

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF NAKURU

THE HANSARD

Third Assembly (Second Session)

Wednesday 22nd February, 2023

Assembly Building

The House met at 15:05 PM

[Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage) In the Chair]

PRAYERS.

MOTION

CASHLESS PAYMENT SYSTEM AT THE COUNTY HEALTH FACILITIES.

Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): There is a Motion from honorable William Mutai

Hon. William Mutai: I stand here before the Honorable Members to bring a Motion on implementation of the Cashless Payment System at the County Health Facilities. Honorable Speaker, you will agree with me that change is inevitable and I do believe that as we are advancing in our Health facilities it is prudent enough that we actually adopt the new systems that are being used. I have a feeling that if we are going to adopt the Cashless mode of payment, we are going to have order and we are going to reduce some risks that usually take place in our Health facilities concerning money.

I will give some few examples; some scrutiny has been done and discovered that many a times if you check on the receipts, the original receipts bearing the same number with the duplicate may actually be stating a different amount from the duplicate. In that once a client pays the money he or she is offered with the original receipts for example Kshs. 10,000 but checking on the duplicate you may discover that it is written Kshs. 1000. If we are going to use the Cashless System Methods, I am very sure we are going to remove this vice that is rampant in our Hospitals. More so those who go to hospitals are usually weak and here is a scenario where a sick person is the one carrying the money and conmen have taken advantage; they masquerade around the Health Facilities in pretext that they are clients but in essence they have some ill motive to steal from the patients.

If we are going to employ the use of Cashless System I am very sure we are going to eradicate this menace. It also removes the temptation because when you have the cash money, it is liquid in itself and characteristic of liquid money is that it can easily flow and it may flow into wrong destinations. I want to urge this honorable House that we support the use of the cashless methods in a way of enhancing accountability. The Members may want to know which method we can apply and in this case we have the common method that is in place which is the Mobile Banking System or the use of M-PESA or the Till Nos. In some advanced stage, like we the

honorable Members possibly we can carry with ourselves the Credit or Debit Cards. We also have the E-Wallets which is also another modern method used in payments and the Pesa-Link.

There is also another more advance App which is usually in our Mobile Phones. It can be downloaded and be used to make some payments. We also have another one called UPI which is the Unified Payment Interface which is more or less the same as making payment from the bank to the account of the Health Facility through transfer. Honorable Speaker, I beseech the Honorable Members to support this Motion so that we can go the better way. Thank you very much and I request Honorable Jane Gituku from Maille Ward to second the Motion.

Hon. Jane Wanjiru Gituku: Honorable Speaker I second the Motion and I would like to make some comments. I rise to support the Motion on the implementation of the Cashless mode of payment system in our Health Facilities. The Cashless Payment System is aimed at reducing cash transactions and also for revenue in our Health Institutions. The patients will dutiful pay as they are required but the problem arises from the Accounting Officers who actually withhold this money and are at liberty to do whatever they want. Most people do understand that transactions of money do require a bit of paper work and this can be tampered with by the receiving officers. Once Revenue is collected through the Cashless Systems, auditing is enhanced and this revenue is able to reach its destination. And this will improve our Medical Facilities, and especially in services of our patients.

I have a very good example in a hospital where I come from in Naivasha. In most instances at Naivasha District Hospital you realise that the Cashiers will always ask patients to come with lose money.

So when you tender a transaction that is maybe beyond what they have for change, they do not like being disturbed. So they will just tell the patient can you go please and come with money that is equivalent to what you are being charged.

I still believe that as much as a collection of money in our Institutions is part of the services rendered, we can change this by ensuring that we have cashless payments. And this money will convenience the patient and also those people who are involved especially on finance activities of our institutions.

You remember and you understand that health is very expensive. And especially when a patient goes to hospital and you are denied some services and we are forced to go look for these services elsewhere. It becomes a burden to our people; so if you could have systems that are really working and that are able to be accountable to the last coin we will be able to save even our communities from these exorbitant prices that are being charged because of seeking for services elsewhere. While our Health Institutions if money and finances are managed properly, we could offer these services without any hitch. Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker. Sir,

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): I will propose a question that this House resolves at the County Government through the Department of Finance to come up with appropriate and convenient cashless mode of payment in all the relevant Health Facilities to improve financial accountability.

(Question proposed and agreed to)

The Motion is open for debate. Hon. Gatuso.

