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Free clinic opens in Angleton

By Sam Liebl sam.liebl@thefacts.com Sep 27, 2017

ANGLETON — A hand almost cut off while removing drywall and a sternum broken while falling off a ladder are among the dangers of storm recovery Project Hope volunteers have seen since the international organization dispatched them to South Texas.

Project Hope volunteers brought their expertise to Angleton on Tuesday and will offer a free medical clinic through Saturday at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church's St. Thomas Center, 415 S. Erskine St.

While some of the injuries have been traumatic, volunteers said most of the health issues they have treated in Angleton and in Rosenberg, where they operated for the past two weeks, have been related to chronic disease and a lack of routine medical care.

"We've done a lot of tetanus shots and seen high blood pressure and diabetes," said volunteer Trina Wells, a registered nurse from Kentucky who took two weeks of vacation to come to Houston after Hurricane Harvey made landfall.

Volunteer Bobby Edwards, a nurse practitioner from Michigan, said she has seen a number of patients whose minor injuries became more serious because they had not followed up with a physician after emergency room visits. Flood damage to cars has made getting to a doctor much harder for many people, she said.

"Transportation is the biggest issue patients have," Edwards said.

Along with Edwards and Wells, pharmacist Jennifer Smith staffed the clinic Tuesday in order to address another common problem for flood survivors — unfilled prescriptions.

Smith, a Louisiana resident, said she could prescribe and dispense some prescription medications, such as blood pressure medicine and antibiotics, even if patients did not have medical records or pill bottles with them.

While documents like previous prescriptions could be useful at the clinic, the clinic does not require them. Neither are Social Security numbers or health insurance since people will be cared for at no cost, said Emilja Dukovski, a Project Hope employee who manages volunteer teams and is based in Macedonia.

Project Hope partnered with San José Clinic and Most Holy Trinity to open the clinic. Father Victor Perez, pastor of Most Holy Trinity, said San José provided the insurance necessary to run the clinic. Project Hope saw there was a need for a medical services in Brazoria County after Perez took volunteer managers on a tour through flood-damaged Holiday Lakes, he said.

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