
HSE Global Health Programme

Contributing to Better Healthcare
in Ireland and Globally



The Next Three Years: 2022 - 2024

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Introduction

HSE GLOBAL HEALTH PROGRAMME

Partnerships

- Collaborating for health service improvement with Mozambique, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia Sudan
- Supporting Irish hospitals, primary care and public health services to work with developing countries

Expertise and Resources

- Improving quality of healthcare in Mozambique
- Improving emotional resilience of frontline health workers during COVID-19 in Ethiopia
- Developing medical specialist training programmes in Zambia
- Tackling chronic diseases in Africa
- Donating medical equipment to hospitals in Zambia

Network with Other Organisations

- Developing Ireland- Africa Non-Communicable Disease Alliance
- Collaboration with Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies to support training initiatives in Africa
- Working with WHO to improve quality of health services in Africa
- Partnering with Crown Agents, UK to send PPE to Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Uganda

HSE as a Global-Oriented Organisation

- Supporting countries in Africa, Asia and South America to provide healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Donating essential equipment and supplies to Ukraine
- Developing global health e-learning modules for health professionals
- Applying global health experience to HSE services for asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants

The health challenges we face in Ireland today are global in nature and the HSE cannot deliver a high class health service unless it is connected globally and engages with other countries. The recent COVID-19 pandemic and conflict in Ukraine have highlighted the interdependence in healthcare between countries and the importance of collaboration for mutual benefit.

Since 2010, the Global Health Programme has led a global approach in the HSE, developing and implementing initiatives aimed at improving health in developing countries while also learning from other countries to improve healthcare in Ireland. The HSE has a Memorandum of Understanding with Irish Aid, Dept. of Foreign Affairs to contribute to Ireland's International development policy, 'A Better World'.

In 2022, the HSE Global Health Programme developed a new Strategic Framework and initiated a 3-year Implementation Plan for 2022-2024. The programme is supported through a funding agreement with Irish Aid for €700,000 over the three years.

This document has been prepared to update the HSE Board and other stakeholders on the programme's current work and future plans.

“

No-one is safe until we're all safe

”

The Challenge of Global Health

Global developments have impacted us all in recent times, from the COVID-19 pandemic to changes in our climate to the war in Ukraine. These have reminded us that the health of people in all countries is interconnected. By acting in solidarity with other countries and in line with the Government's international policy objective 'to reach the furthest behind first', Ireland can contribute to long term, sustainable improvements in global health. Ireland is committed to the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 3: 'To ensure health lives and promote well-being for all at all ages'.

Over 700 million people in our world currently live in extreme poverty. Poverty contributes to a high burden of disease and millions of preventable deaths, mainly in low and middle income countries. COVID-19 has pushed millions back into poverty and put great strain on health services everywhere. With collective action, we can help change this. Access to good quality health care is a basic need for all and is key to ending extreme poverty.

What do we have to offer?

Ireland is a small country with a lot to offer with an extremely well skilled and talented pool of health service talent and expertise and a proud tradition of working in partnership with lower and middle income countries for better outcomes. The HSE shares its expertise to facilitate health service improvements and achieve tangible positive health outcomes. It provides global health leadership and expertise and seeks to make best use of its resources by working with other agencies that contribute to global health; collaborating with and learning from partner countries; drawing on the unique expertise that healthcare workers can provide; and harnessing the interest HSE employees have in making a real and valuable contribution to health across the world.

The Global Health Programme facilitates HSE's engagement with other countries. It guides and



supports staff, and the hospital or community services where they work, to engage in collaborative partnerships and projects to improve health care. The programme builds communities of expertise to enhance the knowledge and skills of healthcare workers across many countries. It seeks to optimise competency, skills, reach and impact through engagement with international experts and organisations such as the WHO.

Why is it important?

The COVID-19 pandemic, and more recently the conflict in Ukraine, have highlighted the importance of having a global approach to healthcare. In light of global health threats, there is a need for a collaborative international response. Lessons learned from COVID-19 indicate the need for a more outward looking view on health care provision as 'we are not safe until we are all safe'.

