



FAST FACTS

Our Footprint

- International Medical Corps has key staff in Bhopal, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, and Gurgaon, just southwest of the capital of New Delhi.
- International Medical Corps is collaborating with two local partners, operating in Delhi, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka and other regions, to provide critically needed supplies and equipment.

Our Response

- In collaboration with our partners, International Medical Corps will provide oxygen plants to support facilities in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.
- Our team is continuing to identify and source supplies and resources to augment capacity at intensive care units.
- Needs include medical oxygen – which is in critically short supply – personal protective equipment, medications, testing kits, hospital beds, and ventilators.

India is facing a catastrophic expansion of the COVID-19 pandemic, with hundreds of thousands of confirmed cases being reported each day, and thousands of confirmed deaths. Easing of quarantine restrictions, lack of testing and unmasked gatherings are contributing to this surge, as is the appearance of new variants of the virus.

Experts are warning that cases may be significantly under-reported and continuing to rise, with India's healthcare system on the verge of collapse. Though the national average positivity rate is 15%, in cities like New Delhi the positivity rate may be as high as 30%. The death toll is substantial—although reporting indicates more than 226,000 confirmed deaths, fatalities from COVID-19 may be underreported by a factor of two to five. As of May 5, 2021, there are 20.7 million reported COVID-19 cases, second only to the US. Some 7 million of these cases were reported in the past month.

The strain on the healthcare system is making proper medical care and disease control difficult or impossible in some locations, with scores dying every day in some hospitals. Oxygen, basic medical supplies and hospital beds are in short supply across the country, and logistical challenges abound as India struggles to care for the sick. The government has reallocated critical resources and is developing COVID-specific hospitals. To dispose of bodies, cities have resorted to mass cremation, with families performing last rites surrounded by pyres.

On May 1, the government opened up its vaccination program to all adults, though there are not enough doses and vaccine hesitancy is a major concern. Approximately 9.5% of the 1.35 billion people in India have received a first dose of a vaccine, and only about 2% of the population has been fully vaccinated.

International Medical Corps Response

International Medical Corps is working with local partners across the country to provide critically needed supplies and equipment, including oxygen generators, auxiliary oxygen delivery and storage supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE), patient beds and more to hospitals and healthcare facilities providing care for COVID-19 patients. Though many facilities—particularly those in Delhi—may have hospital beds available, there is not enough appropriate equipment and supplies to provide support for the number of patients requiring treatment. Other facilities need temporary treatment sites to handle the surge.

With the support of Walmart and with India-based organization Doctors for You, we are moving oxygen to address need at healthcare facilities and COVID-19 sites in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh—two states that the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) has ranked as most in need of support, based on a number of health indicators.¹ Our partners in both states have reported significant hurdles in providing care—including oxygen, PPE and levels of appropriate staffing.

In addition to supporting Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, International Medical Corps is prioritizing its COVID-19 response in Delhi, in the New Capital Region, and Bengaluru, the capital of the southern state of Karnataka. These areas are being heavily affected by the surge in COVID-19 cases. “What happened in New York City is now being repeated in Delhi,” says Dr. Ravikant Singh of Doctors For You. The rapid rise in confirmed cases has forced hospitals to triage and prioritize patients for oxygen support, amid severe shortages. In Bengaluru, which is facing India’s second-highest COVID-19 surge, International Medical Corps’ partners have noted that young people are becoming infected and are unable to attain medical care due to lack of hospital beds.

To meet this crisis, and building upon its global COVID-19 response, International Medical Corps is bolstering intensive-care unit (ICU) capabilities by providing oxygen tanks and supplies, along with PPE and critical-care beds, items that are essential to rapidly expand healthcare services and treat COVID-19 patients. Moving forward, International Medical Corps will continue to work with local partners to monitor emerging trends in COVID-19 caseloads, while continuing to secure and deliver additional supplies and equipment to heavily affected areas. Our teams also are getting ready to address concerns of vaccine hesitancy among the Indian population.

¹ <https://thewire.in/health/bihar-up-rank-niti-aayog-health-data>