

Starting November 2025, Rwandans will be able to access medical services covered by the Rwandaise d'Assurance Maladie (RAMA) insurance at primary health centers, or "postes de santé," the Ministry of Health (MINISANTE) announced. The initiative is aimed at bringing healthcare closer to citizens, especially in areas previously underserved.

State Minister in the Ministry of Health, Dr. Ivan Butera, disclosed the plan on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, while briefing senators on strategies to improve service delivery at local health facilities.

"We will start by providing RAMA-covered services at 15 health centers located in areas of high demand, such as border points and densely populated communities. The ultimate goal is to extend this coverage to all primary health facilities across the country," Dr. Butera said.

Under the program, services such as basic eye and dental care will be offered at local centers, while patients with severe conditions will be referred to larger hospitals. Maternal health services, traditionally offered at health centers, will also be gradually introduced to smaller clinics with trained personnel.

Rwanda currently has 1,294 primary health centers, but the Ministry of Health acknowledges that 8.2% are not fully operational due to staffing shortages. To address this, 13 eye specialists and 11 dentists were deployed to 24 centers over the past four months. These professionals will rotate among facilities to ensure equitable service delivery.

Dr. Butera emphasized that the expansion aligns with MINISANTE's long-term goal of having 95% of healthcare services delivered through community health workers, health centers, and primary facilities by 2028. Achieving this will require upgrading infrastructure, recruiting more staff, and strengthening service delivery.

The government also plans to build 100 new primary health centers over the next five years, focusing on areas with high population density. Additionally, 420 existing centers that currently face infrastructure challenges will be renovated to meet modern service standards.

During the senate briefing, lawmakers who visited local health centers noted strong community demand for RAMA-covered services. Senator Uwera Pelagie said the move will particularly benefit private-sector workers and others who previously

relied on out-of-pocket payments for healthcare.

“The expansion of RAMA services to local clinics is a major step toward equitable healthcare access. By starting with these 15 centers and gradually scaling nationwide, the government is making sure every Rwandan can receive quality care without financial barriers,” Dr. Butera said.

The initiative represents a broader effort by the government to strengthen primary healthcare, reduce travel for patients, and improve outcomes in preventive and curative services. Citizens will now have more opportunities to access essential medical care close to home, reducing the pressure on larger hospitals and improving overall health coverage.