

Safeguarding health

Providing care to people in crisis, in **Ukraine and Poland**

Americares is supporting health services for families affected by the escalating humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

The problem

War has been steadily waging over the last eight years in Ukraine, leaving more than 850,000 people internally displaced and almost 3 million people in need of humanitarian aid. There are many reports of widespread damage and human casualties. Preliminary reports from WHO officials in Ukraine confirm the urgent need for medicines, medical supplies, and medical professionals with a focus on trauma and primary care services.

The partner

Americares is a health-focused relief and development organization that responds to people affected by poverty or disaster with life-changing medicine, medical supplies and health programs. Americares also is recognized as a global leader in providing mental health training and support in emergency contexts in the U.S. and around the world.

The philanthropic solution

Americares has been supporting the health sector in Eastern Europe since 1986, and since 1992 has provided more than \$120m in aid to Ukrainians. In response to the current crisis, Americares plans to work with Ministries of Health and local health organizations to provide health-focused humanitarian aid for Ukrainians both inside Ukraine and those taking refuge in neighboring countries.

Americares will focus support on the following three areas:

- **Medicine security:** support the international sourcing and distribution of critically needed medicine and medical supplies to partners in Ukraine and countries across Eastern Europe. Product support for partners can address patient surge, trauma, primary care needs as well as compounding crises such as COVID-19
- **Emergency medical teams:** support provision of primary health and mental health services at the community level while the health system is overwhelmed with patients, including provision outpatient emergency care of injuries and other significant health care needs

- **Mental health and psychosocial support:** support access to basic mental health services for individuals experiencing distress during the conflict by training local health workers and other professionals (e.g., emergency responders, social workers, etc.) in providing community-based mental health and psychosocial support services, including psychological first aid.

The evidence

Americares has over 40 years of experience responding to emergencies, including conflicts that lead to large-scale displacements. Americares responds to more than 30 natural disasters and humanitarian crises worldwide each year. Americares was a key partner of the UBS Optimus Foundation in responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic, providing over 15 million units of protective equipment through 850 shipments to hundreds of partners in 33 countries around the world and training for over 30,000 health workers in preparedness, infection prevention and control (IPC) and mental health and psychosocial support.

The impact

Americares will ensure that displaced Ukrainians have access to essential health services and supplies, including medicines and psychosocial support.

How it's helping

"We're focused on meeting the health needs of families caught in the violence and those fleeing Ukraine. There's an urgent need for medicine and medical supplies as well as basic relief items to protect health. At the same time, Ukraine is battling rapidly rising COVID-19 infections and a polio outbreak. It's a humanitarian crisis with immense health needs and we're ready to help."

- Kate Dischino, Americares Vice President of Emergency Programs.

Source: Americares (2022). <https://www.americares.org/emergency-program/conflict-in-ukraine>

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