

Americares Will Try to Reduce 'Vaccine Hesitancy' With a New \$2.6 Million Federal Grant

Author : David Gurliacci

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Americares announced today it has been awarded \$2.6 million from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to combat COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy at free and charitable clinics across the country.

— *an announcement from* [Americares](#)

U.S. Rep. Jim Himes joined Americares President and CEO Christine Squires for the announcement at the Fred Weisman Americares Free Clinic in Bridgeport, Conn.

“Vaccine hesitancy, among other factors, is preventing low-income, immigrant and communities of color from getting vaccinated, even though these communities are most adversely impacted by COVID-19,,” Himes said.

“I am proud to see Americares—a well-respected relief organization based in southwestern Connecticut—encouraging vaccination so that life can get back to normal as quickly as possible.”

Stamford-based Americares will work with hundreds of clinics, the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics and state associations to dispel myths and educate staff and volunteers about the importance of vaccination.

“Free and charitable clinic staff and volunteers care for underserved communities, including some with deep-rooted distrust of the health care system. Provider confidence in the vaccine and the vaccine roll-out is critical,” Squires said. “Patients will be more likely to get vaccinated if the message comes from a trusted health care provider who is vaccinated.”

Just over half — 52 percent — of frontline health workers nationwide recently surveyed by the [Kaiser Family Foundation and the Washington Post](#) reported receiving at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Of those not yet vaccinated, 30 percent report they are undecided or do not plan to be vaccinated.

“There is much work to be done to dispel myths and misinformation even within the medical community,” said Squires. “Americares will also equip free and charitable clinics with information about vaccine safety that they can share with patients concerned about side effects or efficacy.”

Americares has been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic for more than a year, providing primary care services as well as medicine, supplies, training and mental health support to health workers in more than 30 countries. To date, Americares has provided more than 14 million protective supplies for the COVID-19 pandemic, including PPE, masks, gloves and disinfectants.

Americares helps communities prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters; increase access to critical medicine and medical supplies; improve and expand clinical services; and prevent disease and promote good health.

In the United States, Americares responds to emergencies and supports nearly 1,000 partner clinics and health centers serving more than 7 million patients in need with medicine, supplies, education and training.

Since its founding more than 40 years ago, Americares has provided more than \$19 billion in aid to 164 countries, including the United States.