

# New York doctors protest post-Sandy troubles

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A group of doctors and nurses protested outside New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's office Friday to ask for more help in rebuilding the city's healthcare system in the wake of superstorm Sandy.

About 30 health workers gathered outside City Hall to bring attention to what they said were the lack of resources in areas where hospitals, clinics and pharmacies were closed because of flooding.

"I have one message to the mayor: we need you to do everything in your power to get our healthcare infrastructure up and running again. You aren't doing enough," nurse Mary Fitzgerald, from the Montefiore Medical Center, said.

[Emergency room doctor](#) Marisa Fernandez, who has been volunteering in the badly damaged Rockaways neighborhood, said, "We're having to recreate an entire healthcare infrastructure from scratch—everything ranging from assessment and triage of newly housebound individuals, to mobile clinics."

"We need the mayor's office to step in and provide clinics that are up to standard with the rest of the nation, and help us continue our work to rebuild the healthcare infrastructure on the Rockaways," Fernandez said.

Another medic said that closed facilities like the Coney Island Hospital, due for reopening only in January, needed to come back on line more quickly.

"The city needs to make this their number one priority: getting the local clinics and hospitals back open and at full capacity to be able to provide care for their communities," the medic, Shawn Westfahl, said.

Three hospitals were closed during hurricane-strength Sandy, with NYU Langone being evacuated in the middle of the storm. The protesting medical staff said there was currently no level one trauma center left operating in the lower half of Manhattan.

Several groups, including the New York State Nurses Association, which represents 37,000 members, organized the rally.

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