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## **NCDs in humanitarian settings matter: NCD Alliance partners with Direct Relief**



Direct Relief delivered emergency medical supplies to help the community of Mexico Beach devastated by Hurricane Michael in October 2018 © Zack Wittman for Direct Relief

**The NCD Alliance is pleased to announce a new partnership with Direct Relief, a global NGO that provides direct and targeted assistance to people in need through the mobilisation and provision of essential medical resources, to join forces and make the case that noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) matter in humanitarian settings.**

Climate change poses a threat not only to the health of the planet, but also to humans. Vulnerable populations are facing more and more extreme weather events and massive natural disasters that call for resilient health systems that can ensure the continuity of care for people suffering from pre-existing chronic diseases, but also acute conditions that may occur as a result of the disaster, such as potential NCD complications, physical and psychosocial stress.

Conflicts are also increasingly becoming protracted with currently 70.8 million people being forcibly displaced in the world (UNHCR, 2019). **These people often struggle to access basic health services in their hosting areas**, disrupting the local health capacities and requiring strong NCD prevention and control measures that can cope with the needs of both the displaced and host populations.

Drawing upon the field expertise of Direct Relief in the supply and access to life-saving medicines and care in crisis-affected contexts, **this partnership will seek to develop over the next two years a better understanding of the programmatic particularities for the management of NCDs in humanitarian settings.** The NCD Alliance and Direct Relief will seek to identify evidence-based solutions to nurture our policy and advocacy efforts for the improvement of access to NCD treatment and care in such settings, but also in the broader context of primary health care (PHC) and universal health coverage (UHC).

“We are proud to work with Direct Relief to promote the need of addressing NCDs in humanitarian settings. We need to hear more from the people living with NCDs in such contexts and from the experiences of frontline health workers, and to work in close collaboration with national and regional NCD advocates that do bring in the local knowledge about their health systems”, said **Katie Dain**, CEO of the NCD Alliance.

“We are pleased to work with the NCD Alliance and support our shared mission of helping to improve the lives of the most vulnerable that are affected by chronic health conditions”, said **Damon Taugher**, Vice President of Global Programs for Direct Relief.

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Founded in 1948, Direct Relief is a California-based nonprofit organization that provides humanitarian medical aid in all 50 states and more than 100 countries, with a stated mission to improve the health and lives of people affected by poverty or emergency situations. Among other distinctions, Direct Relief has been named among the world's ten most innovative nonprofits by Fast Company, received the CECF Directors' Award, the President's Award from Esri for excellence in GIS mapping, and the Peter F. Drucker Award for Nonprofit Innovation. For more information, please visit <https://www.DirectRelief.org> [1].

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