

200 awarded diplomas in clinical psychiatry and mental health

By Jeff Andrew Lule

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Graduands at the school of Psychiatric Clinical Officers Butabika, jubilating after being confirmed at the graduation ceremony in Butabika on Friday. (Photo by Jeff Andrew Lule)

EDUCATION

BUTABIKA - A total of 200 mental health workers on Monday graduated with diplomas in clinical psychiatry and mental health.

This comes at a time when Uganda is short of psychiatric doctors, despite the increasing numbers of people with mental health illnesses in the country.

The Executive Director, Butabika Referral Hospital, Dr. David Basangwa said the country needs more psychiatric officers to address cases of mental health illness at various levels.

He made the remarks while speaking at the 2nd Graduation ceremony, at the School of Psychiatric Clinical Officers (PCOs) at Butabika in Nakawa division, Kampala on Friday.

“We are overwhelmed by the number of patients at Butabika Hospital, because we have no officers at the lower level. We need to have officers at general facilities to attend to patients before cases worsen,” said Basangwa.



The Executive Director Butabika Referral Hospital, Dr. David Basangwa speaking at the 2nd Graduation ceremony of the School of Psychiatric Clinical Officers Butabilka on Friday. (Photo by Jeff Andrew Lule)

According to Basangwa, patients from as far as Karamoja, Gulu and other parts of the country run to Butabika Referral Hospital, because the Hospitals from their regions do not have mental health illness services.

He further implored government to support the institution in producing more mental health workers, who will then handle the cases which are increasing daily.

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports, Alex Kakooza said the new graduates will help to bridge the gap between psychiatrists which is very low.

He urged the graduands to exercise professionalism in their line of work and promote ethical values.

The chairman governing council of the school, Muhammad Mayanja said there is need to address the issue of mental illness squarely.