Hon. Bernard Gatuso: Mr. Temporary Speaker sir, I rise to support the Motion. I believe there is a concept out there that technology came to replace human in terms of working but I believe that is not the reality. It has really expanded the niche whereby we are able to employ so many as we continue advancing.

I believe to some extent Mr. Temporary Speaker that we are supposed to have a way on how to inform our people so that they cannot be tempted to go there with cash and that they can have gadgets or phones or money on their phones and be paying using the MPESA or the technology that is there.

In that regard I believe to some extent the Health Facilities have not been able to service or to be able to do their operations well and people usually pay revenues or they pay for the services that are there meaning that we are losing much money because we are paying in cash and we are supposed to pay via the technology or via M PESA. That is the reason why we find that most of the hospitals have pending bills that of huge amounts in which it is understandable where these pending bills or the amounts are arising from and yet the services that are offered are paid regularly or are paid by the clients.

The other thing is lack of drugs within our hospitals, I believe because the services are paid for, We are supposed to have monies to buy drugs in hospital. And with the realisation of that I believe with the technology we will be able to curb much of theft that usually happens within those facility.

So mine is to affirm that if we are able to use technology onto how it is supposed, I believe even the hiccups within the technology will be able to improve as we continue going. It is yet time for us to be able to use technology so that we can curb this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to support. the

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Fadhili Msuri

Hon. Fadhili Msuri: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker. As I support this Motion. I want to for us to have a rider on that. That the proposal When it comes to payment, we make it more optional. Not like a mandatory system. So that the client is not inconvenienced if it happens that he or she has gone to seek medical services and it happens that in his or her phone he has no cash yet they have it in cash but they are allowed to pay in cash.

Lastly Mr. Temporary Speaker, I am a bit disturbed because I have listened to the mover of the Motion and the subsequent contribution by my brother Gatuso and they seem to preempt the service provider that the County should actually engage. Because I have heard them just mentioning the word MPESA. And we know that there are different modes of service providers. So if we can actually restrict ourselves in to just be using the word service providers, so that you also create a level playing field for those who are not Safaricom users, that they can actually have a platform to use other modes of payment not just necessarily MPESA.

So I do not know if Mheshimiwa Mutai has actually made a courtesy visit to Safaricom or is being facilitated by Safaricom because he is appearing to be fronting strongly and have taken a cue because he actually invited Mheshimiwa from Maella and she has taken the same cue, and I have seen my brother here from London ward on the same trajectory, I submit, thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Rose

Hon. Rose Chepkoech: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sir. I support the Motion that we use the cashless, this is because it is very convenient. Somebody can be comfortable with the phone or with the money and paid. Another thing is it will save a lot of time. Because maybe in the hospital, they might be very many sick people, but they can pay the same amount in some minutes. And that one is because of security. You might be the accountant in the hospital and when you are moving. For example, I have my bag here. You can see this bag of mine and you are an Accountant. If you move with that bag somebody might think you have a lot of money inside but only to find a handkerchief inside and a lessor.

Another thing is about dragging spin. All transactions will be in record and even filing of the tax will be easy. Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, sir

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Mercy Kilel

Hon. Mercy Kilel: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir. I rise to support this Motion. I believe the world is moving away from traditional methods of payment and for this reason, we need to move and support technology as a County. For Example, during the Covid-19 season, we were being asked to do away with touching money. Money is known to be dirty and being a hospital environment, we understand there is a lot of microbes and bacteria moving around. If we support cashless system, I believe that you are going to reduce that transfer of germs from one person to another. Also, Kenya being the Country moving to support technology, I believe that we are on the right trajectory and for that reason, I support this. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Robert.

Hon. Robert Langat: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir. I rise to support the Motion. First of all, I want to thank the Member for Keringet Ward for bringing this Bill. I rise here to support the cashless system. I want to highlight four advantages of using the cashless system

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): What is it Hon. Muraya?

Hon. Mwangi Muraya: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir. I am standing on a point of order, on dress code. Hon. Kajwang' does not have a tie. He is out of decorum.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Muraya, resume your seat. The Majority Leader, can you confirm for us whether the Honorable Member is in decorum.

