

Americares Helps Peru Fight COVID-19 Surge

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Patients receive medical care, including COVID-19 testing, at an Americares and VIDA Perú mobile clinic in Lima, Peru, on Aug. 29. Photo by Angela Ponce/Americares.

Stamford-based Americares is providing "surge" medical support in Peruvian health facilities overwhelmed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The health-focused relief and development organization is dispatching medical personnel, all of which are locally based and have experience working within the health system, to health centers in Lambayeque, Lima and Piura to meet the increase in demand for care and provide the struggling health system with some relief as the coronavirus pushes health center capacity to the brink.

“As COVID-19 cases rise in Peru and health facilities continue to struggle with an unprecedented demand for services, our medical personnel will provide critically needed manpower,” said Americares Vice President of Emergency Programs Kate Dischino.

“Our support will help ensure hospitals and clinics can continue treating patients and access the supplies needed to keep health workers safe.”

In addition to surge support, and in collaboration with local partner VIDA Perú, Americares began operating mobile medical clinics on Aug. 29 in communities with high rates of COVID-19 infections to ensure continuity of primary care services for patients and provide COVID-19 testing and referrals.

Americares is also providing critically needed protective gear, training in infection prevention and control and disaster preparedness, and emotional support for health workers in Lambayeque, Lima and Piura to ensure they can continue their lifesaving work.

Despite Peru's early action to contain the pandemic, COVID-19 has spread rampantly throughout the country. More than 650,000 people have been diagnosed with the virus so far, and over 28,000 deaths have been recorded, making Peru one of the world's hardest-hit countries.

Public health experts say high levels of informal economic activity have made it nearly impossible for many Peruvians to comply with quarantine measures, which has only exacerbated the rise in cases.

Americares is working in close coordination with the Peruvian Ministry of Health, the United States Agency for International Development and local partners, including VIDA Perú, to respond to the crisis. Nearly 100,000 patients are expected to benefit from Americares COVID-19 response in Peru over the next six months.

Americares has been supporting the health sector in Peru since 1989, providing medicines and supplies to a network of partner hospitals, clinics, nutritional centers, children's homes and homes for the elderly.

Americares has also responded to emergencies in Peru, including the 2007 earthquake, the 2017 floods and the severe weather of 2018 — delivering more than \$9 million in aid between these responses, which included both product support to health facilities and direct patient care.

Americares is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in 20 countries. Worldwide, Americares has delivered more than 240 tons of infection-control supplies—10 million supplies in all — including gloves, masks, gowns and disinfectants to combat the spread of the virus.

In addition, Americares is training thousands of health workers in infection prevention and control, disaster preparedness and mental health and psychosocial support.

Americares COVID-19 response in Peru expands efforts to contain the spread of the virus in Latin America. Americares is on the frontlines of the pandemic, providing essential primary care services and COVID-19 screening and referrals through its 10 clinics in Colombia and at the Americares Family Clinic in eastern El Salvador.

Americares has a long history of responding to infectious disease outbreaks, including cholera, Ebola, dengue and Zika outbreaks. The organization has professional relief workers ready to respond to disasters at a moment's notice and stocks emergency medicine and supplies in warehouses in the U.S., Europe and India that can be delivered quickly in times of crisis.

Americares responds to approximately 30 natural disasters and humanitarian crises worldwide each year, establishes long-term recovery projects and brings disaster preparedness programs to vulnerable communities.

Since its founding more than 40 years ago, Americares has provided more than \$18 billion in aid to 164

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countries, including the United States.

About AmeriCares

AmeriCares is a health-focused relief and development organization that saves lives and improves health for people affected by poverty or disaster.

Each year, AmeriCares reaches more than 90 countries, including the United States, with life-changing health programs, medicine and medical supplies.

AmeriCares is the world's leading nonprofit provider of donated medicine and medical supplies. For more information, visit americares.org.