



Expanding and Modernizing the Operating Room Facilities

Untenable conditions

Today, GMC is one of the Israeli hospitals whose operating rooms have the highest occupancy rates – averaging more than 90% throughout the year. There are currently only 12 operating rooms: 8 general operating rooms and 4 reserved for OB-GYN procedures. Two of the general operating rooms are too small to accommodate imaging equipment and are only used as a last resort. An additional small operating room is used solely for IVF procedures.

Altogether, over 18,000 operations were performed in 2021 at the hospital. Today, patients typically wait around six months for elective surgery – a much longer wait time than in other parts of the country. Since the population is expected to continue growing, the demand for surgery will undoubtedly increase significantly over the next decade.

The existing operating rooms are small and cramped, and, as a result, the type of medical equipment and technology that can be used during surgery is limited – thereby preventing multidisciplinary teams from being present during complex procedures. There is also no space for students and interns, making it difficult for GMC to fulfill its essential role as a teaching hospital. Moreover, in the OB-GYN operating rooms, it's impossible to fit an X-ray machine; in others, there is no space for surgical instrument trays and other basic equipment.

Equally disturbing is the fact that much of the existing OR equipment is outdated and not suitable for current requirements. GMC will not be able to meet the goal of closing the healthcare gap vis-à-vis the





The operating rooms are small and poorly equipped



Surgeons work under suboptimal conditions

rest of the country without larger, state-of-the-art operating rooms that can accommodate multidisciplinary teams and cutting-edge medical technology. In the near future, complex hybrid operations will use advanced imaging systems and require collaborating teams of surgeons – so that GMC will fall further behind if it does not upgrade its ORs very soon.

The medical personnel are not the only ones to complain; the patients also feel neglected. As the wait time for operations keeps getting longer, patients are subjected to unnecessary suffering as the dates of their long-awaited surgery are often delayed time after time to accommodate more urgent cases. Clearly, the current situation is untenable.

Preparedness: The Need for Fortified ORs

Since the Galilee Medical Center is the closest hospital to the Lebanese border, there have been all-too-frequent occasions when it has been under direct rocket fire. During such times, GMC must treat wounded soldiers and civilians while trying to ensure the safety of the hospital's patients and staff. The only solution is to move everybody to parts of the hospital that are fortified against missiles. In 2006, GMC suffered a direct hit from a missile and numerous lives were saved thanks to the fact that the hospital had transferred its activities to its fortified underground facilities, the first and only one of its kind in Israel at that time.

The hospital's eight general operating rooms are fortified and connected to the underground hospital through a fortified elevator, enabling surgery to take place under fire. However, the **operating rooms are not all located in the same part of the hospital, which makes it difficult for the anesthesiologists and other critical surgical staff, who have to rush from one room to the next.**

Furthermore, GMC does not have a designated operating room for emergencies – a fact that is unacceptable, especially given the hospital's critical role in times of war.

The Planned Project

For the reasons described above, upgrading the hospital's surgical facilities is at the top of the list of urgent projects. **In order to make a**



significant difference in the scope and quality of surgical procedures at GMC, the operating room facilities require a complete overhaul.

Currently, the operating rooms are spread out in different parts of the hospital complex. The planned renovation calls for **increasing the total number of operating rooms to 19, including five large, state-of-the-art fortified operating rooms, one of which will be designated for pediatric surgery.** Most importantly, all the general operating rooms will be located in the same building, thereby preventing the constant need to scurry from one building to another.

The new operating rooms will be built according to the latest and most stringent standards. They will be big enough to accommodate large medical teams, including students and interns, as well as state-of-the-art equipment. In addition, space will be allotted for the sterile storage of medical supplies. The plan also features administrative and logistical areas, staff rooms, and pleasant waiting areas for patients' families.

The new operating rooms will relieve the current insufferable scheduling bottleneck, enable surgeons and their staff to perform operations in first-rate facilities using modern equipment, and will ensure that GMC will be able to provide the best possible care even during wartime.

Budget and Timeline

- The cost of the operating room overhaul is US \$27 million. A detailed budget is available upon request. Donors will receive prominent recognition.
- The Ministry of Health recognizes the importance of this project and has committed matching funds.
- Once sufficient funding is obtained, the estimated time for completing the project is 4-5 years.



For more information about Galilee Medical Center and to donate, please contact: Avrum Lapin, Director, **American Friends of Galilee Medical Center**. Tel: (215) 885-1550, POB 789856, Philadelphia PA 19178-9856, Email: alapin@thelapingroup.com, www.afgmc.org

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