Partnerships allow sharing, adaptability and learning in both directions, built on mutual trust, long-term commitment and solidarity. Collaborative partnerships involving health service staff also result in significant personal and professional growth of the person concerned who learns from healthcare colleagues working in lesser resourced environments, who often show great ingenuity and a healthy pragmatism in their service delivery. This also brings wider benefits back to the HSE, such as better patient experience, strengthened health systems, improved cultural understanding and enhancement of recruitment and retention.

Achievements of the Past 3 Years: 2019 - 2022

1. Partnerships with Africa

The Global Health Programme has implemented successful partnerships with developing countries in Africa. In 2020, training programmes in quality improvement were completed for 15 hospitals in Mozambique and 12 hospitals in Ethiopia. Since 2019, in collaboration with RCPI, the HSE has donated eight containers of used medical equipment to Zambia and supported the development of specialist medical training at the Zambian College of Medicine and Surgery. The programme has supported the Sudanese Medical Specialisation Board to develop post-graduate training for doctors and other health professionals.

Example: Improving Quality of Health Services in Mozambique Through Collaboration with the HSE

In 2014, the HSE signed a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to improve health services in Mozambique. The MoH identified poor quality and safety in hospitals as a particular problem, resulting in poor patient outcomes and experiences of care. Since 2016, the HSE and MoH have co-facilitated a programme of quality improvement (QI) training for 15 major hospitals across the country. Hospitals undertook QI projects to address their quality and safety issues, such as high in-patient mortality, long waiting times in emergency departments or for out-patient appointments, and poor communication with patients. These interventions have resulted in better care processes, improved patient outcomes and increased patient satisfaction. As just one example, 24-hour mortality in the medical ward at the Jose Maçamo Hospital reduced from 11 per month to 4 per month following training in 2017 and further reduced to 8 deaths in the whole of 2019. The improvement measures have become embedded in hospital practice and the improvement has been sustained up to 2022.

The HSE continues to visit periodically for further training, including training of trainers, to build sustainable capacity in the hospitals and at the Ministry of Health. Between visits coaching is provided through webinars. Some of the hospitals are in remote provinces and the next phase of the programme will focus on travelling to the provinces to conduct training and coaching locally. The HSE faces similar challenges of quality and safety in its hospitals and can learn from what Mozambique has achieved in improving quality of care with very limited resources.



Coaching webinar with health staff from hospitals in Mozambique



Quality Improvement training workshop for hospital teams in Mozambique

Achievements of the Past 3 Years: 2019 - 2022

2. Sharing Expertise with Developing Countries

Many health professionals working in Ireland have shared their expertise to help improve health services in developing countries. The Global Health Programme has supported health professionals to work through a partnership or twinning approach. This facilitates peer-to-peer working to achieve sustainable improvements in healthcare through a long-term relationship between hospitals and other health institutions. Since 2019, the programme has provided grants to 23 Irish hospitals and other health-related institutions to implement capacity building partnerships in 14 countries in Africa and Asia. These have helped improve care in diverse areas of need such as chronic diseases, cancer, leprosy, maternal and child health, mental health, and people with disabilities.

Example: Putting Frontline Health Care Staff First – HSE-Ethiopia Project to Improve Emotional Resilience of Health Workers During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged all countries to put systems in place that care for staff well-being. In Ethiopia healthcare staff self-reported psychological distress among healthcare staff as high as 78% and insomnia at 50%.

The HSE Global Health Programme, funded through Irish Aid, collaborated with the Ethiopian Ministry of Health to provide resilience training for front line staff working in COVID-19 treatment centres in Addis Ababa. The Global Health Programme convened a team of professionals from various disciplines including public health, mental health, quality improvement and social inclusion. This team worked closely with the senior psychologist and his team at the Covid-19 Case Management Taskforce in the Ethiopian Ministry of Health. The HSE expert team and the senior psychologist held a series of virtual conferences to adapt and agree on various aspects of the content and design of the workshops. Working together, workshops were tailored to meet the needs of staff and this resulted in creatively designed locally deliverable, socially distanced stress management workshops. The workshops were launched in July 2020 and continued through 2021 and 2022. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The programme has built resilience for healthcare staff and it is now proposed to integrate it into the wider health service as part of routine staff well-being programmes.

