



A Word from the CEO



Dear Friends,

As we welcome the New Year, I am honored to extend to you, on behalf of the Israeli Medical Association, my warmest greetings. I am also pleased to present the latest edition of IMA Around the Globe, which brings you updates on recent domestic and international events.

The past year has continued to test us all. Since the tragic events of October 7, 2023, Israel has faced ongoing war, regional threats, and most recently, the Iranian attack - each a reminder of the difficult and fragile reality in which we live. Yet through it all, Israel's physicians and medical teams have shown extraordinary resilience. Their compassion, dedication, and professionalism have not

only ensured the strength of our health system but also reflected the very best of Israeli medicine.

The Israeli Medical Association is proud to stand beside them, while also deepening our collaboration with colleagues worldwide. Together, we continue to promote health, solidarity, and shared human values, even in the most trying of times.

As this New Year begins, we carry with us a sincere prayer: for the swift return of all the hostages, for the safety of our soldiers, and for health, peace, and security for the people of Israel. May the year ahead bring renewal, comfort, and above all, hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Shana Tova,
Adv. Leah Wapner
CEO
Israeli Medical Association

THE ISRAELI MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION WISHES YOU,
YOUR FAMILY,
AND YOUR COMMUNITY

**A HAPPY AND
HEALTHY
NEW YEAR!**



ההסתדרות
הרפואית בישראל
Israeli Medical
Association



IMA Domestic News and Activities

MinDstart Hackathon: Pioneering Medical Student Innovation in Israel



Photos by Lior Moshe

MinDset, the International Center for Innovation, Leadership, and Research for Israeli Medical Students, hosted the MinDstart Hackathon - the first-ever international hackathon for medical students.

Held in Jerusalem, the 72-hour hackathon brought together over 300 participants from Israel, the U.S., and Europe. Students from all six Israeli medical schools teamed up with international peers, physicians, mentors, and entrepreneurs to tackle clinical challenges in five key areas: psychiatry, breast cancer prevention, medical education,

gynecology, and cardiology.

Twenty-nine multidisciplinary teams worked intensively to develop early-stage solutions, culminating in presentations before a panel of experts. The top winners were:

- EndoVolt – a diagnostic platform for endometriosis (1st place)
- SkillScope – an AI-driven tool for tracking residency training (2nd place)
- BrainPower – a U.S.-developed app reducing psychiatric readmissions (3rd place)

Supported by leading hospitals, universities, and partners such as the Israeli Medical Association (IMA), Teva, Jnext, and Birthright Israel, the event marked a major step in embedding innovation into Israeli medical education and fostering the next generation of physician-entrepreneurs.

U.S. Physicians Visit the IMA



On June 8, 2025, the Israel Medical Association hosted a group of 30 doctors and medical students from the United States, visiting as part of a Birthright volunteer program. Their goal was to experience the Israeli healthcare system up close and to learn about the IMA's work in Israel and around the world.

The program included presentations by **Adv. Malka Borow**, who provided an overview of the Israeli Medical Association and its international activities; **Prof. Eric Shinwell**, who spoke about the IMA Scientific Council and Zionism as reflected in the provision of medicine in the periphery; **Dr. Devorah Seigel**, who addressed Neurofibromatosis in the Age of Targeted Therapies; and **Dr. Jessica Feig**, who discussed Psoriasis and Heart Health: The Emerging Intersection of Cardiology, Dermatology, and Internal Medicine.

It was inspiring to see the connection, curiosity, and mutual inspiration in the room—an engaging exchange of ideas about medicine, Zionism, innovation, and the bonds between communities.

Soroka Medical Center Struck in Iranian Missile Attack



Photo by the IMA

On June 19, 2025, Soroka Medical Center in Beersheba sustained a direct hit from an Iranian ballistic missile as part of a large-scale attack on Israel.

The strike caused extensive structural damage to key areas of the hospital, including the surgical wing, emergency department, and ophthalmology unit. Remarkably, the impacted wings had been evacuated in advance, preventing mass casualties.

Despite the chaos, Soroka's medical teams continued to operate with unwavering dedication, ensuring continuity of care even under fire. The hospital treated between 50 to 80 injured individuals, most suffering from minor wounds or shock, while some required more intensive medical intervention. Due to the extent of the damage, the facility was forced to limit operations to life-threatening cases only and began transferring or discharging patients to ease the burden on emergency services.

Prof. Zion Hagay, President of the Israeli Medical Association, visited Soroka to assess the situation firsthand, express support for the medical teams, and offer assistance as needed.

"Only thanks to the proper precautions taken by Soroka Medical Center was a greater disaster avoided," said Prof. Hagay.

During his visit, he met with Dr. Dror Dolphin, Deputy Director of the Medical Center, and Prof. Rely Hershkovitz, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Ben-Gurion University.

