International Medical Aid Program

Grateful to Provide Haiti Earthquake Relief

At Global Links we are grateful for our family of supporters, who share our passion to improve access to health resources for our neighbors facing challenges locally and globally. After the August Haiti earthquake, we put out the call via email and social media to raise funds to supply at least a dozen medical backpacks to our partners working on the ground in Haiti. These medical backpacks support healthcare workers in the field, working in community health and/or making housecalls. They contain new medical supplies and essential medical equipment that cannot be easily sourced in Haiti and which Global Links does not receive enough of as medical surplus - so we must buy the components. To donate one medical backpack, we currently need to raise $175. Nearly 150 of you donated from $5 to $5,000 and we are humbled by your generosity and trust in our ability to deliver on our mission. Thanks to you, we were able to raise enough funds to provide over 150 medical backpacks to date!

As of mid-October we have worked with four organizations that collaborate with or have Haitian medical staff or partners. Within a week of the earthquake, we donated 28 medical backpacks to WORK, an organization that works...
to accompany families in Haiti out of poverty through good, dignified jobs. In addition, 8 backpacks have been provided to Haiti H2O and 28 to Partners in Progress, to support rural health clinic networks. The remaining 92 medical backpacks are on their way to Hôpital Albert Schweitzer to equip their network of community health workers and mobile clinic teams. All of these organizations working in Haiti have Pittsburgh ties as well as established partnerships and local expertise on the ground in Haitian communities.

Nicole Mullins, Partnership and Operations Manager at WORK shared with us, “Thank you so much for donating various medical supplies and mobile clinic backpacks for our families in Les Cayes, we appreciate your quick and generous response. Because of your donation we are able to provide them with the medical care needed to treat and heal wounds and injuries sustained during the earthquake. Without your support this would not have been possible.”

We will continue to build our medical backpack program, which allows doctors, nurses, and community health workers to provide the care they have been trained to do. With these medical backpacks, health workers can also make home medical visits to those who cannot access healthcare because they are too isolated or too vulnerable or because they do not have the resources to travel to a health facility. Thank you -on behalf of our partners working on the ground in Haiti and the people they care for, we are so appreciative! •

Global Links Medical Backpacks contain important primary care tools that cannot be sourced easily in Haiti.

Nicaragua: Supporting Community Health

This past year Global Links has been receiving requests from the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health (MINSA) and SILAIS (Local System for Integrated Health Care) in the Zelaya Central region to provide urgently needed healthcare supply backpacks for the Community Health Worker network. Unlike the medical backpacks we assemble here at Global Links, the Nicaraguan Community Health Worker Backpacks are sourced in Nicaragua, providing important employment and resources to the local economy. These backpacks include hammocks and rain boots made in Nicaragua that support the health workers’ travel in the rural communities to reach and improve health for all residents.

Anabel Salazar, Head of Nursing for the region, with whom we have been working for 3 years, shared, “Receive greetings and a formal request for 1,000 BACKPACKS for the community network to support the work done by the volunteer health brigade in hard-to-reach communities.

Distribution of Community Health Backpacks in Nicaragua over the past months.
The backpacks are very useful to carry out health prevention and promotion activities in the context of COVID-19. Faced with this epidemiological emergency, the brigade members are working more on the surveys of their communities. We already received 200 backpacks that were very useful for our brigade members. They had a great impact in the first phase of the project. The community health workers are more engaged, they are making more visits, since they are motivated.

**Honduras: Dignified Healthcare in Prisons**

This year Global Links has been able to deliver medical and hygiene materials to The National Feminine Penitentiary for Social Adaptation (PNFAS), the main women’s prison. This prison is located near Tegucigalpa, houses 280 inmates although its maximum capacity is only 150 inmates. They have a new clinic that just opened thanks to the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In the clinic they provide OB/GYN services for inmates as well as primary care and pediatric care for the women’s children (up to 4 years old). They also have a special room for the care of tuberculosis patients which unfortunately is very common in prisons. The Global Links donation will help equip this new clinic and improve the health and dignity of the women in this prison.

Dr. Amy Tovar of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) in Honduras was present for the donation. Dr. Tovar met with the health center personnel and Dr. Eduardo Retes, head of the Health Unit of the National Penitentiary Institute (INP), who was thankful for the support received, “By continuing to improve the health system in prisons, we improve the condition of their lives,” he said.

**Cuba: Providing Syringes for Covid-19 Vaccinations**

Working together with Global Health Partners (another U.S. based, federally licensed non-profit organization), the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and the Ministry of Public Health, Global Links was able to provide millions of syringes and other medical supplies to support the national Covid-19 vaccination campaign in Cuba. Cuban medical professionals developed several of their own vaccines earlier this year, but face critical shortages of medical supplies.

The project to support the vaccination campaign in Cuba reaffirms Global Links’ commitment to continue with bilateral collaboration to guarantee health for ALL, in Cuba and worldwide. Mass vaccination is a way to relieve stress on health care systems.
DOMESTIC MEDICAL AID PROGRAM

Project Breathe Hope

Global Links’ Breathe Hope Program recovers gently used nebulizers from people across the U.S. and shares them with our partners, both locally and globally. Global Links tests, cleans, and pairs each machine with new accessories so that the nebulizer has a second life helping someone breathe easier.

