

Support of Ukraine Humanitarian Efforts Continues

This week, Trace Ambulance, Inc., located in Tinley Park, Illinois – a suburb southwest of Chicago - donated an ambulance stocked with medical supplies and equipment to the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America ([UMANA](#)) for use in Ukraine.

Trace was joined by representatives of the Consulate General of Ukraine in Chicago, UMANA, and staff from OSF HealthCare. The Trace ambulance was the third Illinois ambulance to be donated and the first from the greater Chicago area.

Working collaboratively, OSF HealthCare, the Ukrainian Consulate, and UMANA have sent seven stocked and ready for service ambulances to Ukraine since the Russian invasion began in February.

“This Trace ambulance is going to be one of five that we are going to ship over in the next week or so. It will head out to the east coast, we will put it on a ship, head over to Europe, and be taken into Ukraine. In the meantime, there are a couple more ambulances that are about to arrive in Europe,” said Chris Manson, OSF HealthCare vice president of government relations.

With Manson leading the charge, OSF HealthCare Mission Partners (employees) have helped to coordinate multiple ambulance donations for Ukraine since March.

“In total now, it looks like we are going to have about 12 ambulance that are either in Ukraine or in route. This is one of them. We are really appreciative of Trace Ambulance for this donation. I am also incredibly appreciative of OSF because really, without OSF’s support in the beginning, we wouldn’t be here today. The support that we had with the [first donation](#), getting the Mission Partners there to fill it with supplies, and to have the blessing ceremony really to kick things off I think really set us up for success and kind of laid the foundation for where we are today with this effort,” Manson expressed.

After hearing of the efforts started by Manson and OSF HealthCare, Chris Vandenburg, president of Trace Ambulance, Inc., felt inclined to help.

“At its core, to be involved in EMS, you need a fundamental drive to help people in need. Sometimes that means helping your friends and neighbors close to home, and sometimes it means helping people halfway around the world,” said Vandenberg.

He added: “Today, the people of Ukraine are facing a devastating humanitarian crisis with the Russian invasion and the best way we are able to help is through providing this ambulance and the medical equipment with it.”

These additional lifesaving supplies will be delivered to the Ukrainian Ministry of Health for disbursement.

“We’ve got AEDs, or defibrillators. We’ve got cardiac monitors. We’ve got ventilators. These are all things that are critically needed. It is lifesaving equipment that we might take for granted here in the United States, but in a warzone, moving patients from point A to point B without a ventilator when it’s needed – that’s the difference between life and death,” explained Manson.

Manson is involved with these donations every step of the way. In fact, he will soon embark on a second trip to Ukraine to see this new round of donations through to the finish line.

What started as a [conversation between Manson and his 7-year-old daughter](#) has grown into an ongoing humanitarian aid effort with incredible support from all [across the country](#) – and Manson has no plans to stop the efforts anytime soon.

“I wanted to do it because I wanted to figure out some way that I could possibly provide some tangible help to the people suffering in Ukraine. People I was talking to at OSF, friends, family, and others were very supportive and said it was a great idea, and the need was there so we moved forward with it. While the need exists, I will keep looking. If people want to donate, I will keep working with others trying to get aid over there and we will see where we wind up.”