

Firefighter receives emergency care after heroic act

"I've transported patients to Regions dozens and dozens of times, so I'm familiar with its Emergency Department," said Paul Burgett, a firefighter-paramedic with the Eagan Fire Department. "It was very strange coming in on a stretcher."

On November 21, 2021, Paul suffered significant trauma to his leg while responding to a crash on an Eagan highway. Three vehicles had crashed at the end of an icy bridge. With cars approaching the site and sliding out of control, Paul's team acted quickly to bring passengers to safety.

Paul personally pulled a woman from the minivan she was trapped in and led both her and her husband to a safe area behind the guardrail. In the process, Paul was struck by an oncoming SUV.

Paul, a Marine veteran, received the American Legion Firefighter of the Year award for his efforts. "If ... the husband and the wife had remained in the vehicle on the highway, they most likely would have lost their lives," the nomination reads.

Paul was in a state of shock when he entered the Regions ER. The first thing he remembers is seeing Kurt Isenberger, MD, an emergency physician. Dr. Isenberger seemed at ease, giving Paul a sense of calm.

"My main concern was, will I get the proper treatment and get on the road to recovery right now?" Paul said. "When Dr. Isenberger came in, I knew I was on the right road." Paul also appreciated how Dr. Isenberger took his feedback and that of other first responders into account while considering his choices.

"The whole staff was very attentive and caring. They were overwhelmingly helpful to me and my family."

As a paramedic, Paul has always felt comfortable bringing patients to Regions. "Our patients need complex care for complex injuries. The Regions ER is great at taking patients in and segregating them based on their needs, and resources are always there to provide critical treatment. Emergency care providers like doctors and nurses could easily become jaded, but Regions ER staff members always respond with energy and passion."



Paul Burgett

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Paul's experience in the ER convinced him to stay in the HealthPartners system for continuing care. Ultimately, he underwent knee surgery at the hands of Mahad Hassan, MD, a HealthPartners orthopedic surgeon who Paul credits for much of his recovery.

Paul continues to receive HealthPartners care for complications related to his leg injury. "I'm still getting great care even as the situation evolves," he said. He finished his physical therapy and went back to work in June 2022. His goal is to restart his five-mile-a-day running routine next summer.

"My family is incredibly grateful for the care we received," Paul said. "It got me back to my normal life."