



Category: Home Care Hero



BILLY CAMPBELL

As Billy Campbell, a physical therapist with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, lay in a hospital bed with COVID-19 a few months ago, he fought the disease with the same determination that he brings to his work caring for New Yorkers every day — and it worked.

Today, Billy is back on the front lines caring for patients again. But in the dark days of April he depended on a ventilator to breathe — yet even then, he found a way to focus not only on his own health, but on the health of others as well.

“The nurses were impressed that I was in bed doing exercises,” says Billy. “I was making my roommates sit up on the edge of the bed. We did breathing exercises together, and I was telling them the importance of standing up and sitting down a few times to keep yourself moving — as opposed to just sitting there dying.”

Billy would go on to lose about 50 pounds and 50 percent of his lung capacity over the course of his convalescence.

“All the doctors tell me I shouldn't be here,” says Billy, who was in excellent physical shape before the illness. After a carefully monitored recovery, including clearance from his doctor and “practice” walks through the city with his PT equipment to make sure he could cover his cases, Billy is back on the job.

He is still challenged by fatigue and reduced lung capacity, but he applies his expertise as a physical therapist to his own recovery. Courageously, Billy used his first-hand experience to not only put himself in patients’ shoes but to also develop protocols to improve recovery and outcomes for his patients.

He notes that too many COVID patients are prescribed oxygen upon discharge from the hospital and not taught how to use it. Now that he is well and back in the field, he’s been working to help people better understand how to use the equipment and monitor their oxygen levels, and he coaches using a post-COVID exercise program to enhance recovery as well.

Billy is just as concerned about the wellbeing of people without COVID who are newly homebound—or couch-bound. Many of these individuals are afraid to go outside but should still be doing some type of physical activity on a daily basis, he knows. His practical tips and solutions for maintaining physical strength, releasing anxiety and improving cardiovascular strength while isolating at home make him an inspiration to many.

Always kind, always thinking of others, Billy Campbell shows every day how much he cares. He’s a true #HomeCareHero who is grateful to be back at work with VNSNY.