The Israeli Medical Association sends strength and solidarity to the medical staff and wishes a swift recovery to all those injured in the attack.

Explore One of the World's Most Innovative and Equitable Healthcare Systems

Want to learn about one of the world's most innovative and equitable healthcare systems? If so, subscribe to Israel

Healthcare Highlights – a new YouTube channel hosted by Professor Bruce Rosen of "Together in Health" and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.

Israel is a global leader in digital health, clinical AI, emergency preparedness, and more. It provides universal health insurance, serves as a model for Arab-Jewish coexistence, and invests heavily to ensure that all Israelis-regardless of income-have access to high-quality healthcare.

Israel Healthcare Highlights showcases these unique strengths through interviews with leading Israeli healthcare experts.

Watch now and subscribe:



Israel Healthcare Highlights on YouTube

Featured Interview:



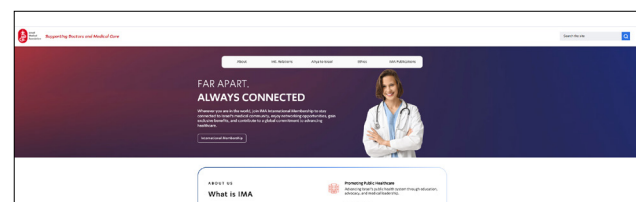
An interview with Adv. Malke Borow, Director of the Division of Law and Policy at the Israel Medical Association. Learn how the IMA supports physicians before, during, and after the move to Israel-easing the transition, cutting through bureaucracy, and helping them succeed in their new surroundings.

To get in touch with Prof. Bruce Rosen, please email:

Bruce@jdc.org

New English Website Launched!

We are delighted to share the launch of the **Israeli Medical Association's new English website**



The website provides updated information, resources, and insights about our work, making it easier than ever for our international community to stay informed and connected.



We warmly invite you to visit and explore it today!

Spotlight on a hospital

The Harvey and Gloria Kaylie Rehabilitation Medical Center at ADI Negev-Nahalat Eran: An Oasis of Healing in the Desert

Known for its multidisciplinary approach and seemingly magical environs, The Harvey and Gloria Kaylie Rehabilitation Medical Center at ADI Negev-Nahalat Eran, led by Medical Director Dr. Itzhak (Tzaki) Siev-Ner, former director of the Ministry of Health's Rehabilitation Division, is the first fully dedicated rehabilitation hospital in Israel's south. Established in June 2022 together with the Israeli government, Jewish National Fund-USA and international supporters, this modern marvel of accessible medical care has eased Israel's recovery crisis by providing the highest-level therapeutic, rehabilitative and emotional care for more than 1,200 soldiers and civilians from the hardest hit communities in the Negev since October 7, 2023.

Located within the healing oasis of the ADI Negev-Nahalat Eran rehabilitation village, the medical center keeps patients

and their families close throughout the recovery process, immerses them in a uniquely inclusive environment, and provides a host of unique rehabilitative amenities. These include a therapeutic horse stable, safari petting zoo, organic farm, hydrotherapy pool, sports therapy complex, and physical and occupational therapy gyms outfitted with state-of-the-art recovery technology. By fall 2025, the hospital's neurological, orthopedic and geriatric wards will boast well over 100 inpatient beds.

Most recently, when a ballistic missile from Iran decimated Beersheba's Soroka Medical Center, most of its rehab patients were immediately transferred to the Kaylie Rehabilitation Medical Center, a facility specially designed to protect against conventional (missiles and rockets), chemical and biological threats. In just three years, the Kaylie Rehabilitation Medical Center has become the gold standard of restorative care in Israel's south and is now the lone safe haven and recovery hub for all rehab patients in the Negev.

The Kaylie Rehabilitation Medical Center is also home to a groundbreaking Translational Research Lab run in conjunction with Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Weizmann Institute, Johns Hopkins University and other global partners. The lab studies cognitive impairments and physical disabilities and allows for the immediate transfer of data from the lab to clinical implementation throughout the hospital and around the world.

Learn more about The Harvey and Gloria Kaylie Rehabilitation Medical Center here.

