



*International Medical Corps volunteer conducts a medical assessment at the mobile medical unit at a community care station in Buncombe County, North Carolina.*

On September 26, Hurricane Helene made landfall in the Florida Panhandle as a Category 4 storm before unleashing a historic deluge of rainfall and wind over the southeast, traveling through Georgia, the Carolinas and Tennessee. Less than two weeks later, on October 9, Hurricane Milton slammed into the Florida coast just south of Tampa, wreaking extensive infrastructure damage and knocking out power to millions. These two storms are responsible for at least 255 deaths and an estimated \$300 billion in damages and economic loss.<sup>1</sup>

The back-to-back major hurricanes triggered large-scale landslides, flooding and road damage—isolating and displacing entire communities and compromising essential services, including power, water, sewage and sanitation systems. Nearly two months later, affected communities are still reeling from the impacts of the storms, with increased physical health threats and challenges, limited access to essential care and shelter, additional mental stress and, in some communities, little to no access to potable water. Across nearly all affected areas, including Buncombe County in North Carolina, communities remain under a boil-water advisory due to damaged or contaminated water systems. In Buncombe County, access to potable water is not expected to return until 2025.

As communities return to their normal operations, students return to school and businesses reopen, residents remain exceedingly vulnerable to numerous challenges, including an increased risk of communicable disease, contaminated mud, non-operational sanitation systems, reduced access to potable water, worsening of existing health conditions, disrupted and decreased access to healthcare, lost wages and shelter, and increased mental stress.

## FAST FACTS

- **Hurricane Helene** and **Hurricane Milton** made landfall in Florida less than two weeks apart as Category 4 and Category 3 hurricanes, causing at least 255 deaths and extensive infrastructure damage across Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas and Tennessee. Many affected communities across several states have yet to regain access to clean water.
- The long-term implications of the storms are extensive, with economic and property losses anticipated to be as much as \$300 billion.
- In 2024, there have been **18 named Atlantic storms**, including **six hurricanes** that have made landfall in the United States and territories. These storms have caused more than **320 deaths** in the US and Territories alone.

## OUR RESPONSE

- In response to **Hurricane Helene**, International Medical Corps deployed teams to Florida, Georgia and North Carolina, and is supporting partners in Tennessee.
- In North Carolina, International Medical Corps deployed 47 volunteers to provide medical and behavioral health services in three shelters and one community care station in Buncombe County, where hard-hit Asheville is located.
- Over the course of the response, the team conducted 349 medical consultations, 142 behavioral health consultations and 1,403 administrations of over-the-counter medications.
- In response to **Hurricane Milton**, International Medical Corps is continuing to coordinate with the Florida Association of Community Health Centers and one large federally qualified health center network to meet urgent needs.
- Over the course of the response, International Medical Corps has distributed 1,512 wound-care kits, 10,144 hygiene kits and 20,441 hygiene items, including first-aid supplies, mosquito repellent, handwashing stations and water bladders, as well as 20 portable toilets, 14 1,000-gallon water tanks and 6,000 gallons of potable water, to 82 health centers and local partners.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2024-10-28/helene-and-milton-damage-is-just-the-start-of-climate-change-costs>

## International Medical Corps' Response

International Medical Corps has implemented a multi-state response to both Hurricanes Helene and Milton across four affected states—Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee—since September 26. We have partnered with state and local governments, health center organizations and networks, and other local actors to provide direct health services, water and sanitation supplies, and medical and non-medical equipment to affected communities. As health facilities return to regular operations and communities adjust back to normal, International Medical Corps has been transitioning from providing direct services to collaborating with state, local and regional partners to support ongoing recovery and future preparedness efforts.

In response to **Hurricane Milton**, International Medical Corps is coordinating closely with the Florida Association of Community Health Centers (FACHC), existing health facility partners, and county- and state-run distribution centers to identify and disseminate urgently needed emergency supplies, equipment and other items. For example, one large federally qualified health center (FQHC) network south of Tampa was heavily impacted by Hurricane Milton, with four health centers—including a specialized care clinic for individuals with chronic illnesses—taken offline due to severe damages. International Medical Corps is working to support the reopening of these facilities.



*An International Medical Corps volunteer organizes medical supplies and pharmaceuticals at a shelter in North Carolina.*

In response to **Hurricane Helene** across Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee, International Medical Corps has responded by distributing urgent medical and non-medical items and by providing direct medical services. Over the course of the response, we have facilitated the shipment and distribution of 10,144 hygiene kits, 1,512 wound-care kits, and 20,441 hygiene and emergency items to 82 sites—including health facilities, community centers and recovery centers—across the region. International Medical Corps has also delivered 14 1,000-gallon water tanks, 6,000 gallons of potable water and 20 portable toilets to various health facilities, to ensure the restoration and continuation of operations and services.

