



CHILDREN'S HEALTH ALLIANCE FOR ISRAEL

Supporting Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel

Quarterly Newsletter
SEPT. 2021



Dear Friends,

As we prepare to celebrate Rosh Hashana, we are happy to share with you The Children's Health Alliance for Israel (CHAI) Fall Newsletter. Rosh Hashana is an opportunity to celebrate new beginnings, and this new year we are pleased to announce two milestones.

First, we would like to thank CHAI Trustee Professor Ehud Davidson, MD., for his leadership as CEO of Clalit Health Services. During his tenure from 2018 to 2021, Professor Davidson led Clalit through many challenges and achievements for the benefit of patients, the health system in its entirety, and the State of Israel. We are grateful that Professor Davidson will continue to serve as a Trustee of CHAI as he begins the next chapter of his extraordinary career. Professor Davidson's wise counsel and deep familiarity with the Israeli healthcare system will make CHAI a stronger and better organization.

This Rosh Hashana also marks the beginning of the 30th anniversary of Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel (SCMCI). CHAI looks forward to celebrating SCMCI's 30th anniversary with the hospital's dedicated administrators, physicians, nurses, and staff. We invite you to join us in wishing our partners at SCMCI many more years of pioneering care for the benefit of children in Israel and worldwide.

We wish you a healthy and joyful New Year

Michael Lesser, MD
Chairman & President

Mindy Schneider
Secretary & Treasurer

Israel's Response to the Global Pandemic and its Impact on Children



In April, CHAI launched Zoom briefing sessions with physicians from SCMCI. The briefings provide unique opportunities to hear from physicians at the hospital who are leading initiatives in clinical care and research, solving the mysteries of childhood diseases, and addressing pressing global issues.

The inaugural briefing focused on Israel's response to the global pandemic and its impact on children. Hosted by Dr. Efrat Bron-Harlev, CEO of SCMCI, and moderated by Dr. Philip Lankowsky MD, ScD., Trustee of CHAI, the session featured three front-line clinicians who shared lessons from battling COVID-19.

Prof. Elhanan Nahum, MD., Director of the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, described the first days of the pandemic at SCMCI. Dr. Liat Ashenazi-Hoffnung, Director of the Department of Day Care Hospitalization, addressed long-haul COVID-19, and Prof. Silvana Fennig, MD., Director of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, discussed the pandemic's impact on children's mental health.



[A recording of the session is available here](#)

SCMCI Hosts Dignitaries in Pursuit of its Mission



PEACE BEGINS WITH CHILDREN

The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Israel, Mohammed Al Hajeh, was SCMCI's distinguished guest on July 8, 2021. The Ambassador visited as part of the historic medical collaboration agreement that was recently signed in Abu Dhabi between Clalit, the UAE Ministry of Health, and Dhaman, the largest medical insurance company in the UAE. The partnership includes developing joint initiatives for the advancement of remote medical care and the exchange of knowledge, consultations, and treatments in Clalit's top medical centers, including SCMCI.

"I was moved to meet the brave children dealing with complicated conditions in such an exceptional way, These children are a reminder to us all that we are obligated to leave a better world behind us for them. The Abraham Accords and the many collaboration agreements that have followed, among them in the field of health, will help children from all over the Middle East grow under a reality of peace and prosperity and benefit from the most advanced medical care."

Mohammed Al Hajeh



Dr. Efrat Bron-Harlev led the ambassador on the tour of the hospital. "We at Schneider, the one and only all-encompassing pediatric center for children in the Middle East, are pleased to exercise in practice the vision of providing every child with the finest medical care and the best health," said Bron-Harlev. "The potential of linking the efforts of the medical teams at Schneider to the treatment and health of children in the UAE is huge and realizes the dream of a partnership to improve the health of children wherever they are."



Astronaut Eytan Stibbe visits SCMCI



TAKING MEDICAL RESEARCH TO SPACE

SCMCI was chosen to participate in the Rakia Mission to space, sponsored by the Ramon Foundation and the Ministry of Science and Technology. Astronaut Eytan Stibbe visited SCMCI in preparation for his upcoming trip to outer space. While at the International Space Station, Stibbe will conduct scientific trials that can potentially lead to breakthrough developments in the treatment of leukemia, the most common type of cancer in children.