Hon. Alex Lang'at: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir. Before I do a confirmation, I just want to remind the House on matters decorum. This thing has occasionally kept coming before this Honorable House and at some point, as an office, you ruled that we are going to sit down as a House so that we are also able to develop rules on matters decorum because it has been a bit contradictory and you have been referring to the former House which was there before us. Just to remind ourselves is that since the Speaker made a ruling on matters decorum, we are yet to receive a Committee which will sit and determine the right decorum for the County Assembly of Nakuru. It may not be so much in order to keep on bringing it before we make a ruling and set our own rules on what is the right dress code, what is the right decorum because the Speaker has already made a ruling. I do not see it as an issue today.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): We are going to retreat and we are going to give our resolution for that next week.

Hon. Alex

Hon. Alex Mbugua: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Alex, a minute then you are going to continue.

Hon. Robert...

Hon. Robert Langat: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir. As I was saying, first of all, let me thank Mheshimiwa Mutai for bringing this timely Motion. The introduction of Cashless System has many advantages. It helps in improving revenue. By that, I mean the money is safe. Secondly, when the money is paid through Cashless System, it grows. Number three, when you use the Cashless System, you will have a better money management system. By that I mean you can track your money very well, you can budget your money very nicely and also it helps in flexibility of the same budget. Another point is that it reduces risks and finally, it also lowers stress levels. When you go to a place with money in the pocket, you at times feel unsafe but when it is on your phone, it is safe. I stand to support the Motion. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Alex, resume

Hon. Alex Mbugua: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir. First of all is to commend the mover of this Motion because this is a noble idea that he has come up with. Indeed, as a County, we need to grow our own source revenue. I must remind Members here that at the moment, Nakuru County is generating Kshs. 1.7 billion in collection revenue collection. When you come and look at the generation of revenue, you will find that Health Facilities should be generating more. If we move cashless, you will find that we shall be able to hit between Kshs. 2 to Kshs 3 billion. When the President visited Nakuru County last week, he encouraged Nakuru County to come up with ways we can generate our own revenue. In fact according to His Excellency, the estimated revenue collection for Nakuru County should be hitting around Kshs. 5 billion and this money will come and help our people.

When you go to Naivasha Hospital, you will find that the hospital generates almost Kshs 20-40 million per month. That has been used as Facility Improvement Fund within the hospital. We have nurses, doctors and casuals who have been hired there. On the same as these funds grow, there is a caution to the County Government that the autonomy of the hospital and the Hospital Bboards should be contained because with this source of revenue growing very fast we might find ourselves having cartels within the hospitals in form of Boards.

One example that we can give is the Margaret Kenyatta Mother and Baby Care Centre within our PGH here in Nakuru. Recently like within the last budget, they had a short on their revenue collection to around 120% of what they had claimed to have collected. This means that if this facility is able to only use the online cashless payment then they will be able to generate this. If the entire County is able to comply with this then we shall collect enough funds and at the same time the autonomy of the Boards must be contained. I stand to support this Motion Mr. Temporary Speaker. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon Elijah Murage): The Hon. Majority Leader.

The Majority Leader (Hon Alex Langat): Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir, I also wish to give my contribution on the Motion before us. First of all, I want to thank Hon. Mutai for having such a great thought. However, I wish that we can incorporate this Motion so that it can cater for all Kenyans without infringing on the rights of other Kenyans as it is entrenched in

the Constitution. I say so because the cashless system as we all know is fully dependent on matters technology. When we talk of technology it comes with other added things. It comes with equipment which include mobile phones, computers, interlinking systems and programs.

In Kenya the rate of literacy, as much as we have improved to almost 80%, there is a small percentage of Kenyans who are not literate and may not be in a position to use the technology. Secondly, the same 20% who seem not to be literate are the ones highly affected. They are the ones who get sick most of the time by virtue of their living standards, what they eat and how they take care of themselves. Ensuring that these people must pay using a mobile phone with that state of illiteracy might be a challenge to them. Looking at people who are also physically challenged, they might not in one way or another be able to use this gadget. We are also looking for the availability and ability to be able to deposit money in our phones. I am victim being a privileged Member of the community sometimes I have money and I want to deposit it on Mpesa but you find that shops do not have float. This is a sick person that we are actually talking about so the essence of making it exclusive shows that there is a decision that has already been made and I have like the way Hon Mutai has put it, it is actually implementation of a cashless system.

