

GLOBAL RESCUE PERFORMS MEDICAL EVACUATION FROM ECUADOR AFTER MEMBER'S HEART ATTACK

Every winter, 71-year-old Leslie Erickson takes a month-long trip to a new and exotic location. This February, Leslie was scheduled to escape the cold of Omaha, Nebraska, in favor of Ecuador for his annual vacation. However, unexpected health issues led to the use of his Global Rescue membership. "I never thought I'd need it," Leslie said. "They did so many good things I can't even think of them all. I get tears in my eyes."

Within the first few days of Leslie's trip, he began experiencing fatigue, difficulty breathing and nausea. He visited a local physician who recommended he go to Hospital Metropolitano in Quito, Ecuador. The treating physician found that Leslie was, in fact, dangerously close to entering a diabetic coma as he arrived at the hospital. Leslie was treated immediately with insulin and intravenous fluids in the intensive care unit. During his stay, he was examined by a cardiologist who determined that Leslie was also having his first heart attack, the first ailment he had suffered in 25 years.

While undergoing treatment via surgery and medication, Leslie was alone in a place where language barriers prevented anyone from explaining what was happening to him, let alone from caring for him throughout the symptoms and fears associated with his condition. Those feelings abated when Global Rescue, after learning of his situation, immediately deployed a paramedic to Leslie's bedside.

"He made me feel very comfortable and had a good sense of humor," Leslie reflected.

Global Rescue's paramedic stayed with Leslie in Ecuador until he was sufficiently stable to travel back to Nebraska for treatment at his home hospital of choice, the University of Nebraska Medical Center. While Leslie was hospitalized, the paramedic was instrumental in explaining details of the treatment and care plan. He coordinated discharge with the treating team to ensure that all was in order – medications and full medical records to pass to the admitting hospital, for example – prior to discharge. Additionally, Global Rescue worked with the airlines to ensure that services were available during the trip home, and coordinated with customs and immigration both in Ecuador and the U.S. upon departure and arrival.

"He was a godsend," Leslie recalled. "When he left, I was very sad. It felt like I left my best friend."

Leslie continues on the road to recovery from his ordeal abroad. While he does not yet have future travel plans, Leslie is eager to take off to some distant location, his health permitting. He confidently states, "If I can, I will."



LESLIE ERICKSON