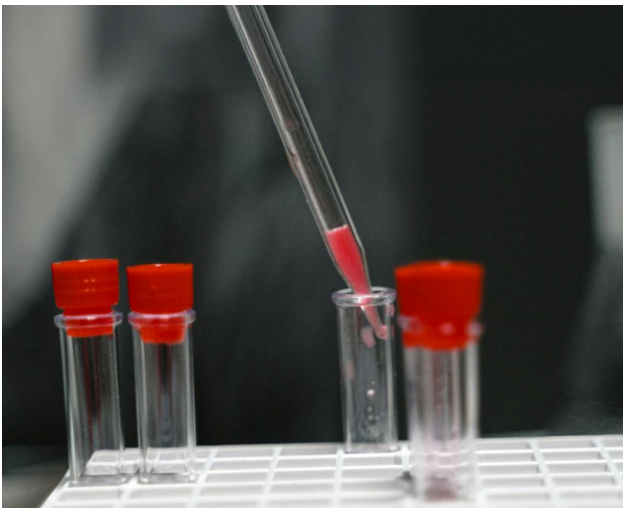
<https://adi-il.org/>



Kaylie Rehabilitation Medical Center at ADI Negev-Nahalat Eran. Photo by ADI

Medical Achievements

Hemorrhage survival tripled in study by Israeli researchers



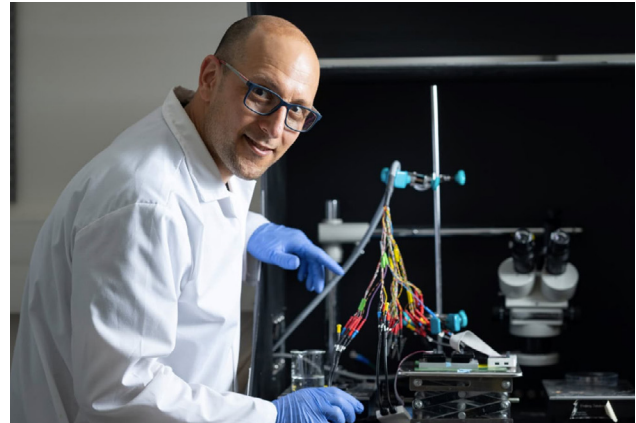
Targeting PKC- ϵ after hemorrhage may offer faster, safer trauma intervention. Photo by MART PRODUCTION/Pexels

A groundbreaking treatment developed by the Hebrew University and the IDF Medical Corps has shown remarkable success in improving survival after severe blood loss. By targeting a protein known as PKC- ϵ shortly after bleeding begins, the approach boosted survival rates in preclinical studies from 25% to 73%. The treatment helps stabilize vital functions and reduce tissue damage, offering a potential breakthrough in trauma care. The study underscores Israel's ongoing leadership in developing cutting-edge medical solutions for both civilian and battlefield settings.

Article courtesy of Israel 21c.

To view full article: [Hemorrhage survival tripled in study by Israeli researchers - ISRAEL21c](#)

Simple blood test may soon help detect colon cancer



Prof. Hadar Ben-Yoav in his laboratory at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Photo by Dani Machlis/BGU

A groundbreaking blood test developed by Israeli startup OncoRedox, co-founded by Prof. Hadar Ben-Yoav, may soon revolutionize early detection of colorectal cancer. The test uses an AI-powered electrochemical sensor to analyze blood plasma and detect cancer-related molecular patterns, achieving 94% accuracy in early studies.

Created in collaboration with Ben-Gurion University and Sheba Medical Center, the test offers a low-cost, non-invasive alternative to traditional screenings like colonoscopies and stool tests. With its potential to expand into detecting other cancers and inflammatory diseases, OncoRedox is paving the way for more accessible, early-stage diagnostics and reinforcing Israel's leadership in health-tech innovation.

Article courtesy of Israel 21c.

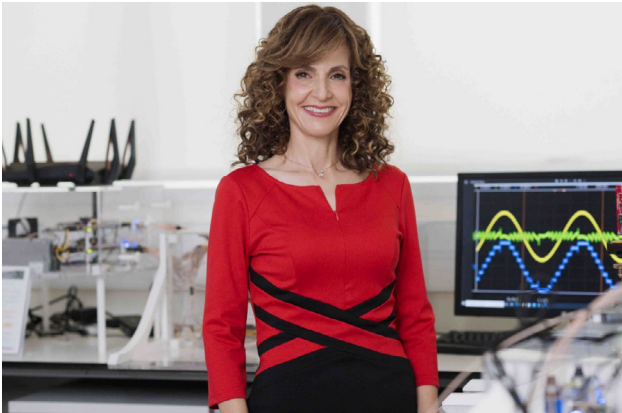
To view full article: [Simple blood test may soon help detect colon cancer - ISRAEL21c](#)

Noncontact radar unit monitors patients' vitals remotely

An innovative Israeli system is transforming how vital signs are monitored in hospitals and at home. Developed at the Weizmann Institute of Science by Prof. Yonina Eldar, the BRAHMS (Bio-Radar Health Monitoring System) uses contact-free radar technology to remotely track patients' heart rate, breathing, and lung function-without wires or physical contact.

Originally inspired by challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, BRAHMS reduces the risk of infection for medical staff and improves patient comfort by eliminating traditional monitoring equipment. The system can track multiple patients simultaneously in real time and automatically alert caregivers to any concerning changes.

