



March 23, 2020

Dear Friends:

## **Re: Galilee Medical Center; Facing Down our Shared Challenge**

The COVID-19 outbreak is a new phenomenon, affecting all of us – in Israel, and in North America. Governments in the US, in Canada, and in Israel are confronting the situation with the tools at their disposal, unfortunately resulting in disruption and uncertainty for our families and our communities. We hope that these steps will slow the spread of the virus and eventually return things to some semblance of normal life. We are confident that in the days and weeks ahead, as we live in these unique circumstances, we will find ways not only to cope, but to advance. When this ultimately passes, we will all be smarter and stronger and more resilient.

In the interim, as we face this shared challenge, the mission of the Galilee Medical Center continues.

The Galilee Medical Center (GMC) is experienced at confronting adversity. Located only ten kilometers from the Lebanese border, the hospital can adjust rapidly to emergency situations, such as during the First Lebanon War, the Second Lebanon War, and while facing the challenge of treating 3,000 injured Syrians at the GMC from 2013-2018. This time as well, the hospital's professional staff is rising to the challenge.

Galilee Medical Center, which has been caring for the health of the region's population for over 70 years, is struggling to prepare for the new global challenge.

Galilee Medical Center in Nahariya already has a functioning ward for treating confirmed coronavirus patients, as per the directive of the Ministry of Health. The ward conforms to advanced hospitalization standards and is suitable for patients who have both severe and mild symptoms. It includes 24 beds, of which six are for patients requiring artificial respiration.

Currently, GMC is diligently preparing the infrastructure and procuring the medical supplies necessary to open an additional ward to treat 30 more coronavirus patients, if it will become necessary. By establishing this second ward, the hospital will be able to treat 30 patients who require respirators and intensive care, as well as caring for 24 patients suffering from mild to moderate symptoms.

Both wards will feature a fully protected nurses' station and a separate area for the medical staff. This ensures strict compliance with the Government's isolation and protection guidelines



and ensuring that the medical staff will avoid infection. Thanks to sophisticated control rooms, all the patients' vital signs will be monitored from afar and direct communication with the patients is possible from a safe distance. The wards will be staffed by medical and nursing personnel who underwent special training and are prepared for all the challenges of this virus.

The first ward was set up in only a few days, thanks to full collaboration among the many external maintenance, logistics and contracting teams, alongside close supervision of the Unit for Preventing Infectious Diseases, which must approve all actions taken at the hospital.

As part of the preparations for accepting patients, a protected treatment tent was constructed at the entrance to the urgent care unit. Those who are suspected of having the coronavirus are directed to the tent. This enables preliminary isolation while they are questioned and examined, without endangering the other patients and medical staff who are in the urgent care unit for other reasons.

Galilee Medical Center has already treated coronavirus patients and is prepared to treat many more. The hospital is committed to providing the best possible medical treatment while ensuring that all staff members and patients remain safe.

This is a shared challenge, impacting us all – in Israel and in North America. Our priority is our personal safety, the health of our families and the strength of our communities.

We will continue to update you as time goes on. We hope that many lives will be saved and life will return to normal, here in Israel and throughout the world.

If you would like to help us during these challenging times, your generosity will be appreciated and we will put this towards the many needs that this emergency situation has brought upon our Medical Center.

Please feel free to contact us at Friends of Galilee Medical Center: [judy@friendswgh.org.il](mailto:judy@friendswgh.org.il) or Avrum Lapin at the American Friends of Galilee Medical Center: [alapin@thelapingroup.com](mailto:alapin@thelapingroup.com).

Praying for everyone's good health.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Masad Barhoum  
CEO  
Galilee Medical Center