In 2022, the HSE has supported the Ethiopian Public Health Institute to develop educational videos focusing on building emotional resilience. They are being produced in 3 languages and will be readily available online to healthcare workers across the country.



Stress management workshop for staff working at Covid-19 treatment centres in Addis Ababa



Dedicated Covid-19 therapeutic area for staff with booth to communicate with families

Achievements of the Past 3 Years: 2019 - 2022

3. Networking for Effective Cooperation in Global Health

The Global Health Programme has a small team and achieves its impact through networking and collaborating with other organisations in Ireland and internationally. These relationships were very important during the COVID-19 pandemic when the HSE was focused on providing services in Ireland. The following are some notable examples of effective networking since 2019:

- Collaborated with the Irish Global Health Network to support developing countries during COVID-19 pandemic, including weekly webinars
- Cooperated with Irish health professionals to develop Ireland Africa Non-Communicable Disease Alliance
- Made leading contribution to Global Health Committee of Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies, to support training initiatives in Africa
- Worked with global expert group under WHO to improve quality of health services in Africa
- Partnered with Crown Agents, UK to send 34 containers of PPE to Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Example: Cooperation to Develop Covid-19 Training Videos, Viewed More Than 2 Million Times in Africa

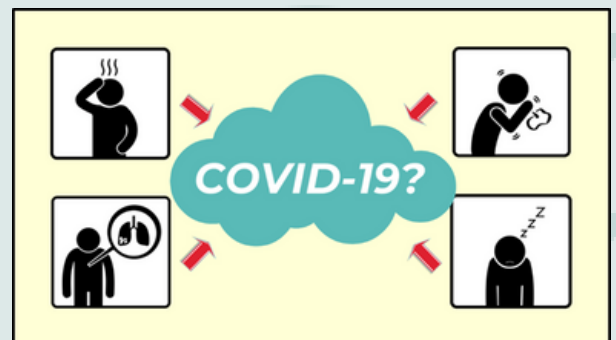
The Palms Surgery in Gorey, Co. Wexford has a long standing relationship with St John's Hospital in Mzuzu, in northern Malawi to develop services for the growing number of people with chronic diseases, such as asthma and hypertension (the Gorey Malawi Health Partnership). The HSE has supported the partnership with advice and small grants through the ESTHER Ireland programme.

Faced with the threat of COVID-19 in Malawi the partnership had to adjust its plans. They identified educational resources as of the greatest relevance to Malawi and suggested to develop a series of short educational videos, in line with WHO advice, that could be shared easily via social media. The technical content was co-developed by the Palms Surgery, St. John's Hospital and the HSE Global Health Programme. The HSE provided funding for technical assistance to produce and disseminate high quality videos. The output was a series of 14 short, engaging and educational animated videos targeting health workers in low resource settings on topics such as 'Managing COVID-19 patients' and 'Hand washing steps for health workers'.

The videos were promoted by a social media campaign through the Facebook platform. This allowed for dissemination across the entire continent of Africa and the videos were viewed more than 2 million times. The low cost and wide availability of social media sites made them a useful and rapid information dissemination tool. We learned that Facebook advertising campaigns have the ability to reach large populations and achieve a range of engagement outcomes which would be more cost effective and have greater reach when compared with traditional media.



