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Study Objectives: The objective of this study was to investigate if a disaster relief non-governmental organization (NGO), who blended their non-medical disaster response footprint with their established international medical model, would be able to effectively integrate and support local health care novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic operations broadly across the United States (US).

Methods: An observational study during the US COVID-19 pandemic was conducted collecting data from three primary sites during the NGO Team Rubicon (TR) COVID-19 pandemic response. The three sites chosen for disaster operations include: a drive-through triage system in Charlotte, North Carolina; an alternate care site in Santa Clara, California; and medical response support operation in Kayenta, Arizona in the Navajo Nation. Multiple aspects of the deployment were recorded including: number of TR volunteers deployed to each site, dates of operation, number of patients seen, roles TR volunteers performed, and the number of TR volunteers who were high concern for COVID-19 exposure and infection.

Results: Charlotte, North Carolina: This operation lasted between 4/2/20-4/22/20, and involved 10 volunteers who filled multiple roles in the hospital external ED drive through triage system. A total of 580 patients were seen in the drive-through, and 302 met criteria COVID-19 testing with subsequent discharge to home quarantine. None of the TR volunteers involved reported any symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, and others) concerning for COVID-19 infection.

Santa Clara, California: This operation took place between 3/31/20-5/1/20 and involved 40 volunteers who staffed a 250-bed alternate care site supporting the surrounding county’s health care system comprising 10 local hospitals. A total of 16 patients required transfer and care at the site. All of the patients were able to be successfully discharged home. None of the TR volunteers who were involved reported any symptoms concerning for COVID-19 infection.

Kayenta, Arizona: This deployment began 4/10/20 and is currently still in operation in the Navajo Nation. 37 volunteers deployed for this operation through the end of May 2020, and a total 1,354 patients were treated. 64 of those patients seen required medical evacuation to a higher level of care, and 20 total intubations were performed. TR volunteers served multiple roles including: emergency physicians, incident command staff, nurses, and medics. There were 3 TR medical staff who were either confirmed infected or reported signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection.

Conclusion: Team Rubicon demonstrated how a disaster relief NGO, who operated in three completely different types of operations in three different locations across the country can successfully coordinate efforts on multiple organizational levels to provide effective care to patients seeking treatment during a pandemic. Whether staffing a drive-through triage system in Charlotte, establishing an alternate care site in Santa Clara, or working in an emergency department in the Navajo Nation, Team Rubicon exhibited how a group of highly motivated individuals can make a significant difference in an impacted population.