With plans for future integration into ICUs, ERs, and elderly care settings, BRAHMS showcases Israel's leadership in merging cutting-edge engineering and healthcare innovation.



Prof. Yonina Eldar at the Weizmann Institute's Manya Igel Centre for Biomedical Engineering and Signal Processing. Photo by Ben Kelmer

Article courtesy of Israel 21c.

To view full article: [Noncontact radar unit monitors patients' vitals remotely - ISRAEL21c](#)

Sheba Leads a Mental Health Breakthrough with AI and Neurofeedback



"AI doesn't replace therapists, but it's a powerful tool" – the LIV team at Sheba. Photo by Sheba Medical Center Spokesperson

A new AI-powered mental health platform developed by Sheba Medical Center is transforming trauma care in Israel. The system, called LIV, conducts virtual intake sessions to identify PTSD, anxiety, and depression with 94% accuracy-dramatically reducing wait times and expanding access to care.

The system is part of Returning to Life, a national initiative providing trauma treatment for Israeli security personnel and their families. The program also features neurofeedback therapy- a noninvasive, drug-free method that helps patients regulate their brain's stress response. Together, these tools highlight Israel's innovative approach to expanding access to personalized mental health support.

Source: Ynet, Feb. 9, 2025

<https://www.ynet.co.il/health/article/r1ubgzly1e>

Israeli Healthcare Uses VR to Reduce Patient Anxiety

Hospitals and clinics across Israel are using virtual reality (VR) to ease patient anxiety during medical procedures.

At Assuta Ashdod Hospital, patients undergoing catheterization watch a calming, step-by-step explainer video through VR headsets. Clalit Health Services uses similar technology during blood tests, showing relaxing virtual environments to lower stress.

The results include reduced heart rates, calmer patients, and smoother procedures. With plans to expand VR to oncology, maternity, and dental care, Israel is leading the way in patient-centered medical innovation.



Prof. Ben Asa and a patient using VR before catheterization. Photo by Assuta

Source: Maariv, July 28, 2025

<https://www.maariv.co.il/news/health/article-1218901>

International Conferences

World Medical Association Council Session – Montevideo, Uruguay April 2025



Israeli Medical Association President, Prof Zion Hagay, CEO Adv. Leah Wapner and International Relations Officer, Mrs. Michelle Glekin attended the 229th Council Session of the World Medical Association in Montevideo, Uruguay from the 24th-26th of April 2025.

Prof. Zion Hagay was re-elected for a second term as the Chair of the WMA Socio-Medical Affairs Committee. Elections were also held for the Chairman of Council, with Dr. Jack Resneck from the American Medical Association being elected. In addition, Dr. Tohru Kokuta from the Japan Medical Association was re-elected to the position of Vice-Chair of Council, Mr. Rudolf Henke from the German Medical Association was re-elected as Treasurer, Dr. Christofer Lindholm from the Swedish Medical Association was elected as chair of the Medical Ethics Committee and Dr. Philippe Cathala from the Conseil National de l'Ordre des Médecins (CNOM) France was elected as chair of the Finance and Planning Committee.

The meeting was marked by the international situation for global health, and the vulnerable position of some medical associations. There were four council resolutions which were adopted, on **The role of Physician Associates and Other Non-Physician Providers in the United Kingdom and other**

countries, The Use of Riot Control Agents and Human Rights Violations against Protesters in Turkey, a Resolution to Uphold the Ethical Framework of Healthcare, and one on **Public Health Funding Worldwide**, in light of the WHO's reduced revenues and the reduced funding of aid.

It was also decided to initiate work to review the WMA's **Declaration of Taipei** on ethical considerations regarding health databases and biobanks. This will be important work in terms of technological development and the fact that the Taipei Declaration is referenced in the Declaration of Helsinki. The Israeli Medical Association was appointed Chair of this important workgroup, and it is expected that the review process will take approximately two years.

There were also new workgroups set up on Medical Neutrality, Procedure Development of Policy on Health-related Crises and Hybridization of WMA Meetings. The IMA will also continue to Chair the Workgroup on Medical Technology, which successfully organised a series of webinars on Artificial Intelligence. The workgroup will continue this series after the summer break and are also working on revising the WMA statement on AI.

A briefing session on health workforce issues relating to physician migration discussed the challenges, advocacy, and solutions for a sustainable health workforce.

On the final day the Sindicato Médico del Uruguay organised a bus tour of Montevideo's famous landmarks which began in the Old City (Ciudad Vieja) to Hotel Carrasco, continued alongside the rambla and ended at a winery where participants enjoyed a tour of the vineyard followed by a delicious dinner.