A nebulizer is a small air compressor that turns liquid medications into a mist which is inhaled to help with the treatment of respiratory conditions such as asthma or COPD. Nebulizers are often easier to use than inhalers, making them especially useful for infants, young children, and older adults.

Global Links began sending nebulizers internationally after our staff noticed health clinics with a single communal nebulizer, or witnessed parents with young children struggling to breathe waiting in line for long periods to utilize one. However, our international partner countries are not the only places where there are barriers to accessing a nebulizer and the life-saving treatment it provides.

For example, according to a 2017 study by Dr. Deborah Gentile, there are 27,000 children in Allegheny County, where Global Links is headquartered, with asthma, including 6,500 with uncontrolled asthma that can be life-threatening. The rate in Allegheny County is higher than that nationally; 11% of children in the county have asthma compared to 8% nationally. There are also significant racial and geographic disparities, with ER visit rates and uncontrolled asthma rates significantly higher among black children, and children living in “urban and river-adjacent zip codes.” Some of the barriers to access a nebulizer include: a lack of insurance, multiple home living situations wherein a child needs more than one nebulizer, and situations where a nebulizer is lost or broken before being eligible for a replacement through insurance.

In response, Global Links has been building partnerships regionally to respond and help more of our neighbors have the breathing equipment they need. In 2021, we have specifically been focused on partnering with the network of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in our region, which provide free or reduced cost medical attention to patients. This year we have provided nebulizers to Northside Christian Health Center, Metro Community Health Center, and Sto-Rox Neighborhood Health Council. These FQHCs identify situations in which a nebulizer(s) is required but is not being provided through insurance, and their clinical staff can write the necessary prescriptions for respiratory medications and the accompanying nebulizer to ensure the patient is able to manage their respiratory health more effectively and avoid unnecessary trips to the emergency room. To donate a nebulizer, visit our website. To request a nebulizer or to get more information, contact the program coordinator at breathehope@globallinks.org.

MEDICAL SURPLUS RECOVERY PROGRAM

Does your facility have surplus?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is still needed around the world. Global Links is able to send large quantities of PPE to our partners internationally still fighting COVID-19. Case pack or bulk donations of masks, gloves, face shields, isolation gowns, or vaccine kits can be accepted.

Also, the Global Links Senior Care Facility Program launched in 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to broaden Global Links’ donation base. Senior facilities such as independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing, and others can donate durable medical equipment (DME), beds, mattresses, PPE, administrative furniture, and more. If you know of a facility which has surplus, call us at 412-361-3424 or email us at medicalsurplus@globallinks.org.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Be a Good Neighbor: Join Us for Family Volunteer Days

Get your family together and do good this holiday season. Global Links Family Volunteer Days are back. And we’ve got multiple ways to get involved to suit every comfort level on two different Saturdays. A third option is to participate when you choose - anytime and from anywhere!

Saturday, Nov 20
10:00am
• Join us for a LIVE streamed virtual event. This event is geared toward families with our youngest supporters ages 0–12 (although anyone of any age is welcome).

Saturday, Dec 11
10:00am–12:00pm
• Join us for an IN PERSON event at our headquarters in Green Tree. This event is geared toward families with teenagers ages 12–18.

Register to volunteer with your family, friends, or colleagues and receive detailed written instructions, a link to video instructions, and a shopping list. Whichever way you choose to engage, you will be giving the gift of HEALTH and DIGNITY this holiday season. #NeighborsHelpingNeighbors

Giving Health for ALL

Did you know you can support your favorite charities when you make a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA if you are 72 or older? Talk to your financial advisor about whether you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) to Global Links, and possibly take advantage of tax savings while supporting health and the planet.

Have a Donor Advised Fund (DAF)? Consider making a donation from your DAF to improve mobility, independence, dignity and health for your neighbors locally and globally.

#GiveBigPittsburgh #GivingTuesday on November 30

Double your donation on November 30 and bring HOPE as part of Give Big Pittsburgh and Giving Tuesday. From 12:01 am to midnight November 30, your donation to Global Links will be matched 100% thanks to the generosity of a family foundation in Pittsburgh. On that day only, visit www.givebigpittsburgh.com/organizations/global-links to bring mobility, independence, dignity and health to a neighbor in need.

Congratulations to Executive Director Angela Garcia, for winning a 2021 Fox Rothschild Outstanding CEOs and Top Executives Award.

Become a Legacy Donor for Health! Include Global Links in your will and provide Health for All.

Have a vehicle you no longer need? You can donate your car, truck, boat or RV and designate Global Links to receive the proceeds and you can claim the tax deduction. Contact us for details.
ABOUT GLOBAL LINKS

Global Links is a Pittsburgh-based nonprofit dedicated to improving health in communities with need. For 30+ years, Global Links has been collaborating with partners to improve health for vulnerable populations by sharing surplus rescued from the US healthcare system to support health programs globally and locally.

We Believe in Health for ALL.

Global Links affirms our foundational commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. These important themes are at the forefront of our minds and our work and are woven throughout all we do. Respect for all people and the environment guides our mission. We recognize everyone has value and deserves to be included equitably. We recognize everyone is our neighbor and we are dedicated to helping all people live with dignity, independence, mobility, and in good health. We will call out inequities and injustice and work to lift up all.

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