

BSW Faith in Action Initiatives meets medical needs in Ukraine

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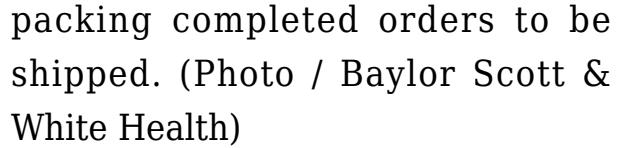
Since Russia began its invasion of Ukraine in late February, Baylor Scott & White Health's Faith in Action Initiatives has supplied about \$500,000 worth of medical supplies and equipment to partners working in Ukraine.

Through its involvement with the [Baptist World Alliance](#) Forum for Aid and Development, Baylor Scott & White also helped a clinic in Moldova secure medication from another provider.

Now, the health care system stands ready to meet further needs of refugees and displaced people, said Matthew Hoffman, director of the [Joel T. Allison Faith in Action Initiatives at Baylor Scott and White Health](#).



Baylor Scott & White Supply Chain team members at the Faith In Action Second Resource Center in Dallas prepare medical supplies to be sent to the Ukraine. They're building boxes, sorting medical supplies, documenting orders and



packing completed orders to be shipped. (Photo / Baylor Scott & White Health)

In the past eight weeks, Baylor Scott & White Health has sent six shipments of wound-care supplies, personal protective equipment, hospital beds, examining tables, surgical packs and other supplies to Ukraine, working with partners including [Nova Ukraine](#), [Omnis Foundation](#) and the [Arlene Campbell Humanitarian Foundation](#).

Hoffman expressed appreciation to BWA—and particularly the “boots on the ground” involvement of the European Baptist Federation—for ministry to refugees in countries surrounding Ukraine and displaced people within the country.

“The Baptist World Alliance is a wonderful resource for information and connection,” he said.

Hoffman particularly pointed to the powerful firsthand accounts of Baptist pastors and denominational leaders in the region. He recalled Igor Bandura, vice president of the Baptist Union of Ukraine, reporting churches in his country mobilized and prepared in advance of the invasion to serve as shelters and “centers of hope.”

Through his BWA contacts, Hoffman learned about Emmanuel Clinic, operated by the Baptist Union of Moldova in Chisinau, and the medical care it is offering Ukrainian refugees.

“They needed medications,” he said. Hoffman’s office was able to connect the clinic with [Blessings International](#), which specializes in providing medicine internationally for missions causes.

Responding to a ‘moving target’

Faith in Action Initiatives has offered to secure medical equipment and supplies for the clinic in Moldova and currently is “waiting on their response,” Hoffman said. The clinic—like others caring for refugees in the region—are dealing with “a moving target,” he said.

“Baptists continue to provide food, clothing, medicine, transport and pastoral care to people forced from their homes. The number of refugees entering neighboring countries has significantly decreased since the first few weeks of the war. However, as Russia begins its re-asserted attacks in the east of Ukraine, the most desperate who were not able to flee earlier will be pushed out,” the European Baptist Federation reported in an [April 21 situation update](#).

“Likely the second wave of refugees, many with significantly fewer resources than some of those fleeing earlier, will come further west and into neighboring countries.”

Within Ukraine, Baptists not only are providing food, clothing, medicine and pastoral care. The EBF reported volunteers from a church in Irpin also are helping remove mines left behind by Russian troops that withdrew from the region.

While the COVID-19 global pandemic already disrupted normal supply chains, conflict in Eastern Europe made the situation “increasingly difficult” for health care providers and humanitarian agencies, Hoffman noted.

However, thanks to the partnerships Baylor Scott & White already had in place internationally, as well as additional connections through BWA and the European Baptist Federation, supplies are reaching their ultimate destinations, even if they have to be shipped by way of Poland, Hungary or

other countries, he said.

Hoffman—a former health care chaplain before going to work with former Faith in Action Initiative Director Don Sewell seven years ago—said Baylor Scott & White views a long-term response to needs in and around Ukraine as consistent with its “Christian ministry of healing.”

“Even if the war were to end today, ... the rebuilding effort will take years,” he said.

“It’s a joy and an honor to partner with Texas Baptists and others. We want to respond collaboratively and cooperatively, doing our work in partnership.”