

March 17, 2020

Emergency Response Update



The official COVID-19 global statistics now include more than 189,000 confirmed cases, 7,500 deaths and 80,000 recovered across 155 countries/regions. The countries with the highest rate of infection are currently China, Italy, Iran and Spain. The number of official cases in the U.S. is expected to increase significantly over the next few days as testing becomes more available. (To monitor case counts, we recommend the [Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center map](#).)

In response to COVID-19, Americares goal is to assist in slowing the spread of the virus, while building the capacity of local health centers to safely provide health services for COVID-19 and continue to meet the ongoing health needs of vulnerable populations in the U.S. and multiple other countries.

To that end, Americares has established three core programmatic priorities that are shaping our response:

Product support for frontline health workers

Along with other preventive measures, personal protective equipment and other infection prevention and control supplies are critical to decreasing the spread of infection.

- To date, Americares has sent 14 shipments with more than 6 tons of protective supplies including masks, gowns, gloves, sanitizer, and hygiene kits to frontline health workers in clinics serving low-income and uninsured patients across California, Connecticut, New York, Texas and Washington state.
- Internationally, in addition to shipments to our global field teams, Americares sent a large shipment of protective equipment and supplies to China to aid health workers at the epicenter of the outbreak and is preparing additional shipments for partners in high case count “hot zones.”

Training and technical assistance for health providers and partners on Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and Preparedness

Leveraging Americares long-standing expertise in IPC, MHPSS and Preparedness, Americares technical experts are creating COVID-19-specific training modules for all three program areas to ensure health center partners are armed with the knowledge and expertise needed to slow the spread of the virus and protect health workers as they continue their lifesaving work.

- All materials will be available on digital platforms to reach more partners in need of training and technical support during this challenging time.
- Americares will also be providing remote technical assistance and mentoring across all three program areas to provide expert guidance to health center partners as they evolve and adapt their models to meet the needs of their patient populations.

Continuity of operations for Americares health programming, including direct clinical care

Ensuring that Americares clinical and community health staff can continue to do lifesaving and lifechanging work on behalf of those affected by poverty and disaster is a priority in our response to COVID-19. Americares currently has field teams operating across Connecticut, Puerto Rico, Texas, Colombia, El Salvador, India, the Philippines, Liberia, Tanzania, Haiti, Malawi and the Bahamas. To support them, we are:

- Equipping staff with personal protective equipment (PPE) and commodities needed for infection control (including 8 shipments to-date to high-risk field teams and local procurement where available).
- Ensuring our clinics can provide safe, essential services and patient-centric care including prescription refills and, where appropriate, telemedicine hotlines for advice and referral.
- Providing refreshed training on infection prevention, preparedness and mental health during this unprecedented time.
- Preparing to mobilize medical personnel to provide surge support for overwhelmed health facilities (beyond our own clinical operations), if needed. Members of AmeriCares global roster of emergency response experts, including infection prevention and control specialists, stand ready to deploy as needed.