

## Banner Health | Debbie Olsen

We are at Banner Australia Hospital. Came back because I wanted to meet the doctors and the team that had saved my life during my corona stay here. I was admitted on April 23rd. And I ended up staying here until June 11th. And at that time, I was moved to a rehab center for six weeks. During my stay here, I had a wonderful care team that took care of me. I was on the ventilator for four weeks. And I had a cardiac arrest. They had to revive me. They put me back on the ventilator for two additional weeks. When they took me off, I had another cardiac arrest. They had to revive me at that time. And then I went on a bypass machine for two weeks.

So I had quite the haul here of machines on and machines off. But it was important for my husband and I to come here today because we wanted to personally thank everybody that was involved in my care. They were just absolutely wonderful. And I didn't want their efforts to go unnoticed. We also had made a donation to the Heroes Fund in honor of the doctor that had saved my life. This is a program that Banner Australia has. And they are working towards getting people recognized. That are actually the true heroes. So we went on ahead and made a donation in honor of Doctor Patel's name. And we are here today. We met the doctors. And we met the team that saved me. And I was able to thank them.

During my stay, after I came out of being gone for six weeks, they walked in and they asked me to call my daughter, Amanda. And I called her, and she says, "Yo, Mom." She goes, "I'm so thankful you're back. It's been six weeks." And I said, "Six weeks." I said, "You mean six days." And she says, "No, it's been six weeks." And I was shocked to hear that I was under for that amount of time period.

And during that duration, I was taken very good care of. I was on the ventilator, receiving good care. I also, when I came out of it, I woke up and saw all these people standing around me. And my first thought was am I at my funeral? And I wasn't, thank God. But I had to learn to re-walk again. I had no feeling in my arms and legs. I had to go to rehab every day. I ended up leaving Banner Australia Hospital on June 11th. And I went to Surprise Rehab Center. And at Surprise Rehab Center, I was there for six weeks. And I had intensive physical therapy and occupational therapy.

I ended up continuing my physical therapy at home. I had my first night home on July 30th. And at that time, being at home, I ended up walking on September 11th for the first time. I thought I was never going to be able to walk again. I'm still on oxygen care, as my lungs are bilaterally infiltrated still. I still have no feeling in these three fingers, which is COVID-related. And by the end of the day, your legs feel like they're a hundred pounds. You can hardly lift them.

I remember a gal named Sarah. Nurse Sarah came in. And she says, "I have a surprise for you." And I thought, "My family's here." And she's like, "No, they're not allowed in. But I have a surprise for you." She came in and she connected her iPad up to the TV screen. And she had phoned my older daughter, Amanda, and my little granddaughter, Ava, who was three at the time. So I could see them because I had not seen them since April.

And that was the best medicine that I could ever have gotten. It was such a nice call, to be able to see them and talk about how much I was going to be on my road to recovery. Because I was wanting to take my granddaughter to Disneyland. And that's why I wanted to come through this free and clear. It was for that little girl. I just love her so much.

Prior to going in on the ventilator. The doctor handed me a phone and said, "Here, make your phone calls to your loved ones." And that was the hardest thing that I had to do. Because you can only put so much "I love you" into a two minute phone call. And I called my older daughter first and told her that she turned out to be the daughter that I always wanted. And then I call my husband. He has a brain injury. And he wasn't too sure, like are you coming home tomorrow? When are you coming home. He wasn't understanding. Then I called my younger daughter, Kylie. And that had to be the toughest thing that I ever had to do in my life.

They gave me a 1% to 2% chance in living and coming off the ventilator. And I had them fooled. Here I am today. So I fought so hard for that little girl, my granddaughter, so I could go to Disneyland and take her on the Dumbo ride.

Seeing the doctors and the nurses faces today, there's just no words that can describe it. It was incredible that I was never thought that I'd be standing here today, let alone having them in front of me so I could personally thank them for saving my life. It was just incredible. Everything that they've done for me, I am so grateful for. And everything that they continue to do for people in the hospital behind me here. I'm so grateful for that. They are true heroes inside and out. That hospital, like I said, is full of hearts and heroes. Every single one of them. They were put here on this Earth for a reason. And I'm so glad that I got to be part of the reason why they're here. They saved my life. And I love them.