129th German Medical Assembly

The 129th German Medical Assembly was held in Leipzig from May 27-30, 2025, at the Congress Center Leipzig. The Israeli Medical Association was represented at the meeting by Adv Leah Wapner, CEO and Ms. Michelle Glekin, International Relations Officer.

The annual meeting of the German Medical Association (GMA) focused on current health and socio-political issues, with artificial intelligence in medicine being a key topic. The annual meeting serves as a platform for medical professionals to present their positions on these issues to the public.

The meeting began with a "Dialogue Forum with Young Physicians" which was held on the 26th of May. During this event, the Executive Board of the German Medical Association meets with junior doctors in order to discuss issues important to them. This year the Forum was opened by Dr Ellen Lundershausen, Vice President of the German Medical Association.

A special programme for international guests was organised by the GMA which began with a special dinner in Gondwanaland in the Zoo Leipzig. The guests enjoyed a welcome drink and were then able to have a private exploration of the tropical world at the Zoo Leipzig. Following this, the guests were treated to a delicious dinner in the zoo.



The opening ceremony of the meeting was held at St. Nicholas Church “Nikolaikirche”, where the participants heard about the current challenges facing German physicians. The newly elected Federal Minister of Health, Nina Warken, addressed the over 1000 invited guests. She spoke in favour of a new culture of trust between politics and medical self-administration. In view of the enormous challenges in health policy, she wants to enter into dialogue with all those involved. She stated that the upcoming reforms in the health care system are about ensuring high-quality health care in urban and rural areas, in view of an aging society, a shortage of skilled workers and scarce financial resources in statutory health insurance.

Dr. Klaus Reinhardt, President of the German Medical Association, had already called for fundamental reforms. The GMA President and the Minister spoke out in favour of better patient management and the introduction of a primary doctor system. Dr. Reinhardt also appealed to politicians not to consider the health care system alone as a cost factor. Austerity measures must always be subject to an impact assessment. At the same time, Reinhardt also emphasized the role of the medical profession in the reform process.

Participants were treated to a wonderful performance by St. Thomas Choir of Leipzig, one of the oldest boy's choirs in Germany, with a history spanning more than 800 years.

Following the opening ceremony, participants made their way to the Congress Center where the international guests enjoyed a welcome reception and briefing from the GMA International Relations Team, who explained the meeting proceedings.

The focus of the general debate was on health and social policy with particular attention to the health policy plans of the new federal government. In addition, the German Medical Association Assembly discussed other health and socio-political topics, including an important course in the

amendment of the fee schedule for doctors.

Following the first day's meeting, guests enjoyed a city tour of Leipzig where they heard about the history of the city followed by a traditional dinner.

European Forum of Medical Associations (EFMA) Annual Meeting

On June 25–27, the Armenian Medical Association hosted the European Forum of Medical Associations (EFMA), which brought together medical leaders from over 20 countries to discuss the most pressing issues in healthcare.

EFMA hosts an annual meeting of representatives of national medical organizations from across Europe, aimed at exchanging views on issues related to health and the medical profession. It provides an opportunity to meet with representatives of medical organizations from all European countries, including those outside the EU or EEA.

Adv. Leah Wapner, IMA CEO, chaired the meeting in her position as Secretary General of EFMA.

The main topics of this year's Forum included:

- Self-governance of medical associations
- Physician migration and challenges in healthcare workforce policy
- Development of emergency medical care
- Artificial intelligence in the context of the future of medicine

During the opening ceremony, the President of the Armenian Medical Association, Dr. Hovhannes Hovhannisyan, welcomed the audience, emphasizing that due to the current situation in the region, some participants were unable to attend. The organizers are especially grateful to the representatives of approximately 20 medical organizations who participated in the Forum, despite some difficulties. Adv. Wapner emphasized that we live in turbulent times, which, of course, also has a significant impact on healthcare. EFMA is an event that allows representatives of medical organizations from across Europe, to meet, reaching far beyond the European Union.

EFMA is also an opportunity to support doctors from countries where medical organizations have not yet been established or are in their early stages. Adv. Wapner emphasized the involvement of the Armenian Medical Association in EFMA's activities and thanked them for organizing this year's Forum.

The Head of the WHO Country Office in Armenia, Dr. Siddhartha Sankar Datta, spoke about the importance of health, especially in the context of the current global situation. As he pointed out, there is no health without peace. He added that both infectious and non-communicable diseases are currently a serious problem for healthcare, affecting an increasing number of people.



Armenian Minister of Health, Anahit Avanesyan, welcomed the meeting participants. She emphasized that professional organizations are partners for state authorities, both in policy development and implementation.

