

In an exciting new phase for Rwanda's healthcare system, the Ministry of Health has unveiled a series of significant reforms aimed at improving services and making healthcare more efficient in 2025.

Rwanda is making bold strides to ensure better access to healthcare for all its citizens, with key changes that promise to reshape the way health services are delivered.

One of the most impactful changes announced by the Minister of Health Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana is the introduction of a pre-payment system for primary healthcare services. By July 1, 2025, health centers—including health posts and clinics—will begin receiving payments from insurance companies *before* providing services, rather than after as has been the case in the past.

This change is designed to address the financial struggles that many health facilities face, where delays in payments often result in shortages of medicines and medical supplies. With the new system, hospitals and clinics will have the necessary funds to operate smoothly and ensure that care is delivered without interruption.

Dr. Nsanzimana explained that the current post-payment system has created significant challenges. "Health centers often operate with limited funds, and when payments are delayed—even for a week—it affects the community," he said. "Patients arrive expecting care, but sometimes they find that there is no medicine or equipment available." With the new pre-payment model, the hope is that these delays will be eliminated, creating a more reliable and efficient healthcare system.

This new approach will begin with smaller health centers, and if successful, it will eventually expand to all healthcare facilities in Rwanda. Though the Minister acknowledged that there are risks—such as potential misuse of funds—he stressed that these would be closely monitored, and the system will be adjusted as necessary in its early stages.

Along with the pre-payment reform, Dr. Nsanzimana also announced plans to renovate some of Rwanda's oldest hospitals, many of which were originally health centers that expanded over time. These hospitals were not originally designed with modern healthcare needs in mind, and now, many of their buildings are outdated and inadequate.

The Ministry will prioritize renovations at facilities like Kiziguro, Rwamagana, and

Muhima, with plans to modernize the infrastructure to meet current healthcare demands.

“Most of these buildings weren’t designed for today’s healthcare needs. They were converted from other structures, and now they need to be updated,” Dr. Nsanzimana said. While securing the full funding for these renovations will take time, the Ministry plans to start with what’s available and gradually build up to complete overhauls.

The hope is that this will improve the capacity and quality of healthcare available to Rwandans, ensuring that hospitals can offer the best care possible.

In a forward-thinking move, Rwanda is also embracing digital technology to streamline its healthcare system. Dr. Nsanzimana revealed plans to implement a digital referral system for patients, meaning that instead of carrying a pile of paperwork between health centers, patients’ medical information will be accessible online. This will allow for easier scheduling of consultations, digital prescriptions, and seamless referrals between health centers and hospitals.

“This technology will speed up the process, making it more efficient for both patients and doctors,” said Dr. Nsanzimana. “Patients won’t have to carry physical documents from one facility to another, and healthcare providers will have instant access to complete medical histories, which will improve care.” The Minister emphasized that the system will be ready to roll out later this year, marking a significant step toward a more modern, efficient, and patient-friendly healthcare experience in Rwanda.

While all these changes will take time to fully implement, the direction is clear: Rwanda is determined to create a healthcare system that is more accessible, reliable, and responsive to the needs of its people. Through these bold reforms, the country is building the foundation for a healthier future where high-quality care is available to all.