Team from Palm's Surgery, Gorey during visit by HSE Global Health Programme



Slide from educational video on managing COVID-19 patients

Achievements of the Past 3 Years: 2019 - 2022

4. HSE as a Global-Oriented Organisation

The HSE showed global solidarity during the COVID-19 pandemic. From the start of the pandemic in 2020, the Global Health Programme provided technical assistance to developing countries, including development of guidance documents and training videos. In 2021, the HSE responded to humanitarian crises due to COVID-19 with over €18 million worth of emergency donations of respiratory equipment, medical supplies and vaccines to India, Nepal, Brazil, Uganda and Lebanon. In 2022, 34 containers of PPE were donated to Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In 2022, the HSE further demonstrated its global commitment in responding to health needs arising from the conflict in Ukraine. The Global Health Programme coordinated HSE's humanitarian donations of medical supplies, equipment and ambulances to Ukraine. The value of donations reached €4.34 million by August.

Example: “We’re all in This Together” – HSE Donations to Assist in Covid-19 Crises in India and Nepal

Towards the end of April, Irish TV screens revealed the unfolding crisis in India as health facilities ran out of oxygen desperately needed to treat thousands of sick people with COVID-19 infection. The HSE Global Health Programme coordinated a rapid response involving many HSE staff, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Dept. of Housing, Dept. of Health, and Indian and Nepalese authorities. Over a weekend, the HSE prepared 700 oxygen concentrators for shipping, and funding was secured from the Department of Foreign Affairs under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. By Tuesday, a plane was loaded and departed for Delhi. A second, larger donation followed the next week with 548 oxygen concentrators, 425 ventilators and 2 oxygen generators, filling a Boeing 747. This arrived in Delhi on 4th May and remarkably, just two days later on 6th May, the HSE received confirmation from the Indian Ambassador in Dublin that every piece of equipment had been distributed to various hospitals across India.

Nepal, a poorer country than its neighbour India, requested international assistance a few weeks later and again the HSE promptly responded. Despite the disruptions to communications following the HSE cyber-attack, clinical engineers and other staff worked flat out to organise a donation of eighteen hundred items of respiratory equipment and more than two million items of PPE. This consignment was despatched in June, again in coordination with the other Government Departments and availing of EU financial support through the Civil Protection Mechanism.



PPE from Ireland arriving at a health post in Nepal



Loading equipment for India at Dublin Airport

Strategic Framework for the Next 3 Years: 2022 - 2024

In 2021, the Global Health Programme undertook a review of its work in consultation with national and international stakeholders, including partners in low and middle-income countries, the World Health Organisation (WHO), Irish Aid and health service staff. The review recognised the important and unique contribution the HSE makes in global health in support of Ireland's aid programme. We produced our Strategic Framework 2022 – 2024 which focuses on what we do best to have the greatest impact on improving services and better health for people in our partner countries.

OUR WORK IS CENTERED ON FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS:

Partnerships

- HSE Partnerships with low-income countries (e.g. Mozambique, Ethiopia)
- Institutional health partnerships (ESTHER Ireland)
- EQUALS Initiative
- HSE – Irish Aid MoU
- Services agreement with Irish Global Health Network

We will work in solidarity with low- and middle-income countries through partnerships with national and international organisations and healthcare providers to improve quality and access to healthcare.

Expertise

- Quality Improvement
- Health system strengthening
- Mental health
- Health Workforce Development
- Women and children's health
- People with disabilities
- Humanitarian Preparedness & Response

We will support health system strengthening, resilience building and humanitarian response in low- and middle-income countries through peer-to-peer learning, education, sharing of institutional knowledge and skills, and equipment transfer.

Network

- Communications and Promotion
- Irish Global Health Network
- Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies
- UK & Ireland Global Health Coordination Units Network
- Global health partnerships network
- World Health Organisation

We will connect and collaborate with partners, institutions, and individuals to identify and build opportunities from institutional exchange and learning around health systems.