As part of the session on the role of medical organizations, Leah Wapner emphasized the crucial importance of the independence of medical organizations. She recalled the problems faced by organizations in some countries – particularly Turkey, Hungary, and Israel. Limiting the independence of professional organizations and depriving them of influence, for example on the system of professional education and development directly impacts the quality of healthcare and patient safety. She spoke about the growing politicization of healthcare; the idea that a threat to the medical profession is a threat to healthcare and patients; the need for medical associations to fight back in order to preserve their independence and the need for various modes of action in the public, parliamentary and legal arenas.

On the second day of the conference, a session devoted to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare continued the discussion from the previous year about the extent to which AI will contribute to improving the healthcare system and the extent to which it may pose a threat to the system and to individual doctors. It was repeatedly emphasized that AI will not replace doctors, but it could significantly change the way they practice their profession, which is already visible in some fields.

Dr. Nathalie Bloch, founder of the Innovation Center for Digital Health ARC at Sheba Medical Center in Israel presented on her personal journey in the intersection of healthcare and AI. She then described trends using examples of the use of AI for diagnosis and treatments.

Following the meeting the Armenian Medical Association

organised a guided tour where they visited Lake Sevan, Sevanavank Monastery, Dilijan, Goshavank Monastery, Haghartsin Monastery and ended with a traditional lunch at Village Tsaghkunk.

IMA Delegation at the 14th SEEMF Conference in Bulgaria

The 14th meeting of the Southeast European Medical Forum (SEEMF) was held in Burgas, southeastern Bulgaria, bringing together representatives from 26 countries across Southeast Europe and from states formed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Delegates from Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, as well as Belgium and Italy-representing doctors and nurses in the European Parliament-were among the participants.

The conference offered a rich program that included both academic medical topics and issues related to professional organizations. Key discussions addressed challenges such as violence against physicians, alongside a variety of other pressing subjects.

The IMA delegation consisted of six physicians and nurses: Dr. Moshe Kostiner, Deputy and Acting Chairman of the IMA; Dr. Ludmila Levin-Spivak of Tel Aviv; Dr. Anatoly and Vilna Brotman from southern Israel; Tikva Kostiner; and Dr. Alex Levin, Deputy Chairman of the IMA. Dr. Levin presented a lecture titled “Military Medicine: History and Reality,” emphasizing Israel’s achievements in treating wounded patients. The reception toward the Israeli delegation was very warm, reflecting the spirit of friendship and collaboration that characterized the event.

Delegates also enjoyed social activities, including a boat trip on the Black Sea, which contributed to the collegial and friendly atmosphere. The conference was considered a success, strengthening ties with leading physicians and partners from across the region.



Aliyah Interview

Personal/Professional Background

Could you tell us a little bit about your education and past work experiences?

I grew up in South Africa. I studied medicine in Johannesburg and completed my 2 years of internship and then 1 year of government community service. After this I was able to register for independent practice in South Africa, and I then worked for a number of years in the position of medical officer in a government hospital emergency department and for a pre-hospital aeromedical medicine company in the private sector. I then moved on to a brief career in medico-legal assessment and report writing as well as lymphedema and wound care management. After making aliya I started work at Terem in order to learn the system here, and then decided to formally specialize in Emergency Medicine. I did residency at Samson Assuta University Hospital in Ashdod. Residency was challenging, as apart from the usual difficulties which every resident faces, I was also in a new country, with a new language and then faced with the international COVID pandemic. But I flourished in the challenge. Since completing residency almost 4 years ago, I have continued to work as a senior emergency physician at Assuta Ashdod where I work night shifts and teach in our residency program. I am also on the exam committee for both the Shlav aleph and Shlav bet emergency medicine exams and for the last 3 years I have been in the position of Academic Director of the National Israeli Course in Emergency Medicine. I love all the different aspects of my job and although often faced with challenges, feel like I continue to grow and learn all the time.

How did you decide to make Aliyah?

Our decision to make aliya came after extensive research into what it would take to pack up our lives and move. We looked into multiple different options of countries to live – including Australia, the UK and Canada. But after meeting with the aliya representatives in South Africa at the Jewish Agency we came to realize that apart from the push to leave South Africa, moving to Israel also had many “pull” factors.



Full Name:
Gila Anat Nussbaum

Occupation:
Emergency Medicine Physician, Academic
Director National Israeli Course in
Emergency Medicine

Date of Aliyah:
15 January 2017

Originally from:
South Africa

Made Aliyah with (family):
Husband Robin, Sons Ben and Raphael
(subsequently had a 3rd child after making
aliya – our Israeli Yaeli)

What were your reasons for making Aliyah?

Our reasons for making aliya were mostly born out of the desire to give our children better opportunities for a secure future. We felt that in this day and age, as religious Jews packing up our lives and moving across the world, the best place we could move to would be Israel.

