



Prof Phil Banfield  
Chair of Council  
British Medical Association

30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Dear Prof Banfield,

It has been brought to our attention that the British Medical Association (BMA) has released a position on the Israel-Gaza conflict. While we thank the BMA for your concerns at this difficult time and appreciate much of what is addressed in this position, we also would like to note our disappointment that the Israeli Medical Association was not contacted prior to its release to ensure that the information given is correct.

Most importantly, in the section on healthcare for detainees, we are unaware of any direct, official policy issued by the Ministry of Health to refuse to give medical care to injured Palestinians detained by the Israeli authorities.

There was, unfortunately, a statement by the former health minister, Moshe Arbel, not to treat the Hamas terrorists in our hospitals. This obviously concerned us greatly, and we immediately issued our ethical position to all our doctors, as follows:

*Israeli doctors are committed to international conventions, the rules of medical ethics and the Declaration of Geneva. Despite the barbaric and horrific acts of the Hamas terrorists, doctors will provide the necessary treatment in hospitals, the prison services or the army according to medical necessity only. The terrorists will be punished as is customary in a country with the rule of law.*

*We are aware of the difficulty of treating victims of terrorism alongside the perpetrators; however, Israeli doctors have always acted in accordance with their professional duty and treated even in difficult situations, and will continue to do so.*

Concurrently, we understand that a designated hospital was set up by the Israeli Ministry of Health near a large military base to treat the terrorists who do not require treatment in one of the general hospitals. We understand that this was done primarily to diffuse the extremely volatile situation in the hospitals, especially in the first few days after the horrific massacre, where terrorists were being treated side by side with their victims. All hospital directors agree that in cases where a prisoner cannot be properly treated in this designated hospital, he will be transferred to a regular hospital. The underlying, across the board understanding among all involved is that every patient will be treated to the best extent possible, without regard for who he is or what he did. That is not the job of the doctor to decide.



We would appreciate that the BMA review and amend their current position accordingly.

Best regards,

Prof. Zion Hagay  
President

Adv. Leah Wapner  
Secretary General