

Survivors Need Health Services After Deadly Louisiana Floods



Louisiana

When 4 feet of water flooded the Total Family Medical clinic in Robert, Louisiana, clinic staff feared that the facility's doors would close forever, leaving 2,000 low-income patients without health care.

Just six months before, in March, flood waters had ruined the clinic's interior. Administrator Peggy Gautreau used her personal savings account to restock damaged medicine and supplies and re-open the clinic. When water poured into the clinic after heavy rains in August, funds were depleted and the future looked grim.



The flooding was widespread: Across southern Louisiana, 13 people died, and 10,000 were forced from their homes. Nearly 70 health facilities had to close temporarily.

To restore health services for survivors, Americares immediately began emergency shipments of medicine, including tetanus vaccine and insulin, and looked for ways to quickly re-open health facilities. Total Family Medical needed a new facility, Americares stepped in with the funds needed to secure and open a modular clinic. "Americares support has given us hope in what seemed a very hopeless situation," says Gautreau.

Within a month of the disaster, Americares had provided 14 shipments, including medicine, bottled water, first aid kits and medical equipment, to area shelters and clinics. Shipments included enough tetanus vaccine to protect more than 900 survivors and first responders.

"We're ready when disaster strikes," says Americares Director of Emergency Response Kate Dischino. "We are able to quickly identify and fill the needs of our partners to address immediate and long-term health needs of disaster survivors."

Heavy rains were deadly and destructive, closing roads and ruining everything in the Total Family Medical clinic (above). Silvia is thankful to have a healthy son, even as Zika is present in her community (right).

Zika Prevention Kits Help Families

When Silvia and her husband learned that a mosquito bite could cause lifelong harm to their unborn child, the Salvadoran couple worried. "We were concerned and afraid," Silvia says. The mosquito-borne Zika virus is known to cause birth defects in unborn babies. In February, the World Health Organization declared Zika a public health emergency; the virus spread from South America to Central America, the Caribbean and the southern United States.

Health promoters from Americares Family Clinic in Santiago de María, El Salvador, told Silvia about a Zika prevention program at the Americares clinic. There, she received a protection kit with a bed net, insect repellent, water treatments, education materials and condoms (to prevent sexual transmission of Zika). In July, Silvia gave birth to a healthy son. She is thankful for the help she received.

"People must have the knowledge and supplies to protect themselves and stop the spread of the virus," says Americares Medical Officer Dr. Julie Varughese.

Americares is working to protect vulnerable families from Zika in Central America and the Caribbean, as well as Puerto Rico and the southern United States, including Florida and Texas. In Colombia, Haiti and El Salvador, Americares is collaborating with local partners to distribute protection kits for pregnant women.



From the President and CEO



Dear Friends,

When I heard in late July that deadly floods had struck Bihar, India, I wondered how people there would cope, as their communities were already vulnerable, burdened with fragile health systems. And weeks later, when heavy rains struck southern Louisiana, I had the same concerns: Flooding forced more than 70 health facilities to shut their doors. Where would residents turn for health care until the clinics could reopen?

In both instances, AmeriCares emergency responders helped restore health services for survivors. Our Mumbai-based team collaborated with a hospital to provide critical supplies and primary care in Bihar. In the U.S., our emergency response team made sure that shelters and health centers could address patients' health needs (see page 1), then provided the support needed to re-open a clinic serving 2,000 local residents.

Your ongoing support ensures that AmeriCares can respond to disasters when they happen and work every day to provide health programs that change lives.

Thank you,

Michael J. Nyenhuis
President and CEO

“Don’t Let the Light Go Out!” Village Elder Pleads for Clinic

Two weeks before her baby was due, Cecilia packed and left her house. If she waited, she would have to give birth at home or walk four hours while in labor—perhaps at night or through rain—to reach the John Logan Town Clinic, the health facility nearest her home in Liberia. Instead, Cecilia temporarily moved into her in-laws' house just steps from the clinic. “It’s safer to give birth at the clinic,” she says.