The Aliyah Process

Could you briefly describe the process of making Aliyah?

I feel like our aliya process can be divided into 3 separate sections

1. Packing up life in South Africa.

- We had a lot of practical, administrative and emotional

things to sort out. My husband and I both had to leave our jobs and walk away from established careers. We had to sell our home and our cars and pack up all our belongings. We brought our 2 cats with us and had to organize their travel and “aliya” documentation. Leaving South Africa also meant leaving behind our friends, families who we are very close to, including uncles, aunts, cousins, siblings, their children and our aging parents. It was a difficult and complicated process.

2. Planning for our move to Israel

- We came on a pilot trip 6 months before our actual move in order to assess possible living and work options. We travelled around the country looking at different locations and what they would have to offer in terms of living arrangements and accommodation, schools, health care facilities, amenities and job opportunities. In South Africa we had to make financial arrangements, get documentation, find an apartment to live in once we got here, register kids for school and set up potential work opportunities, including transferring my medical licensing.

3. Actually moving and setting up our lives

- Once we landed in Israel we hit the ground running. We had to set up our lives in terms of opening bank accounts, applying for passports, moving into our apartment and setting up accounts for water, electricity and arnona, register our boys for gan and then get them settled, buy a car, find work. It was a lot to do. But we made ourselves check lists of everything we had to get through and slowly but surely managed to check it all off.

Life in Israel

Where do you live and work in Israel? Can you describe your job?

We live in Modi'in. My husband works in Jerusalem and I work in Ashdod.

I am an emergency physician nocturnist. For the clinical portion of my job I work only night shifts, from 23:00 until 8:00. I see all patients coming into the emergency department. We have the only “United ED” in the country with no division between medical, surgical and orthopedics. One patient may have a broken leg from a car accident while the next will be having a heart attack and the next a stroke or sepsis. I supervise residents on shift and teach residents within our department. I am also on the committees for both the shlah aleph and shlah bet emergency medicine board exams. I set exam questions and examine directly in the oral components of the exam. I am also the academic director for the National Israeli Course

in Emergency Medicine – a residency requirement for all emergency medicine residents. I oversee the academic content of the course as well as plan each day, liaise with venues, book equipment, lecture and instruct residents.

What do you enjoy most about life in Israel? What are some of the challenges you have faced?

The freedom. The freedom to be a proud Jew and to be able to teach my children what that means. The freedom to be able to go out and enjoy life without the fear of crime and antisemitism. The freedom to work in a specialty that is growing, evolving and developing.

There have been many challenges, one big one being the language. I came with moderate Jewish day school Hebrew. I did a medical ulpan which helped build up my vocabulary, but I really improved once I started working and had no choice but to speak Hebrew on a daily basis. I worked hard at it to the point that I managed to achieve well in my shlah aleph and shlah bet exams and I can now switch between English and Hebrew with relative ease, but I will always be smarter, funnier and more myself in English.

Compare working in South Africa to working in Israel.

The biggest difference working as a doctor in Israel compared to South Africa is the feeling that every life is precious. The resource availability and capacity in Israel is also so much greater that it leaves the feeling of being able to do a lot more.

Describe any professional culture shocks you've experienced in Israel.

It took me a while to become “less polite” and more assertive. To realize that here “please” and “thank you” are often implied and not necessarily required. Emergency medicine is still a very male dominated field in Israel and it was tough to learn to stand up for myself as an English speaking Olah without being intimidated a lot of the time.

Would you like to share your experience as an Oleh physician since October 7th and how it has impacted you?

There have been many challenges and impactful experiences since the start of the war. These include driving to and from shifts during sirens, treating wounded from missile attacks, treating some of the most seriously injured soldiers straight off the battle fields of Gaza, working with a smaller team as colleagues have been called to miluim. There has been the ethical and moral challenge of treating terrorists. I have also had the privilege of being involved in the project of Frontline Emergency Medicine with Dr Debra West, providing training on essential lifesaving procedures to doctors and medics in the field and emergency response units.

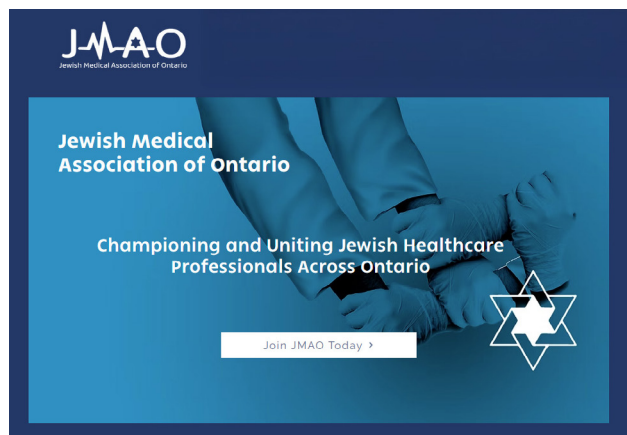
International Highlights

CANADA



Jewish Medical Association of Ontario (JMAO)

Founded in the days following October 7, 2023, the Jewish Medical Association of Ontario (JMAO) quickly became a cornerstone of support for Jewish healthcare professionals across Ontario and Canada. As a founding



member of the Canadian Federation of Jewish Medical Associations (CFJMA), JMAO hosted dozens of events - from book clubs and historical walking tours to holiday cooking demonstrations, support circles, and professional development programs such as networking and mentoring for healthcare trainees.

