



## SANDY'S FORGOTTEN VICTIMS: Hundreds in the Rockaways still living without access to basic health services

*- Doctors of the World-USA stays behind after most relief organizations have left -*

(New York, NY) – Less than three months after Superstorm Sandy devastated the Rockaways and left hundreds of local residents in dire need of health care services, Doctors of the World is one of only two organizations providing free medical relief in the area. Through its **“Treat, Connect and Restore”** initiative, Doctors of the World is meeting unmet critical medical needs through the winter months.

Since November, Doctors of the World-USA, has been deploying volunteers to canvas much of the Rockaways and address local health needs. To date, the nonprofit has identified more than 100 individuals in need of ongoing care and expects to locate many more.

“We have encountered people who vitally need critical health care: the elderly, vulnerable and ailing, people who have lost their homes and their access to medical professionals and nearby pharmacies,” said Henry E. Chang, the Executive Director of Doctors of the World-USA. “Thanks to a small but growing crew of medical professionals, we have begun to treat those with pressing medical conditions. But the need is much greater, and we could use more help.”

Doctors of the World-USA is calling for volunteers, and is most in need of primary care doctors, psychiatrists and nurse practitioners. The organization also needs volunteers to further assess the area and help dispatch medical professionals to meet with those who have already been identified as needing treatment.

Volunteers can sign up at the Doctors of the World-USA website – [www.doctorsoftheworld.org](http://www.doctorsoftheworld.org) or by emailing [help@doctorsoftheworld.org](mailto:help@doctorsoftheworld.org).

To date, volunteers have surveyed the area between Beach 117th and Beach 57th streets and have identified the need for treatment for asthma, respiratory conditions, flus and colds, as well as for mental health services. They also found residents who were unable to obtain medical supplies and much-needed prescription medications to treat serious chronic illnesses.

“This will be the start of a substantial, long-term effort to bring crucial health care services to the area,” Mr. Chang said. “We have begun to treat people with pre-existing and new chronic health ailments, and we need to ensure that we provide ongoing care through the difficult winter months when people without heat and other vital services or access are more vulnerable. As the Rockaways rebuilds, we will be there to rebuild lives and health, too.”

Doctors of the World-USA treats people regardless of citizenship and insurance coverage. The organization is:

- **Treating** the most vulnerable individuals with unmet health needs by providing sub-acute care, home-based care, and hygiene kits;
- **Connecting** pharmacy services, such as prescription medications and refills, and primary care providers with affected and displaced individuals, regardless of their ability to pay;
- **Restoring** the local health service delivery capacity and system by working with local providers, city health officials, and community organizations.

### **About Doctors of the World-USA**

Doctors of the World is an international humanitarian organization providing medical care to vulnerable populations affected by war, natural disasters, disease, famine, poverty or exclusion. Originally established in France in 1980, the Doctors of the World international network now has offices in 14 countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas, including the U.S. office, which launched in 2012. In 2010, Doctors of the World's global network used \$152 million to run 365 programs that provided medical care for more than 1.6 million individuals in more than 70 countries. Learn more about Doctors of the World-USA at [www.doctorsoftheworld.org](http://www.doctorsoftheworld.org).

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