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"MEDICAL EVACUEES ARE THE NEW REFUGEES OF CLIMATE CHANGE."

by

Dennis J. Wall

Dr. Stephen Parodi wrote that. Dr. Parodi is currently an Associate Executive Director at the Permanente Medical Group at Kaiser Permanente. He wrote this piece that The New York Times published on November 2, 2019: Stephen Parodi, *Can Hospitals Survive the Flames?*, NEW YORK TIMES, in print on Saturday, November 2, 2019, p. A27 (posted [online November 1, 2019](#), but The New York Times may charge for online access).

Dr. Parodi has first-hand knowledge on the subject. In 2017, he was in charge of teams of doctors, nurses, orderlies, and others who evacuated 122 patients away from a California hospital that was about to be engulfed by fire. A "makeshift firebreak" apparently bought time to evacuate the people; the next day, the hospital was intact but everything on the other side of the firebreak was burned up.

Doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel are trained to deal with illness, infection, and broken bones. They are not trained to fight fires, as Dr. Parodi points out.

The new healthcare model is shifting in the face of climate change whether anyone likes it or not. That includes being prepared to evacuate if you are a patient -- or a physician or a nurse -- in a hospital in what are now war zones complete with refugees.

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