HSE as a Global Health Oriented Organisation

- Strong Global Health Programme
- Leadership & Capacity Building
- Collaboration with Irish Aid and Dept. of Health
- Global Health Strategic Advisory Group
- Enabling policies
- Global health training
- Apply global health learning in HSE

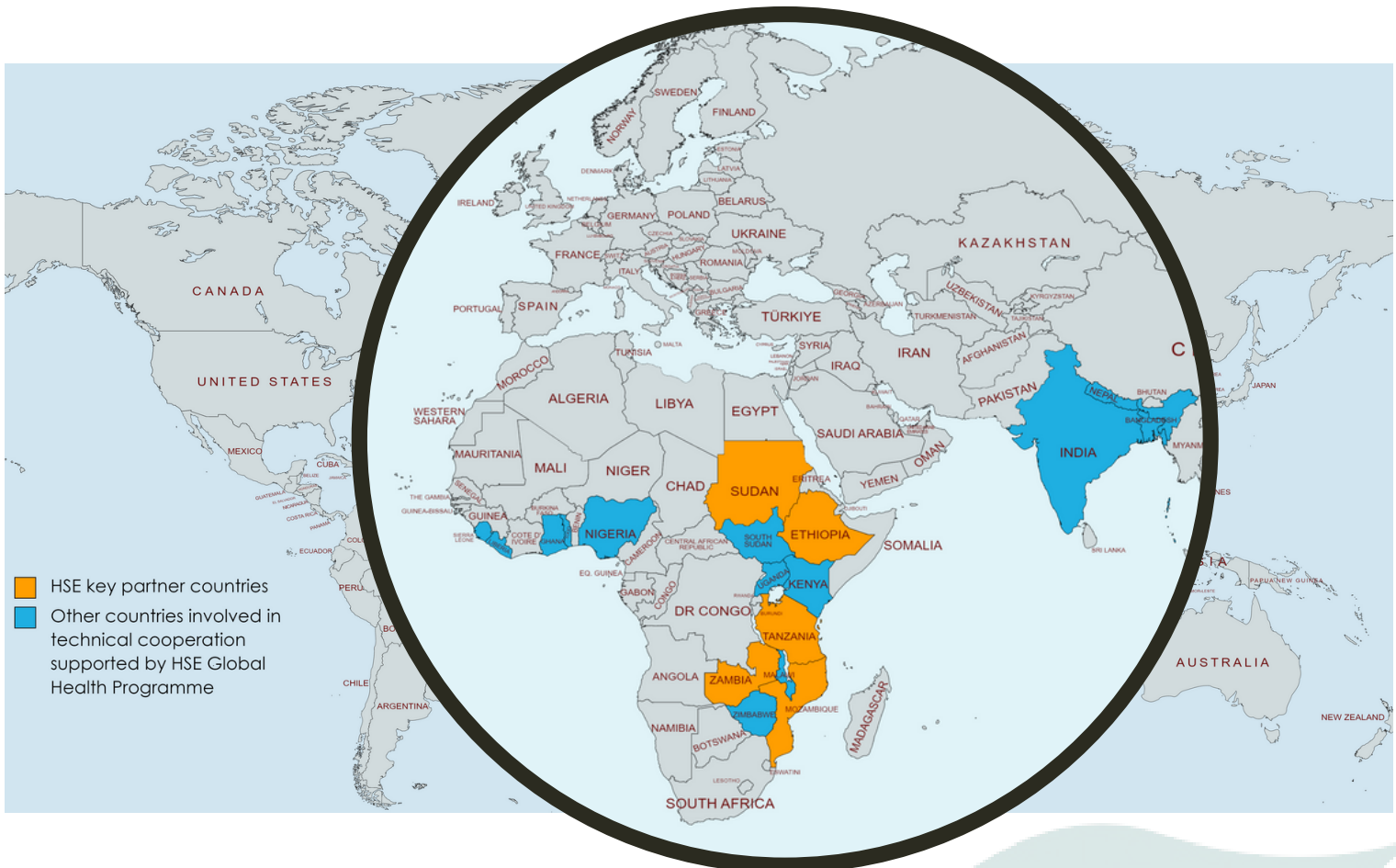
The HSE will adopt a global approach to providing high quality healthcare that is reflective of Ireland's role in the world; global health challenges and society.

