

# Dispute brews over plan to hire Tanzanian doctors

By Verah Okeyo and Elizabeth Merab <sup>5 Apr 2017</sup>

A stalemate is brewing between the counties' health management teams, governors and the national government over a plan to employ Tanzanian doctors.

This is yet another blow to health cabinet secretary, Cleopa Mailu in his efforts to restore normality to public health after a court temporarily stopped the government from hiring foreign doctors.



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In a letter to Council of Governors chairman Peter Munya, Mailu directed counties to prepare to hire foreign doctors.

However, there are counties, such as Isiolo, that turned away local doctors last year, citing financial impediments.

Fearing retribution, the county executives said local doctors had a hard time securing jobs in hospitals in the counties and they did not understand why it was being made easy for their Tanzanian counterparts.

## Doctors denied jobs

But Mailu denied the claim, saying there was no Kenyan doctor who had been denied a job.

Meanwhile, counties have maintained they will not pay doctors who participated in the 100-day strike, even as the workers' union insisted on payment. To complicate matters for the doctors, the county governments also said they will not pay 14 days of March salaries for those who had gone on strike.

According to the counties, the health ministry's directive against payment was based on a position agreed upon by both doctors and the two levels of government.

County Health Executives Forum chair, Andrew Mulwa said payment of doctors' accumulated salaries of about Sh3.2 billion was unjustifiable and could not be honoured. "We cannot pay for work not done. Anyone who does so will be in trouble with the auditor-general," said Mulwa.

**Source:** *Daily Nation*

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