

April 10, 2024

Dr. Tamar Elram

Director, Hadassah Medical Center

Mount Scopus

Dear Dr. Elram,

It has been brought to my attention that there are demonstrations taking place outside Hadassah hospital on Mt Scopus, as a protest against the fact that the institution treats security prisoners.

I would like to strengthen your hands and clarify that this treatment is required in our duty as doctors. The rules of ethics, international treaties and declarations, and even the law in the State of Israel require that a doctor treat every person regardless of who they are. For example, in the WMA Geneva Declaration we state that "I will not permit considerations of age, disease or disability, creed, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, social standing or any other factor to intervene between my duty and my patient."

The World Medical Association's statement in times of armed conflict and other situations of violence states that: "During times of armed conflict and other situations of violence, the ethical standards of the medical profession apply as in times of peace. The professional duty to treat people with humanity and respect applies to all patients. The physician must always act in accordance with medical neutrality and give the necessary care impartially and without discrimination."

The WMA's Declaration of Edinburgh adds that: Persons deprived of liberty ("prisoners") should receive the same standard of health care as people outside prisons."

Similarly, the IMA Ethics Committee rules also call for the continuation of medical services during an armed conflict, regardless of the patient's identity. The only consideration relevant to the doctor is the patient's medical condition.

Therefore, despite the horrific acts of the Hamas terrorists, we as doctors must and will provide the necessary treatment, and allow the justice system to judge them.

The IMA and its Ethics Bureau provide full support for your activities in these difficult days.

Best regards,

Dr. Yossi Walfish

Chairman of the IMA Ethics Bureau