3 Year Implementation Plan: 2022 - 2024

The 3-year Implementation Plan describes in detail the objectives, actions and deliverables under each of the four pillars for the period 2022-2024. The main elements are summarised below.

Technical and Geographical Focus

In order to achieve greatest impact, the programme will focus its technical engagement on selected thematic areas where it has established expertise working with developing countries. It will deepen its engagement in its key partner countries in Africa which are Mozambique, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia and Sudan.



Technical Areas	Countries of Engagement
Health Systems Strengthening	Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania
Quality of Health Care	Mozambique, Ethiopia, Sudan
Health Workforce Education and Training	Zambia, Sudan, Ethiopia
Non-communicable Diseases	Tanzania, Malawi, Togo
Women, Children and New-born Health	Kenya, Sudan
Mental Health	Ethiopia, Bangladesh, India, Liberia
People with Disabilities	Malawi, Nepal

3 Year Implementation Plan: 2022 - 2024, contd.

Key Directions for Next 3 Years

- Develop sustainable structures, staffing and resources for the Global Health Programme
- Strengthen HSE's role and contribution to 'A Better World'
- Deepen engagement with priority country partners in Africa
- Support and strengthen health systems to 'build back better' after COVID-19
- Increase focus on capacity building in key technical areas
- Promote sustainability approach using IT solutions and virtual working
- Strengthen HSE's humanitarian responses to health emergencies in other countries
- Enhance the quality and impact of all global engagement by HSE staff and institutions
- Connect global health work to Irish health services for mutual learning and benefit

Actions and Deliverables for our Strategic Pillars

Partnerships

- Deliver training in **quality improvement** to provincial hospitals in Mozambique and Ethiopia
- Provide **technical support** to establish hospital accreditation system programme in Ethiopia
- Develop new collaboration programme with the Ministry of Health in Tanzania to **strengthen health services**
- Support the Zambian College of Medicine and Surgery to develop **specialist medical training** programmes
- Work with Sudanese doctors in Ireland to expand links with Sudan to **improve hospital services** and clinical training programmes
- Run **small grants scheme** for Irish hospitals and other health institutions for partnerships in Africa and Asia to strengthen health services and systems (ESTHER Ireland)

Expertise and Resources

- Provide technical advice on **Quality Improvement** policy and strategy to developing countries requesting assistance from WHO
- Provide technical advice to the Ireland Africa Alliance for Non-Communicable Diseases and the establishment of **services for chronic diseases** in Togo
- Collaborate with Ethiopian Ministry of Health and Public Health Institute to develop **mental health services and psychosocial supports** for health workers
- Expand programme of **donation of medical equipment** to Zambia and other countries in Africa
- Establish expert groups in Ireland for **technical cooperation** with developing countries in quality improvement, mental health, chronic diseases, and other priority areas

Network

- Work with Advocacy for Health Partnerships, WHO and THET (UK) to develop a new **global network for health partnerships**
- Engage with Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies to develop a global health curriculum and promote **global health training** for all specialist medical trainees
- Co-organise **networking and learning events**, including annual forums and conferences with the Irish Global Health Network
- Promote **cooperation with UK partners** through representing Ireland in the UK & Ireland Global Health Coordination Units Network

The HSE as a Global Health Oriented Organisation

- Participate with Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs and Department of Health in the Government's **Inter-Departmental Committee for Development Cooperation**
- Develop **e-learning courses in global health** for HSE staff in different disciplines
- Establish **global health register** to facilitate HSE staff to engage in global health activities
- Coordinate HSE **humanitarian response** to Ukraine and other countries in crises

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Key Documents:

1. HSE Global Health Programme, Strategic Framework 2022-2024
2. HSE Global Health Programme, Implementation Plan 2022-2024
3. 'A Better World', Ireland's Policy for International Development

“ *If you want to go fast – go alone.
If you want to go far – go together.*
African Proverb

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Meeting with Ministry of Health, Ethiopia



HSE, Medical Help Ukraine Volunteers and Lifeline deliver ambulances to Ukraine