

Hurricane Sandy Volunteer Receives Treatment at Winthrop



Hurricane Sandy volunteer Robert Burcham of Tennessee (right) receives a Tysabri Infusion, which helps slow down the progression of Multiple Sclerosis. He is joined by his care team at Winthrop (l.-r.): Denise Cheng, RN; Eileen Boylan, RN; and Malcolm Gottesman, MD, Chief of the Division of Neurology and Director of The Winthrop Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care Center.

Volunteers have travelled from across the country to assist with Long Island relief efforts after Hurricane Sandy. The Team at the Winthrop Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care Center was recently given the opportunity to give back to one such volunteer, 41-year-old Robert Burcham of Tennessee.

Although Mr. Burcham suffers from Multiple Sclerosis (MS), he hasn't let it stop him from assisting victims of environmental disasters across the country over the years. Mr. Burcham is an expert in his field – assessing damage to roofs that are difficult for most people to get to. When Mr. Burcham had the opportunity to come to New York to help with Hurricane Sandy relief efforts, he didn't delay, even though that meant he would be missing his Tysabri Infusion – a therapy that he receives every 28 days to slow down the progression of MS.

“When I left Tennessee, I was already due for another treatment, but I wanted to get out here to help, and then I was so busy that I never made time to take care of myself,” he said.

After spending a month in New York helping others, Mr. Burcham called The Winthrop Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care Center. Dr. Gottesman and the Center's Team worked to ensure that Mr. Burcham could promptly receive the necessary treatment.

“We were eager to do anything we could to help Mr. Burcham,” said Denise Cheng, RN, who was instrumental in coordinating Mr. Burcham's treatment.

“During the process, I was privileged to get to know Mr. Burcham – he is a remarkable man who lives his life to the fullest.”

“From the very first time I met Dr. Gottesman, I felt confident that I was in good hands,” Mr. Burcham said. After receiving the infusion, Mr. Burcham was immediately able to travel to his next appointment assessing roof damage on Long Island homes.

The Winthrop Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care Center has been recognized by the National MS Society since 2000 as a center for comprehensive care, providing services that address the varied and often complex issues related to living with MS. With a multidisciplinary and humanistic approach to treatment and care, the Center offers a variety of services, including clinically proven medication therapies; an Onsite Infusion Center; a referral network for appropriate specialty services; and support groups. The Center is also involved in many ongoing clinical research trials, including participation in the New York State MS Consortium since 1997.

For more information about The Winthrop Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care Center, call 1-866- WINTHROP.