

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CHOLERA OUTBREAK CONFIRMED IN HAITI  
IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED**

**Friday, October 22, 2010**

According to the CDC, there have been no reports of Cholera in Haiti since 1960. That is until TODAY. 138 deaths and over 1,526 new cases of Cholera have now been officially confirmed by the Haitian Government. Response is needed immediately and time is of the essence. With proper hydration and medication the death rate can be dropped from 50% to under 1%. Lives can be saved, but the time is NOW.

Operating out of Les Cayes (Southern Haiti), Hope for Haiti, a Naples, FL based non-profit, has had no confirmed Cholera cases as of yet, but the organization is taking immediate action to prepare their supported healthcare and education partners with the necessary information and resources to recognize and treat cases that may arise in the south of Haiti. Currently, Hope for Haiti has the supplies on hand to treat Cholera cases at its Infirmary in Les Cayes, but more medication is needed, and it is needed now (i.e. IV Fluids, Antibiotics, Water Purification Tablets, Hygiene Kits, etc...). "Monetary donations are the most effective means of immediate action and will enable the supplies to be quickly distributed," says Hope for Haiti's Executive Director, Elizabeth Davison.

Hope for Haiti's Healthcare Director, Dr. Steeve Victor, is currently attending the National Haitian Healthcare Conference "Shaping Haiti's Health System Through Collective Action" taking place in Port-au-Prince this week and is participating in conversations regarding Cholera prevention and treatment.

"There could be another virus that is compounding the Cholera outbreak, making it more lethal. Although there are no reported cases in Les Cayes at this time, we are preparing for patients who may travel to the Hope for Haiti Infirmary or Hope for Haiti supported healthcare partners. We are also alerting our healthcare and education partners in the south as well as sending out educational materials to schools and clinics describing the keys to prevention, recognizing the symptoms of Cholera, and stressing the immediate medical attention needed to treat the patient," Dr. Victor explains.

## **CHOLERA OUTBREAK CONFIRMED IN HAITI – IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED (Page 2)**

Public health announcements and education about proper sanitation, water treatment and safe storage, hand washing, careful animal contact, are all critical to an outbreak mitigation strategy to reduce the transmission rate of Cholera. Unfortunately, the current rainy season and increased deplorable living conditions post-earthquake for over a million families is not only exacerbating the health risks, but also making prevention challenging, if not impossible.

Men, women, and children who are infected with Cholera can be treated, but medical attention is required immediately. According to the CDC, “Death due to dehydration from watery diarrhea can occur within hours,” thus making rehydration critical to a Cholera patient’s survival. With over 1,500 new cases of Cholera now confirmed in Haiti and numbers rising, medication and rehydration solutions are in high demand and are imperative for treatment.

Last year alone, Hope for Haiti safely and effectively distributed more than \$50 million worth of medications and medical supplies to over 60 healthcare sites in Port-au-Prince and throughout the south of Haiti. With over 20 years of experience safely and effectively distributing supplies, Hope for Haiti stands ready and able to help supply healthcare facilities with the resources they need to treat Cholera patients. Now, Hope for Haiti needs the medications and financial support to make it happen.

You can help Hope for Haiti TODAY prepare and treat those in desperate need by donating on their website [www.hopeforhaiti.com](http://www.hopeforhaiti.com) or contacting the Naples office at 239-434-7183.

For continuous updates, follow Hope for Haiti on Twitter at @HopeforHaitiFL, or via the organization’s website [www.hopeforhaiti.com](http://www.hopeforhaiti.com).

[http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/earthquakes/haiti/pdf/waterydiarrhea\\_pre-decision\\_brief.pdf](http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/earthquakes/haiti/pdf/waterydiarrhea_pre-decision_brief.pdf)

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**Hope for Haiti** is a Naples, Florida, based 501(c)(3) charitable organization that has been committed to serving the Haitian people for over 20 years with the mission to improve the quality of life for the Haitian people, particularly children, through education, nutrition, and healthcare.

### **Key Organizational Facts:**

- Over 20 years of service and partnership
- Founder and president is Naples resident, JoAnne Kuehner.
- Supports 40 schools with 10,000 students and 400 teachers.
- In 2009-2010, distributed over \$50 million worth of medications and supplies to over 60 supported healthcare sites in the south of Haiti.
- Supports 3 medical nutrition programs to save the lives of severely malnourished children.

## **CHOLERA OUTBREAK IN HAITI CONFIRMED – IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED (Page 3)**

In addition to supporting on-going education, nutrition, and healthcare programs, *Hope for Haiti* has responded to the needs of the Haitian people in the aftermath of earthquake since January 12th in the following ways:

- Sent six 757 Arrow Cargo planes and one DC-10, delivering and safely distributing \$30 million/400,000lbs in medications, medical supplies, food, water, and construction materials to healthcare centers and tent camps for Internally Displaced People (IDPs).
- Ten private planes have flown to Port-au-Prince and Les Cayes, transporting several teams of emergency medical volunteers and life-saving healthcare supplies.
- Distributed over 600,000 meals to *Hope for Haiti* sites within the earthquake impact area.
- Organizing on-going public and primary healthcare through static and mobile clinics within IDP camps throughout Port-au-Prince and the south of Haiti.
- Employing Haitian medical and support staff to respond quickly and effectively to the needs of IDP communities within Port-au-Prince and Les Cayes.
- Evaluating *Hope for Haiti's* 40 school buildings in collaboration with local engineers to assess damage and constructing temporary structures while deconstruction and reconstruction efforts continue.

### **For additional information, please contact:**

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