In close collaboration with the Hemato-Oncology Division at SCMCI, Stibbe will research leukemia cells under sub-gravitational conditions with or without chemotherapy. The findings of the research to be conducted in outer space will be compared with those following a similar study conducted in the Hemato-Oncology Division at SCMCI.

As Dr. Efrat Bron-Harlev, explains, “the results of this study can contribute to understanding cancer cell culture under sub-gravity conditions and add to the way in which new therapies are developed. One goal is to reduce the side effects of existing treatments.”



An International Collaboration Saves a Girl from Israel with Blood from Japan



Manelle, a 7-year-old Bedouin child who was born with a complex heart disorder and congenital anemia, was in treatment at Soroka Hospital in Beer Sheva and at SCMCI. A year ago, it became clear to Manelle's doctors that she needed open-heart surgery to save her life. However, the medical team encountered a major hurdle upon discovering that Manelle's blood type was extremely rare (B, RhD negative). Because Manelle would require blood infusions during and after surgery, a blood donor was needed.

Dr. Joanne Yaakovovitz, Director of the Hematology Unit at SCMCI, together with Dr. Vered Yahalom, Head of Blood and Apheresis Services at Beilinson Hospital, embarked on a search for a suitable donor. When no such donor was found in Israel, the national lab team at the Blood Service at Magen David Adom (MDA), headed by Dr. Leora Muncher and Dr. Marina Izak, searched for compatible blood types from the international registry of donors. MDA's Blood Service approached the Japanese Red Cross, which identified relevant donors and sent matching units of blood to Israel.

This past March, Manelle underwent open-heart surgery conducted by Dr. Gabi Amir, Director of Newborn Cardiac Surgery, during which Manelle received one unit of donated blood. Manelle's surgery was a success, and she was transferred to the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit for follow-up care. She received a second unit of blood the day after surgery and was discharged in good health a few days later.

"We at Schneider believe that there are no limits in our efforts to save the life of every child. The mission required multidisciplinary organization, which also included Beilinson and Soroka Hospitals, MDA, the Japanese Red Cross, and international collaboration to save Manelle's life. This story underscores the humanity and creativity of every medical professional who was involved in this case."

Dr. Yaacobovitz



The Children's Health Alliance for Israel hosts Dr. Beigelman in NYC



CHAI hosted a June reception in New York City for Dr. Avraham Beigelman, Director of the Institute of Allergy and Immunology at SCMCI. Introduced by Mindy Schneider, Dr. Beigelman emphasized that pediatric food allergy is a serious health condition that has become increasingly prevalent. Equally alarming, food allergy affects the psychological well-being of children and their families.

Currently, no preventative treatments for food allergy exist, and the primary course of management is suboptimal. Dr. Beigelman proposes to establish the Center for Food Allergy at SCMCI to actively cure food allergy. The Center will focus on the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of pediatric food allergies through oral immunotherapy, lead clinical and translational research, and deliver advanced education to the next generation of physicians. According to Dr. Beigelman, the Center will dramatically improve the quality of life for thousands of Israeli children each year and become one of the leading centers for food allergy treatment, research, and education in the world.



SCMCI Celebrates 30 Years



From the beginning, SCMCI has stood out as the only pediatric tertiary care hospital of its kind in Israel and the Middle East. Since it opened on October 29, 1991, SCMCI has made an indelible contribution to the healthcare of children in Israel.

Now, 30 years later, SCMCI has revolutionized pediatric practice, introduced breakthrough technologies and techniques, and raised the level of children's care to the highest standard of medical excellence.

In honor of the 30th anniversary, SCMCI is hosting two celebrations in 2021, including a party for hospital employees and a Gala celebration, which will be attended by the President of Israel and other distinguished guests and partners.



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looks forward to celebrating SCMCI's 30th anniversary
with the hospital's dedicated administrators, physicians, nurses, and staff.