

News

April 19, 2026 by [Tosin Tope, Akure](#)

How power outage at FMC Owo ended battle to save 58-year-old mother's life



Controversy is trailing the death of a 58-year-old farmer, Mrs Christianah Jegede, at the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Owo, Ondo State following allegation by her family that her death was caused by a prolonged power outage that delayed a critical blood transfusion, **TOSIN TOPE reports.**

In the early hours of a quiet Sunday morning in Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State, a family's fragile hope flickered and then went out.

For days, Mrs Christianah Jegede, a farmer and trader from Imoru in the Ose LGA of the state had been fighting for her life at the Federal Medical Centre, (FMC) Owo where she was rushed for treatment.

The alarming condition of the 56-year-old, though critical, had suddenly begun to improve. Blood transfusions were working. Her strength was returning and family members dared to believe she would survive.

But by midday on Sunday, Mrs Jegede was gone. Her passing was announced to her family members, who had hoped for her healing.

Her death has since ignited grief, anger, and a familiar question concerning Nigeria's public health system.

“How does a patient die in this hospital because there was no electricity?” one of the family members queried the medical personnel.

A race against time

According to family sources, Mrs Jegede’s travail began on Easter Monday when she noticed blood in her urine – an alarming symptom that sent her family scrambling for help.

She was rushed to Oba Israel Adewusi General Hospital in Ifon, where doctors diagnosed chronic haemolysis, a condition requiring urgent and sustained blood transfusion.

Her packed cell volume (PCV), a key measure of blood health, was already low at 18 per cent. She needed more specialised care and was immediately referred to the FMC Owo.

But by the time she arrived on Tuesday, her PCV had dropped further to 15 per cent. Doctors moved quickly and she was stabilised at the Accident and Emergency Unit before she was admitted into the female medical ward.

Her son, Olamide Jegede, said her mother’s PCV dropped from 18 per cent at Ifon town to 15 per cent on arrival at the hospital facility, prompting urgent intervention.

He revealed that over the next few days, there were signs of progress, noting that each improvement was a step away from tragedy.

“She received four pints of blood between Tuesday and Saturday and her PCV rose to 19 per cent. The bleeding also reduced and she was responding,” Olamide recalled.

However, the situation worsened early Sunday when a scheduled transfusion could not proceed due to absence of the electricity needed for blood grouping and cross-matching at the hospital laboratory.

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“We were told there was no electricity since midnight. Nothing could be done until power was restored around 10 am,” the sober Olamide lamented.

The turning point

On Saturday evening, doctors had recommended another round of transfusion for Sunday morning – routine, necessary, and potentially lifesaving. But Sunday came with an unexpected obstacle: no electricity.

According to the family, the hospital laboratory had been without power since midnight. Without electricity, critical procedures like blood grouping and cross-matching – essential steps before any transfusion – could not be carried out. Everything stalled.

“We were told nothing could be done,” Olamide added. “We waited for hours.”

He said doctors repeatedly made urgent calls, stressing that at least four blood donors were already on standby. "The will to act was present but the means were not," the bereaved Olamide further said.

It was not until about 10am that power was restored and the process resumed, but then, it was too late.

"The blood was eventually given," Olamide said quietly, "but her body could not take it anymore."

A failure of the system

Corroborating her brother, Folakemi said her pain was sharpened by the belief that her mother's death was avoidable.

She would not blame the doctors or laboratory scientists, whom she said did their best under impossible conditions.

"Even one of the doctors had to rush to the laboratory to press for urgent attention, but there was nothing they could do without electricity," she said.

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Instead, Folakemi points to a deeper, more troubling issue of systemic failure.

In a desperate attempt to speed things up, she offered to provide N100,000 to fuel the generator to save her mother's life. But the response she got was even more unsettling: the generator was faulty.

"How can a laboratory not have 24-hour electricity or backup power?" Folakemi said she queried.

That revelation, she said, changed everything.

She added: "We got there at 6:30 am, and waited for solar light for over three hours. This is not just about the lab scientists; it is a failure of the system."

She also recounted earlier difficulties at the hospital, including initial refusal to admit the patient due to lack of bed space.

"She was left in the car for about five hours the day we arrived at FMC, bleeding before we found a doctor who intervened. There was no empathy," she added.

The grieving daughter expressed frustration over what she termed systemic neglect in public healthcare, wondering whether the same treatment would have been meted out to the patient if she had an influential background.

"If I were the daughter of a powerful person, would they have treated her this way?" she asked.

Folakemi clarified that while laboratory scientists did their best under the circumstances, the problem lay in broader institutional and management failures.

She painted a grim picture of conditions within the female medical ward, alleging that patients' relatives were forced to fan their loved ones with "sheets of paper" due to poor ventilation caused by non-functional fans, noting that the only sign of electricity supply in the ward was the faint glow of light bulbs.

According to her, "tension nearly escalated into a protest among patients' families on Saturday over the conditions."

She said the family had called for a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding her mother's death, insisting that the outcome might have been different if basic infrastructure had been in place.

FMC reacts

Contacted, the spokesperson of the Federal Medical Centre, Owo, Mr Olufunso Ijanusi, said management had yet to receive a comprehensive report on the incident.

However, he assured that a preliminary inquiry would be conducted.

"We are aware of the concerns being raised, but I must state that we are yet to get a comprehensive report on the matter.

"However, the management will look into the allegations and take appropriate steps where necessary," Ijanusi said.

A pattern beyond one patient

Meanwhile, concerned residents who reacted to the incident told The Nation that the tragedy did not occur in isolation.

Mr Abiodun Anthony, a businessman in Akure, who also lost her elder brother in 2022 after a robbery attack on the Benin/Owo highway and was rushed to the FMC, said the Jegede account paints a broader picture of strain within the hospital facility.

Anthony, who recalled his experience in the hospital, said there were many things wrong with the facility, especially delayed admission due to lack of bed space, poor ventilation in wards, and anxious relatives fanning patients in the absence of working fans.

He said: "While I condole with the Jegede's family, it is also a fact that across Nigeria, unreliable power supply remains one of the most persistent challenges facing public hospitals.

"Sadly, this happened in critical care where minutes can determine survival and any disruption, no matter how brief, can have irreversible consequences," Mr Anthony said.

According to him, laboratories, operating theatres and emergency units are particularly vulnerable.

"So, without constant power, diagnostics are delayed, procedures are interrupted, and outcomes worsen," he added.