



# **GUILBERTO**

## **My Amerivita Story**

*"I feel safe leaving my son in Amerivita's care because all of the nurses are people we can trust!"*



## Calm After The Storm

Guilberto's love for his son has helped him weather many storms — both figuratively and literally

The figurative storms begin when Guilberto's son, Elías, was born at 27 weeks. He survived, but at the expense of a host of medical problems.

Guilberto learned how to provide the best care possible for Elías, but that resolve was tested in 2017 when Hurricane Maria threatened his native Puerto Rico.

Guilberto felt calm and prepared in the hours before the storm struck. He had stocked up on extra medicine. There were gallons of gas stored up for the generator, and plenty of water to spare.

But no one was truly ready for the devastation Maria brought.

*"The apartment was made of concrete and those walls were still acting like they'd get ripped off," Guilberto said. "I really feared for (Elías)'s life while Hurricane Maria hit."*

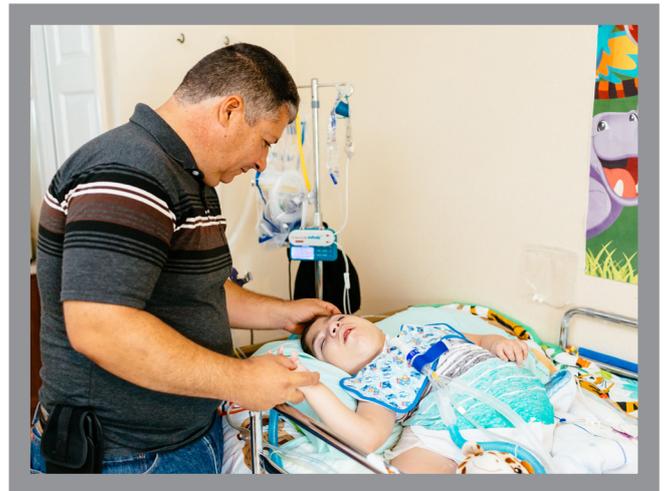




The danger was far from over after the storm passed. Elías relies on machines to breathe, and an unreliable power supply made living in Puerto Rico a literal life-or-death situation.

*"I thought he could die if the power went out at any moment, or if the generator stopped working. I was scared,"* Guilberto said.

Father and son left a shelter in their native Isabela for a larger medical facility in San Juan. But conditions weren't much better there, either, so Guilberto turned to social media for help. A Facebook live video drew the attention of philanthropists in Florida, who arranged a flight for Elías and his father.



“*Elias and I are alone here, and Joan is like our family. She is an excellent nurse and human being.*”



Elías benefited from medical attention stateside, but Guilberto found himself far from home with little money and support. The pair moved into a cramped RV that provided a roof over their heads, but few amenities.

After three months, they were forced into another RV, this one smaller than the first and smelling of rot and mold. Elías' machines would routinely trip the breakers; there was no hot water; and Guilberto could barely hold down a job because of his caregiver demands.

It was a tough phase of life, but there was one bright spot.

Amerivita Homecare nurses stuck with him and his son as they rebuilt their lives. Even in less than ideal circumstances like a small RV, they were professional and compassionate, Guilberto said. It was also through a connection at Amerivita that Guilberto was able to move into an apartment and leave the RV behind.

Having 24-hour care allows Guilberto to run errands without worry, and work normal hours. One nurse in particular, Joan, has been with them since they first arrived from Puerto Rico. Her dedication extends beyond her job, to include helping the Guilberto family move with her personal car.

*“Elías and I are alone here, and she’s like our family. She is an excellent nurse and human being,”* Guilberto said.

*“I feel very happy and very grateful for all the services Amerivita have provided to Elias.”*



Caring for a child with special medical needs will always carry certain challenges; that's something Guilberto accepts. He has his love to draw on for strength, and his dedication to building a new life for son. Amerivita nurses obviously aren't related by blood, but Guilberto sees a compassion and love for Elías that matches his own.

*“I feel very happy and very grateful for all the services Amerivita have provided to Elías,”* Perez said.



## Amerivita Home Care

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