In **North Carolina**, International Medical Corps provided direct medical and behavioral health care to residents of hard-hit communities in Buncombe County, working in partnership with the Buncombe County Health and Human Services and the Red Cross, since October 13. International Medical Corps deployed a total of 47 volunteer professionals, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists and social workers, to provide essential medical and behavioral healthcare at four sites: one medical needs shelter, two general-population shelters and one medical mobile unit (MMU) located at a community care station. Over the course of the response at all service sites, International Medical Corps' team provided 1,403 administrations of over-the-counter medications, 349 medical consultations and 142 behavioral health consultations. The team provided around-the-clock care to shelter residents, effectively curtailed transmission of seasonal illnesses or other communicable diseases in shelters through increased screening and isolation plans, and provided critical mental health support to residents amid many losses and changes. As Buncombe County shifts to a long-term approach and has closed most shelters and many of its immediate response services, International Medical Corps has transitioned to support ongoing recovery efforts, concluding all medical and behavioral health services as of November 9. The team successfully distributed remaining supplies, including pharmaceuticals and water filtration supplies, to the Buncombe County Department of Health and local implementing partners.

International Medical Corps has also helped many affected and closed health centers restore full operational capacity. The team provided 14 health centers with 1,000-gallon water tanks, 10 health centers with two portable toilets each, and two health centers with a total of 6,000 gallons of potable water, as part of our efforts to help health centers—including rural and hard-to-reach facilities—meet urgent and essential water and sanitation needs. In addition to water supplies, the team distributed portable showers, camping toilets, handwashing stations, tables, chairs, tarps and canopies to support clinic operations.

In **Tennessee**, International Medical Corps delivered essential vaccines and emergency preparedness and response equipment—including a shipment this week of first-aid kits, water, sanitation and hygiene items, and other relief supplies—to two FQHC networks. International Medical Corps also provided 200 doses of tetanus vaccines and 200 doses of hepatitis A vaccines, and more than 3,000 hygiene items, including hand sanitizer, diapers, insect repellent and sinks; 1,200 medical-supply items, first-aid kits and insulin cookers; and 200 relief and recovery supplies, including work gloves and batteries. The team continues to coordinate closely with local partners to understand and support their needs as services and operations are restored.

In **Georgia**, International Medical Corps is partnering with an FQHC based in Augusta to meet urgent needs for supplies, including adult and baby diapers, wipes, formula, food, hygiene kits and supplies, blankets, flashlights, trash bags, heaters and hygiene kits. International Medical Corps also continues to coordinate with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency, the Georgia Primary Care Association (PCA), the Georgia Department of Public Health's Emergency Medical Services and several other FQHC networks to support their ongoing needs.

In **Florida**, International Medical Corps continues to support the recovery of health centers affected by both Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

In early November, International Medical Corps co-hosted the second annual [Emergency Management Summit](#), in partnership with FACHC, for 120 representatives from more than 50 health centers from Florida, North Carolina, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee and other states. This two-day summit examined urgent and relevant challenges experienced by health centers, addressed preparation and response to climate-related disasters and emergencies, and conducted a deep dive review of Hurricanes Helene and Milton. The International Medical Corps team connected with many affected health centers and will continue communication with these health networks and organizations to identify avenues of support moving forward.

We continue to coordinate with the federal, state and local medical agencies in addition to various state PCAs, the National Association of Rural Health Clinics and the National Association of Community Health Centers to support the needs of FQHC and community health partners. International Medical Corps remains committed to continuing support to affected communities.

### International Medical Corps in the US and Territories

International Medical Corps has been an emergency responder in the United States and Caribbean since 2005, when we partnered with local community clinics overwhelmed by Hurricane Katrina. In the US, International Medical Corps works with national, state and local partners and agencies in the healthcare system to deploy emergency response teams in response to disasters and address the significant challenges that face domestic healthcare services.

Response to Hurricane Helene		
<b>4</b> states supported	<b>18</b> counties supported	<b>47</b> volunteers deployed
<b>18</b> FQHC networks supported	<b>5</b> state governments supported	<b>4</b> nonprofit organizations supported
<b>82</b> health facilities supported	<b>1,403</b> administrations of over-the-counter medication**	<b>349</b> medical health consultations** <b>142</b> behavioral health consultations**
<b>1,512</b> wound-care kits distributed	<b>10,144</b> hygiene kits distributed	<b>20,441</b> hygiene products distributed
<b>1,232</b> other relief and recovery supplies distributed	<b>117</b> water and sanitation items distributed	<b>2,011</b> units of medical supplies distributed
<b>14</b> water tanks delivered	<b>6,000</b> gallons of potable water delivered	
<b>734,934</b> indirect beneficiaries		

\*\*services since October 13; all other data is from September 26 onwards

# 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season Response\*