The health center in remote John Logan Town was originally built to isolate Ebola cases during the 2014 epidemic. The Liberian government planned to close the clinic in 2015 when the Ebola crisis ended, but AmeriCares had committed to strengthening the county health care system and kept the clinic open, providing staff salaries, medicine and medical supplies. The clinic now provides primary care with a focus on maternal, newborn and child health and serves a community of more than 25,000. AmeriCares also trains and supports community health volunteers who spread information about disease prevention and services—including prenatal care—available at the facility.

In just its first 10 months open with AmeriCares support, the clinic treated more than 5,600 patients, including more than 2,500 children under age 5 and 64 mothers who gave birth at the facility—including Cecilia.

People in John Logan Town know how valuable the clinic is. “Let the light continue to shine in the community,” says Daniel Loway, a village elder, describing the clinic. “Don’t let the light go out!”



Cecilia and her midwife are eager for a safe birth at the clinic.

Photo by Nana Kofi Acquah

“When You’re Told ‘No,’ That’s Crushing”

Kevin remembers how hard it was to find care when he was struggling with a mental illness. “Nothing shuts somebody down quicker than if something’s not available for them that they need,” he says. “When you’re told ‘no’ to a medical need, that’s crushing.”

Kevin found care and now works as a peer-support specialist at Haven for Hope in San Antonio, Texas, one of 88 clinics in the U.S. supported by AmeriCares with a unique program that donates medicine and personal care products to behavioral health centers across the country. Last year, the program provided 220,000 prescriptions for free to low-income, uninsured people like Kevin who qualify. With these donations, behavioral health centers can improve their clinical services.

People with a severe mental illness are twice as likely as the general population to be low-income and uninsured. Even if they get a prescription, they often can’t afford to fill it or must choose between rent, food or medicine. “The patients have benefited incredibly from that choice that they now don’t have to make,” says nurse Kindra Clark, RN. “So many of my patients are grateful because they don’t have to suffer every day from a completely treatable disorder.”



Kevin now helps others at a behavioral health center in Texas.

Partner in Profile: Fresenius Kabi USA

In the United States, one in five adults experiences some form of mental illness every year. Those with a severe mental illness are more likely to be low-income and uninsured—often not able to afford the medicine they need.

To help those patients, Fresenius Kabi USA is supporting AmeriCares Mental Health Initiative and donating prescription medicine that treats mental illnesses. The medicine, provided free to patients, is already reaching behavioral health centers in 13 states. Fresenius Kabi is a global health care company that specializes in life-saving medicine and technologies for infusion, transfusion and clinical nutrition.



“Fresenius Kabi is committed to ‘caring for life’ in every aspect of our business, and we see it as a privilege to support the vital work of AmeriCares,” said John Ducker, president and CEO for Fresenius Kabi USA. “We share AmeriCares passion and commitment to supporting access to care.”

Fresenius Kabi began supporting AmeriCares work after the Haiti earthquake in 2010, donating medicine, including antibiotics to treat infections in survivors. The company also donated its generic and specialty infusion therapies after the 2015 Nepal earthquake, the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011 and Hurricane Sandy in 2012, as well as supplying critical medical treatments to AmeriCares and its partners at the frontlines of the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. In all, Fresenius Kabi has donated enough medicine to fill more than 350,000 prescriptions for patients in need worldwide, valued at more than \$13 million.

AmeriCares recently presented Fresenius Kabi with our Power of Partnership Award to recognize the company’s exceptional dedication to expanding access to care for disadvantaged populations.



Fresenius Kabi USA’s products helped Haitians access health care after the 2010 earthquake. This young boy is heading into surgery.

Photo by Matthew McDermott

Young Students Learn Life Lesson

Low cost, life-saving and so simple any child can do it? Handwashing is all of those things. It’s even been called a “do-it-yourself vaccine” because it’s so effective at preventing infections.

