



Tuesday, August 11, 2020

Dear Friends,

As you are all aware, Shaare Zedek remains in a period of intense activity relating to the Coronavirus and every indicator is that this is a reality we are forced to contend with for some time into the future.

Given that this is of course a global challenge, we must again begin by expressing our sincere wishes that all remains well with you and your families.

As we have reported in the past, Israel has a unique distinction as a country with a continued troublingly high rate of infection but a relatively low mortality rate (as compared to other countries.)

The flip-side of this positive trend is that it somewhat hides the incredible burden this pandemic is taking on our hospital. People may naturally look at the relatively low numbers of intubated patients and infer that the hospitals are not being inundated with patients. That is sadly not the case and it would be incorrect to underestimate the extent of this challenge.

A defining aspect of this second wave is that while it is very bad, it is not "bad enough" to require the closure of the remainder of our medical departments. Due to the fact that these departments remain open, our resources are stretched ever more thinly and the challenges only grow by the day. We are providing both Jerusalem residents, and patients from all over Israel alike, our usual top-quality medical care for a myriad of medical conditions. We are happy to share with you that 89 new babies came into the world at Shaare Zedek during the last 24 hours!

We continue to stand in awe at our medical and logistical staff on all levels for their continued unwavering efforts to provide the uncompromised care for which Shaare Zedek is so famous.

The endeavors made by the hospital management require many different elements and partnerships and certainly we are expecting that the Government of Israel will assume a part of this burden. These are events which were imposed upon all of us by factors well beyond our control and we, like all hospitals in Israel and the world over, have the legitimate expectation that governments will respond in kind.



(PICTURED L-R) Professor Jonathan Halevy, President, Shaare Zedek; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; Meir Ben Shabbat, Director, Israel National Security Council; Professor Chezi Levy, Director General, Israel Ministry of Health; Gali Weiss, Director of Nursing, Shaare Zedek, Professor Ofer Merin,



This past week we had the chance to host Prime Minister Netanyahu for a tour of our facilities with a focus on our Covid-19 response programs. This was his first Corona hospital visit ever, a veritable tribute to the centrality of Shaare Zedek's role in this battle. He voiced his strong solidarity for our staff and we are sure that he now better understands the scope of the challenge and the remarkable feats achieved in our daily response. We presented him with a clear picture of our financial obstacles and we are hopeful and confident that he will work to address this issue.

As a hospital that has been blessed to benefit from global support for all of our history, we know that your friendship continues to be of critical importance at this time, and for this we are extremely grateful.



We welcome the chance to conclude on an optimistic note and highlight the case of a 74 year old patient who left the hospital last week after no less than 99 days in our Corona unit! We believe this is the longest stay of any Corona patient in hospitalized isolation in the world and certainly view her case as an indication of our commitment to do everything necessary to care for the victims of this virus.

Our focus is now on preparation for the coming months which we are forced to acknowledge will be extremely difficult ones.

We strongly believe that with the proper readiness and resources, these days of challenge will remain to be ones of pride for the greater Shaare Zedek community.

We wish you and your families only good health and a continued enjoyable summer.

Sincerely yours,

Ofer Merin, MD
Director General

Jonathan Halevy, MD
President