



A missile from Lebanon caused extensive damage to the hospital



**Galilee  
Medical Center**

# Wartime Preparedness Project: Building A Fortified Subterranean ICU

## Frontline Medical Center

Located just six miles from the hostile Lebanese border, Galilee Medical Center has frequently found itself on the front lines of the regional conflict. The hospital is fully prepared for security emergencies, maintaining comprehensive emergency preparedness protocols as well as conducting regular mass-casualty drills for each department. The medical team is highly experienced in treating large numbers of war casualties – members of the Israel Defense Forces as well as civilians.

Over the years, the Western Galilee has experienced numerous missile attacks from Hezbollah and other terrorist groups based in neighboring Lebanon. Unfortunately, it is very likely that such attacks will continue to occur in the future – almost certainly at a much higher intensity and using more destructive weapons.

As a result of this frightening reality, GMC built Israel's first underground hospital facility, with 450 beds and eight modern operating rooms. These measures proved invaluable during the Second Lebanon War in 2006, when all the hospital's patients were evacuated to these





GMC suffered a direct hit from a missile in 2006

protected facilities. Although GMC was directly hit by a rocket during that war, casualties were prevented thanks to the underground facility that housed the patients and staff, and even provided safe shelter to hundreds of children of GMC employees.

## The Need for a Fortified ICU

**The hospital's underground level is not properly fortified and provides insufficient protection against sophisticated and lethal missiles that experts say will be used in the future. In particular, GMC lacks sufficient ICU beds that can keep patients safe during such attacks.**

In times of war, the hospital's ICU is busier than ever, and it is critically important to keep both the patients and medical staff safe so that they can continue saving the lives of as many people as possible. There is no question that, during periods of missile attacks, soldiers and civilians in critical care must be moved to properly fortified spaces. Today this is not possible.

The proposed renovation and fortification of GMC's underground level will enable the hospital to ensure that patients and staff will stay safe during times of emergency.

## The Planned Project

The subterranean level beneath the hospital's ICU will be renovated and adapted to comply with wartime requirements. The new underground ICU will be located below the Emergency Medicine Department, which will simplify the process of moving patients to safety.

The existing basement will be converted into two fortified areas that will be used during wartime and other emergencies:

1. A versatile treatment unit with 58 beds that will function as an ICU
2. A respiratory ICU containing 46 beds for intensive care and respirator patients





GMC is always prepared for mass casualty events



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Converting the basement level to a fortified ICU requires making fundamental changes to the existing infrastructure, including:

- **Construction** - Installing ceilings, closing off spaces, preparing new infrastructure systems, acquiring new furniture and medical equipment
- **Air-conditioning** - Changing the A/C system in order to comply with Ministry of Health guidelines
- **Electricity** - Substantially modifying the electric system to ensure compliance with the Electricity Law and with Ministry of Health guidelines
- **Medical gases** - Changes in the medical gas piping system must be carried out to comply with Ministry of Health guidelines, including replacing and adding outlet points and storage facilities
- **Plumbing** - Changes to the plumbing system must be made, especially in order to comply with requirements for an infectious disease department
- **Environment** - The décor will be pleasant and friendly in order to instill a sense of security and calm during difficult times

## Budget

The overall cost of the underground fortification project is estimated at \$6 million<sup>1</sup>. The Ministry of Health has committed to providing \$4 million.

**GMC is urgently seeking a donation of \$2 million to cover the balance and begin the construction process.**

<sup>1</sup>A detailed budget is available upon request.



American Friends of  
Galilee Medical Center

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