At 79 schools in Mumbai, India, AmeriCares is teaching young students the basics of handwashing—when to wash and how. Last year, 22,000 students took part. AmeriCares school-based health program also includes health and nutrition information as well as other hygiene topics. Educators encourage the students to use what they learn at home and share the knowledge with their families and neighbors, establishing a foundation of health in their community.



These students in Mumbai, India, are learning that soap and running water are an important step to good health anywhere.

Photo by William Yaquez

Plan a Gift, Leave a Legacy



Photo by Christine Cole

AmeriCares donor Priscilla Letendre

Like many New Hampshire natives, Priscilla Letendre appreciates life’s small pleasures: swimming, gardening, biking, walking trails in the woods and the four seasons. “I lead a very simple life,” says the retired elementary school teacher.

Philanthropy is also among her priorities. “Doing something for other people less fortunate than I is very important to me,” she says. Priscilla read about the life of AmeriCares founder Bob Macauley. “I learned that AmeriCares reaches out to people all over the world and also in our own country and also that AmeriCares helps people help themselves. AmeriCares doesn’t just come into a crisis situation and leave,” she says. “Staff stays to help with recovery and work with local organizations, long after the public has forgotten their plight.” Learning about Macauley inspired Priscilla to become a sustaining donor.

Two years ago, Priscilla chose to include AmeriCares in her estate plan by participating in a Legacy Match Challenge. “I feel my dollars will be well spent and continue to help people now and in the future when I am no longer here,” she says.

For more information on the benefits of gift planning, contact Planned Gift Office at AmeriCares: 203.658.9500.

Your Donations Reached 60 Countries in Three Months

With your help between April 1 and June 30, AmeriCares sent medicine, medical supplies and project support to the following countries:

Afghanistan	China	Ghana	Kenya	Myanmar	Peru	Swaziland
Antigua & Barbuda	Colombia	Guatemala	Laos	Nepal	Philippines	Tanzania
Argentina	Costa Rica	Guyana	Liberia	Nicaragua	Romania	Trinidad & Tobago
Armenia	Dominican Republic	Haiti	Malawi	Niger	Rwanda	Uganda
Bangladesh	Ecuador	Honduras	Mali	Nigeria	Senegal	Ukraine
Belize	El Salvador	India	Marshall Islands	Palestinian Territories	Sierra Leone	United States
Cambodia	Ethiopia	Jamaica	Mexico	Panama	Somalia	Uzbekistan
Cameroon	Fiji	Japan	Mongolia	Paraguay	St. Lucia	Vietnam
		Jordan	Mozambique		St. Vincent Island	Zimbabwe

India



India: Families in Bihar, India, carried the household kits and water purification supplies they received from AmeriCares after floods destroyed homes and roads in early August. AmeriCares medical staff saw nearly 1,000 patients at temporary clinics in 29 villages and distributed relief supplies to 15,000 survivors.

El Salvador: To protect families by killing the mosquitoes that carry the Zika virus, AmeriCares is helping to fumigate homes.

El Salvador



Ecuador



Ecuador: Many residents of Portoviejo are still without clean water, months after the April earthquake. Along with continued shipments of emergency medicine, AmeriCares provided water purification supplies and demonstrated their proper use.

Nepal: A backpack with school supplies, a toothbrush, soap and more comes in handy for this student in Nepal, in a community still struggling after the April 2015 earthquake. AmeriCares is rebuilding damaged clinics and expanding health services for survivors.

Annual Emergency Response Partners

These organizations support AmeriCares year-round readiness for global emergencies:

- Alexicon Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Anthem Foundation
- The Boeing Company
- Chevron
- Medtronic
- MoneyGram Foundation
- Northrop Grumman
- OdysseyRe Foundation
- Patagonia
- Southwest Airlines
- S&P Global
- Vanech Family Foundation
- Voya Financial
- Anonymous

Nepal



AmeriCares is a health-focused relief and development organization that responds to people affected by poverty or disaster with life-changing health programs, medicine and medical supplies.

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