

## The U.S. Renal Community Steps Up in Haiti

01/20/2010

It's difficult to comprehend the utter devastation and tragedy in Haiti. News reports continue to filter in with harrowing stories, and [this morning's earthquake](#) outside of Port-au-Prince only serves to make matters worse. However, global aid continues to pour in to help.

As of Jan. 20, more than 36 countries and dozens of humanitarian organizations have already sent in-kind donations as well as monetary contributions to Haiti, according to the Pan American Health Organization, which is a regional office of the World Health Organization.

"Logistical challenges still remain at the airport in Port-au-Prince, where many supplies are offloaded with the expectation that they will be transported to relief agencies," according to a [Jan. 20 update from the agency](#). "PAHO/WHO has over 25 international staff in Haiti, including specialists in epidemiology, logistics, disaster management, communication, coordination and water/sanitation."

It's even more difficult to understand the plight of Haitian end-stage renal disease patients. There are few statistics available, but the situation for Haitian kidney disease patients has surely gone from bad to worse. [According to the University of Miami](#), there are more than 7,000 Haitians with ESRD, and only three dialysis centers on the island. In addition, it costs an average of \$2,400 a month for dialysis—a dollar amount far out of reach for many in Haiti.

The U.S. renal community is stepping in to help out as much as possible. [Kidney Care Partners has organized](#) to send dialysis equipment, supplies, medication and staff to Haiti. In addition, the American Society of Nephrology on its Web site encourages donations to organization dedicated to providing disaster relief to Haiti.

ASN said a comprehensive list of organizations collecting funds for this disaster is provided by InterAction through its Web site at [www.interaction.org/crisis-list/earthquake-haiti](http://www.interaction.org/crisis-list/earthquake-haiti).

In addition, ASN said it is monitoring the situation in conjunction with other organizations, including the International Society of Nephrology, the Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER) Coalition and the Florida ESRD Network, the National Kidney Foundation, the Sociedad Latino-Americana de Nefrologia e Hipertension, dialysis providers, and industry as well as the U.S. Departments of State and Health and Human Services.

It's wonderful to see this kind of collaboration in the midst of such a crisis. Hopefully, this level of involvement can continue for the years to come as Haiti attempts to rebuild itself after this horrific tragedy.