

Employees Help Evacuate Patients From Record Flood in China

Our Zhengzhou colleagues recount their experiences following a devastating flood

NEWS RELEASE BY MERCK & CO., INC.

Northampton, MA | August 31, 2021 08:36 AM Eastern Daylight Time



Days of torrential rain and flooding created terrifying scenes of submerged roads and vehicles, trapped subway passengers and overflowing dams and rivers in China's central Henan province and Zhengzhou city.

The rain that pounded the area in late July was the heaviest on record in the city. Some reports estimated the city saw nearly eight inches of rain in one hour.

Several employees at our regional office in Zhengzhou were forced to stay at the office overnight due to the massive power outages and traffic shutdowns caused by the floods.

But the torrent of rain didn't stop them from joining rescue efforts — especially when it came to patients in need.

Providing much-needed support

With extreme rainfall covering the province, the Fuwai Central China Cardiovascular Hospital and the First Affiliated Hospital of Zhengzhou University quickly filled with floodwater. The hospitals lost power, and over 10,000 patients needed to be transferred to other hospitals.

"I live close to Fuwai Hospital, located in one of the hardest hit areas. When I saw that there were so many patients and their families who needed help, I joined the rescue team right away," said Yuqi Sun, Pharmaceutical information specialist.

While rescue teams pulled lifeboats full of patients to safer grounds, Jiazhu Zhang, senior pharmaceutical information specialist, helped carry a patient down nearly 18 flights of stairs using a sheet and blanket because there weren't enough stretchers.

When marketing manager Yundan Zheng heard that a critically ill patient was unable to be transferred because of a lack of vehicles, she and her husband drove their car in to help.

"Patients who had not been transported yet were lying on the damp ground. Seeing this, my heart broke," says Zheng. "I saw someone needed help and I was able to help, so I stood up. Compared with the frontline rescue team, our efforts were small," said Zheng.

Answering the call for supplies

Although hundreds of patients were successfully transferred, the hospitals quickly became overloaded and were struck with a shortage of beds and food.

That's when senior district manager Hongxing Chen and his colleagues ran to local medical equipment stores and bought 18 folding beds and over 100 chairs to donate to the First Affiliated Hospital of Zhengzhou University. Other colleagues also jumped in to donate and deliver essentials like food and water.

About a week after the record rainstorms struck Henan, our company received a letter from the First Affiliated Hospital of Zhengzhou University expressing "sincere gratitude" for our employees' bravery and kindness. "All our medical staff, patients and their families were deeply moved," the letter says in part, by the "generosity and kindness in such a critical moment."

We're all extremely proud of our Zhengzhou colleagues and their continued efforts to save and improve lives –even in the face of profound challenges.

Read the **original version** [here](#)

View additional multimedia and more ESG storytelling from Merck & Co., Inc. on 3blmedia.com

Tags

HEALTH & HEALTHCARE

PHILANTHROPY & CAUSE INITIATIVES