCAI, with its long-standing commitment to maternal and child health in fragile states, stands ready to support coordination, triage, and advocacy to ensure this lifeline is opened.

Medical Emergency Immigration is unlike other forms of migration where patients can flee with their families to nearby countries or safe internal areas to receive lifesaving care—it is the only way they can survive. The international community must act before more preventable deaths occur.

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