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PATIENTS WITH BORDERS, CASE STUDY 2

[Editor's Note: This is the second post in a series of case studies describing the bureaucratic and political barriers to medical access outside of Gaza and the stories of three individual Gazan patients. The first post can be found [here](#). Look for the next case study on Monday, November 2.]

Below is one PHR-Israel case study representing a current trend in the provision of exit permits to Gazans for medical reasons. Case studies such as this one have been provided by PHR-Israel to raise awareness about border restrictions in Gaza that prevent Gazan patients from receiving critical health care. Full names are withheld for reasons of medical confidentiality and can only be released for purposes of access to medical care.

Case Study 2 (Provided by PHR-Israel)

July: Diplomatic and public pressure reverse "security" considerations regarding medical access from Gaza.

Ahmad A.B., male, 28, resident of Gaza, was diagnosed in August 2008 as suffering from a Hodgkin's lymphoma type cancer. He underwent seven series of chemotherapy in Gaza but did not respond to it. A CT scan performed in May 2009 showed a tumor in the chest and enlarged lymph nodes. On May 7 he was urgently referred for care to the Augusta Victoria hospital in East Jerusalem, which has advanced care facilities for cancer patients, for lifesaving care. Ahmad was given an appointment for June 23, but his request for an exit permit from Gaza — submitted via the Palestinian coordinating mechanism to the Israeli authorities — was rejected by the Israeli secret police (ISA/GSS/Shin Bet) on the grounds of a "security prohibition." The patient then applied to PHR-Israel for assistance, who transferred his medical documents to their Israeli expert volunteer Prof. Dina Ben Yehuda, head of the Hematology Department at Hadassah hospital in Jerusalem. Prof. Ben Yehuda provided a medical opinion according to which, since the patient was not responsive to ABVD therapy received in Gaza, he must urgently arrive at the Jerusalem hospital to receive combined care including aggressive chemotherapy, radiotherapy and other care.

On June 30 PHR-Israel applied in Ahmad's name to the Israeli military authorities at Erez Crossing asking that he be urgently transferred to East Jerusalem for medical care. On July 2 the Israeli authorities answered that the request had been rejected by the secret police. PHR-Israel then referred the case to members of Knesset, to PHR-Israel's members and to the embassies of the EU presidency (Sweden) and of Norway in Tel Aviv, asking that pressure be exerted on the Israeli military to enable the exit of this patient. Several days later, following multiple queries to

the military authorities and to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, the military authorities reversed the patient's "security prohibition" and the patient was allowed to access the hospital.