In the fall, JMAO embarked on its first medical mission to Israel. Alongside incident-related support, the association also built a resilient advocacy team and engaged in strategic educational programming across healthcare, academia, and government, ensuring Jewish healthcare professionals played a central role in countering the alarming rise of antisemitism and anti-Zionism.

Doctors Against Racism and Antisemitism (DARA) – Canada

On July 27, the DARA (Canada) board held a virtual discussion with Michal Cotler-Wunsh, focusing on strategies to address antisemitism in medicine. The conversation also explored the concept of “Anti-Palestinian Racism” and its implications for Jewish students and professionals in medical schools and teaching hospitals.

DARA and the Association of Jewish Medical Associations (AJMA) also collaborated on a strong response to the anti-Israel resolutions adopted by the British Medical Association (BMA). Their joint letter to the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) critically analyzed the BMA resolutions and provided a clear rationale for rejecting similar initiatives.



Canadian Branch of the International Federation of the Israel Medical Association (CIMA)

CIMA committed significant resources to support Israel in the wake of October 7. In 2025, it allocated \$30,000 to fund a trauma treatment initiative launched by the Israel Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Association. The initiative established 12 new Crisis Intervention Centers across Israel, each staffed with eight clinicians, to address the surge in mental health crises among children and families. Using a “Train the Trainers” model, the program enhanced national capacity to deliver short-term, evidence-based trauma care.

On March 30, 2025, CIMA hosted a special lunch and Zoom meeting featuring two leading Israeli experts in child and adolescent trauma care: Dr. Livia Balan Moshe, MD, PhD, Head of the Crisis Intervention Center at Sheba’s Safra Children’s Hospital and specialist in child psychiatry, autism, and gender medicine, and Dr. Naama de la Fontaine, PhD, Clinical Psychologist at Sheba and Assistant Clinical Professor at the Yale Child Study Center, specializing in trauma interventions for children and families.

ITALY



Countering attempts at ideological interference in healthcare—especially during a severe international crisis and amid public opinion that is largely hostile to Israel and the Jewish people—is no easy task. To address this challenge, the Italian Jewish Medical Association (AME) has taken concrete actions on multiple fronts.

First and foremost, it is essential to closely monitor discriminatory initiatives and collect objective data in order to expose their dangers and prevent their spread. For instance, when two healthcare workers publicly discarded products from the Israeli pharmaceutical company Teva, we did not remain silent. We sent an official letter of protest to the Minister of Health, denouncing the act as serious and contrary to professional ethics. We also took a public stance against the boycott of Israeli medicines, writing to professional bodies and newspapers to emphasize that such actions do not target a government or political policy, but rather harm patients worldwide who benefit from Israeli medical discoveries and therapies.

Alongside institutional efforts, AME considers engagement with the public, especially through social media—crucial. For this reason, we launched an Instagram page to clearly communicate our statements and highlight the many opportunities that arise from collaboration with Israeli research. Through testimonials, scientific data, and in-depth articles, we aim to demonstrate not only our commitment but also the vital role Israeli medicine plays globally—from pharmaceutical innovations to technologies that tangibly improve patients’ daily lives.

Equally important is dialogue with associations and medical societies that share our concerns. Building networks with these organizations strengthens a united front in defense of medical neutrality. This is not about defending a specific interest, it is about ensuring that all patients, everywhere, can trust that their care remains free from prejudice and political influence.



For further insights, we invite you to watch the Ynet Global interview with Dr. Daniel Radzik, in which the Italian Jewish Medical Association calls for action against ideological interference in healthcare (Video: Yaron Brenner).



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IMA

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ISRAELI MEDICAL ASSOCIATION JOURNAL – IMAJ

We are happy to inform you that the Israeli Medical Association Journal (IMAJ) is available online to all IMA World Fellowship members.

IMAJ publishes original articles and reviews, editorials, case reports and other feature columns and includes unique coverage of specific regional issues such as infectious and parasitic diseases, effects of the local environment on morbidity and mortality and Jewish genetic diseases, that are relevant to medical practice in distant countries with similar biopsychosocial problems.

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