When Eva* began to experience symptoms of COVID-19 last spring, she feared for herself and her two young sons. Eva stopped working as a house cleaner so she would not infect others, and she knew it would be weeks, if not longer, before she could earn her hourly wage again.

"In this moment, I was sad. People were saying they were dying," Eva says. "I said, 'I have two sons here. I can't go.'"

Eva immediately called the Boehringer Ingelheim Americares Free Clinic in Danbury, Conn., where she'd been a patient for years. Clinic staff provided medicine to ease her symptoms, education resources and an isolation kit, with masks and disinfectants – all at no cost. Eva sent her sons to stay with a friend to protect them and endured the symptoms, having telehealth appointments with her doctor at the Americares clinic.

Eva is one of 2,519 patients who receive care at Americares four free clinics in Connecticut. Clinic staff continued to provide care during the pandemic: Eva's appointments were among more than 5,000 telehealth appointments clinic staff managed in 2020.

"The clinic has always helped me," says Eva. "They're my angels."

*name changed
Your Donation at Work: Aid Reaches Storm Survivors in Central America, the Philippines and U.S.

Dear Friends,

As we begin 2021, I want to wish you and your loved ones health and well-being in the new year. The pandemic has touched so many lives; I hope there are better days ahead for all of us.

During this challenging time, your generosity means the world to me, my colleagues at Americares and the people we help here in the United States and around the globe.

Americares has committed every resource to battle the pandemic. With your support, we’ve sent more than 11 million protective supplies, including gloves, masks and gowns, to health workers battling the pandemic in 26 countries. Thank you.

Here in the U.S., we’ve provided medicine, supplies and emergency flash grants to protect health workers and ensure that low-income patients can get the health care they need. Thank you.

And, during the pandemic, Americares continues to provide health programs, medicine and medical supplies that are the foundation of health care around the world. Because of your support, clinics can provide prenatal care, treatment for diabetes and heart disease and other medical services — all for people who struggle to access care because of poverty or disaster. In all, last year we sent medicine and medical supplies to 83 countries — saving lives, changing lives and creating healthy futures.

Please know that your generosity and commitment are making a difference to millions of people.

Sincerely,

Christine Squires | President and CEO

Americares emergency aid, medicine and supplies, including COVID-19 safety gear, reached survivors after Hurricanes Eta and Iota devastated Central America and Typhoons Goni and Vamco caused widespread damage in the Philippines in November. This is in addition to aid for clinics in the United States after Hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta hit the Gulf Coast in September and October. In all, Americares responded to eight major storms in the six-month 2020 hurricane season.

Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras were hit hard by powerful Category 4 hurricanes just two weeks apart, causing devastating floods. In Honduras alone, more than 4 million people were affected. Americares provided funding directly to local partners to quickly provide hygiene and COVID-19 supplies to shelters and medicine and medical supplies to damaged health centers. “We not only provided masks to survivors,” says Raúl Pineda, Americares Latin America emergency response coordinator, “but we showed families how to use them, as masks often aren’t worn routinely.” Americares also provided shipments of medicine and medical supplies to partners in the region.

In the Philippines, after millions of people were evacuated or displaced by Typhoons Goni and Vamco, Americares distributed hygiene kits, protective gear, bottled water and water purification tablets to survivors. Americares is also providing medical supplies and equipment for damaged health centers, and emergency response teams promoted hygiene, which can be challenging for families living in the midst of storm damage.

Americares brought relief supplies to typhoon survivors in the Philippines.
When Americares shipments of masks arrive, entire communities breathe easier. “Americares is helping us keep our door open,” says Josefi na Clarivel Manzueta, RN, of Neighborhood Clinic Tacoma, which received an emergency COVID-19 shipment of masks from Americares in May 2020. Longtime Americares partner Medtronic Foundation played a critical role: In spring 2020, the Medtronic Foundation helped provide more than 1.4 million protective masks for frontline health workers in the U.S. “We are thrilled to turn our gratitude into action – so the courageous frontline workers who deliver critical services have what they need to stay safe when they serve others,” said Paurvi Bhatt, president of the Medtronic Foundation. “Over the years, we’ve become trusted partners with Americares, responding to disasters. In this pandemic, our close collaboration helped us get critical PPE to those in need quickly, so they can stay safe as they care for patients with COVID-19.”

Medtronic and the Medtronic Foundation have supported Americares since 1986, including emergency responses in more than 60 countries. The Medtronic Foundation is also an Americares Emergency Response Partner, pledging year-round support in advance of emergencies and enabling quick responses to disasters, including 2020 Hurricanes Laura, Eta and Iota. Health programs across Americares benefit from Medtronic’s partnership, such as Americares Free Clinics chronic disease programs and disaster risk reduction activities in the Philippines.

Medtronic is the world’s largest standalone medical technology company, developing innovations and breakthrough medical technologies used along the entire continuum of care. The Medtronic Foundation partners to improve health for underserved populations, as well as supports communities where Medtronic employees live and give.

You Did It: Water Flows in Pestel, Haiti

In remote western Haiti, Pestel is hours away from another town or city. To improve health services in the region, Americares is strengthening the health center in Pestel, providing equipment, an ambulance, facility upgrades and staffing and training. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Americares is also making hand-washing available to everyone by installing dozens of hand-washing stations in the community and promoting their use with public messaging.

The combination is powerful, says Dr. Waly Turin, Americares project officer in Haiti. “We’ve seen that when we do outreach in the community around COVID-19, if we do not have the actual tools to promote the message we are trying to get across, it is almost as if we are doing nothing,” says Dr. Turin. “The hand-washing stations help so much.” Dr. Turin believes that the hand-washing stations have reduced the spread of COVID-19 in Pestel.
Last year, dedicated staff at Americares global distribution center in Stamford, Conn., safely managed 8,740 shipments containing more than 25 million medical supplies and enough medicine for 10.3 million prescriptions.

When she had COVID-19 while pregnant, this young mother found care at one of Americares 10 clinics in Colombia. Now, she and her baby are healthy. The clinics provide no-cost care to refugees and migrants from Venezuela.

After many clinics that serve people living in extreme poverty in Peru were shut down during spring of 2020, many families went months without health care. This mother and her son can now find care at a mobile clinic, thanks to Americares support.

Americares is improving health facilities in communities near two of Malawi’s national parks. Work goes on, safely, including public health education about hand-washing during the pandemic.