

Locals doctors helping in Haiti - Day by day

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Through Hospitals for Humanity, doctors Rodney Alford, Donald Roland, Ed Jones and Charles Martin arrive in Haiti last week -- one week after the devastating earthquake hit the island. The group returned home Sunday evening. Here is a sense of their day-to-day schedule.

* TUESDAY, Jan. 19

The Kankakee team of doctors finally gets a flight time to Haiti.

When they arrive, the four doctors stay on the tarmac through the night. The set up camp on the beach in tents to sleep to watch over their belongings. "It was a horrible night," Dr. Rodney Alford says. "There was a heavy United Nations presence in the airport, and planes flying in and out constantly."

* WEDNESDAY, Jan. 20

The team is picked up from the tarmac at 6 a.m. and driven two-hours to Carrefour, where they are to stay in a house. They search for a clinic location and set up within a refugee camp in Carrefour.

* THURSDAY, Jan. 21

The team gets up at 4:30 a.m. to arrive at the clinic by 7 a.m. "It would take hours and hours only to go a few miles away just because the roads were bad and people were all over," Alford said. "No one had homes so people were just walking all over the street. The roads were horrible, they generally were bad anyway but the roads were especially bad with crevices and bumps and holes and craters." They help "numerous, numerous" patients and stop at 7 p.m.

* FRIDAY, Jan. 22

The team starts at 5 a.m. "We were extremely efficient because we had gotten a feel of what we needed to do," Alford said. "We were able to see twice as many patients on that day." The team is notified, they cannot leave Tuesday as originally planned. The choice is leave Saturday or wait until the following Friday or maybe two to three weeks later. They choose Saturday.

* WHAT'S NEXT?

Hospitals for Humanity wants to return to Haiti. "One of our biggest problems, of course, is that we need more money," Alford said. "Hospitals for Humanity really needs more money ... We need more supplies, particularly from hospitals and drug companies. We definitely need more physicians and nurses." Alford hopes the return trip will be in the next two to three weeks.

~ Emily Zulz

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