When you talk of implementing something it means a decision has been made or there is something coming up somewhere. We have talked of the machineries and the nature. I would like to support this Motion with a rider just as Hon Fadhili put it so that in case you are visiting the hospital, somebody stole your phone and all the money is in that phone, before you even replace the line you have to go customer care. Maybe the money or the identification card has also been stolen and this is a sick person and a bread winner of the family who does not have another source of money. You went to hospital knowing that you must have all the money in the phone. What happens to this Kenyan when he gets to hospital? How long will he take before he can access his money in the E-Systems that we are proposing today? As we support this very good Motion, it is good to give a rider for the sake of those more challenges that might come. I have talked vividly about phones being stolen, physically challenged people and network. I come from a place where our Level 4 Hospital absolutely has no network and we know the challenges of network.

We encourage the implementation of Cashless Payment System but with a consideration of those challenged in terms of the matters that I have put forth. With amendments I rise to support the Motion and thank the Hon Member for tabling the Motion. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon Elijah Murage): Hon Gathuita

Hon James Gathuita: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir. I rise to support the Motion but with amendments. It is good that we are looking at this on basis of accountability and I support it because it will bring accountability to the facility and bring effectiveness in terms of cash used on those facilities. I want to bring to attention as you hear the Hon. Chair for Budget is talking very well about the amount of money that will be collected in those facilities but on equal measure, we want to relook on the issue of where these cash comes from; they come from the patients and therefore bearing in mind that they come from those patients we need to keep good records. When you talk about cashless, let us have registration of patients be digitalised so that these hospitals go electronic in terms of registration of patients, drug records be digitalised and also in terms of attendance of doctors and nurses attending those facilities so

that we can equate the amount of cash collected to the service rendered to mwananchi. On that issue I beg to rest my case but with amendments.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon Muraya and then Hon. Kayfive then I will call the mover of the Motion to reply

Hon. David Muraya: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker, kwanza ningependa kushukuru mheshimiwa Mutai kwa sababu ya kujikakamua na kuja na Mswada huu. Vile vile nikiendelea kutoa maoni yangu ni *kwamba* systems zetu saa hizi hata kugenerate receipt ya watu wa motorbikes in other institutions ni shida. So we have a problem with the system already. Again, *nikijiuliza kama tumepanga foleni pale ili tuweze kulipa kwa njia ya cashless*, sasa kwa mfano watu kumi na kila mmoja ametuma pesa yake na lazima upeleke receipt kwa Daktari jameni itabidi mwenye ako pale pia umuonyeshe hiyo message yako ndio akutolee. Itakuwa msukumano bado katika ile laini na sasa itakuwa shida zaidi badala ya kusuluhisha na kutafuta jinsi ya kuokota kodi. Nataka niseme hata kama mimi ni Member wa Committee hi ya Finance, kama vile Kiongozi wa Walio Wengi Bunge hili, lazima tufanyie Mswada huu mabadiliko ili tunapoendelea mbele tukaweze kupata kitu ambacho hakitatulemea tunapoendelea mbele. Kwa hivyo, kwa mabadiliko naunga mkono huu Mswada.

Hon. Francis Kuria: Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker sir, I arise to support the Motion and when we use this cashless means of payment, it will ease and fasten on the process of payment; it will reduce thuggery and in terms of the facility, they can have an extra handset where incase the client maybe the phone has been stolen or lost, the handset he or she can deposit the money to that handset and the payment can be made. I beg to support. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): I now call the mover of the Motion to reply.

Hon. William Mutai: Mr. Temporary Speaker sir, Honorable Members, I have seen there is quite a number of honorable Members who wanted to contribute more to this Motion. I have seen Hon. Maritim he is even restless now because you never gave him time and he kept on standing. I think he wanted to support this Motion. He is still restless, look at him Hon. Temporary Speaker. However, I really want to concur with contributors to this Motion that the issues raised are pertinent and I really need to say thank you and especially when you mentioned about People Living With Disability. The Majority Leader was abler to explain on this but I still believe a person with disability will be safer when the money is in a gadget than having cash. Secondly, on the issue of lack of devices that are required to facilitate the cashless mode, we agree that change is inevitable but the real word that will bring change is that we embrace gradual change so that our people can embrace this idea slowly by slowly. I want to say I am grateful for the support that I have gotten from the members and the critic that has also been given, is not it very encouraging so thank you so much.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): Thank you very much.

(Question put and agreed to)

This House stands adjourned until Tuesday next week 9.30am.

The House rose at 3.45pm