

## A word from the chairman

Dear Friends,

I am happy to introduce to you another issue of IMA Around the Globe.

We have been very busy here at the Israeli Medical Association and we hope that you enjoy reading about our latest activities at home and abroad.

The IMA Scientific Council conference on Education in Medical Residency was a great success and we were honoured to welcome Dr. Richard Reznick, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Queens University and Chief Executive Officer, Southeastern Ontario Academic Medical Association in Canada as our keynote speaker. We also welcomed a VIP group from South America including: Thays Noriega, Attorney, Director of International Affairs at the Panamanian Ministry of Health, Dr. Carolina Jurado, Director of Medical Education at the Panamanian Ministry of Health, Dr. Luz I. Romero, Director of Health Projects at the Senacyt, Her Excellency Ambassador of

Panama Adis Ureita Vega and Dr. Anibal Cruz, Past President of CONFEMEL and his wife Dr. Maria Ruth Rocha Cruz.

In this newsletter you will also read about how our medical residents from Panama are acclimatizing to life in Israel and of the experience of a British medical resident who completed an elective at the Nazareth EMMS Hospital here in Israel. We look forward to welcoming more exchange program and medical residents to Israel and will continue to update you on the progress of the doctors from Panama throughout their residencies.

As always, you will hear about the work of our chapters abroad who continue to work tirelessly in their respective communities. There have also been many updates in our chapters, Dr. Maria Silvera from our Italian Chapter has retired and made Aliyah in Israel and Dr. Miriam Kuttner has completed 6 years as President of the Australasian Jewish Medical Federation (Victoria). We wish



both Maria and Miriam every success in the future and hope to hear about their new ventures.

As we reach a new calendar year, I wish you and your loved ones a Happy New Year, may 2020 be healthy and safe for all.

> **Professor Arnon Afek**

Chairman, IMA World Fellowship

Associate Director General, Sheba Medical Center

Former Director General, Israeli Ministry of Health

**The Israeli Medical Association  
World Fellowship**

wishes you and your family  
a prosperous, healthy and  
successful year ahead.

# 2020

# IMA Domestic News and Activities

## The Launch of the Israeli National Academy of Science in Medicine by the Israeli Medical Association

» On October 31, 2019, the Israeli Medical Association (IMA) celebrated the official launch of the Israeli National Academy of Science in Medicine, at the Hilton Hotel in Tel Aviv.

Although Israel boasts a National Academy of Science, established by law in 1961, it does not sufficiently address clinical and bio-medical research, and there is no national policy, nor sufficient resources, in place to encourage such research.

Consequently, the Israeli Medical Association took upon itself to facilitate the founding of the Israeli National Academy of Science in Medicine, a non-profit, non-governmental association

dedicated to the promotion of medical research in Israel and serving as an impetus for economic investment and growth in this area. The Academy, founded by Prof. Rivka Carmi with the support of the IMA, will contain some of the leading physician researchers in the country, all of whom have an international reputation. The Academy will work to advance bio-medical research in Israel, and give evidence-based information and advice to policy makers. The goal of the Academy is to be recognized by law, allowing it to receive designated budgets for medical research.

At the launching event, the Academy

welcomed its 31 founding members, along with notables such as Professor Sir Robert Lechler, president of the British Academy of Medical Sciences, noted Israeli scientist, Professor Howard Cedar, Ministry of Science and Technology Director General, Hagay Bar and Member of Parliament Uri Maklev, Chairman of the Science Committee in the Knesset. These individuals, along with IMA president Prof. Zion Hagay, Chair of the Medical School Deans' Forum Prof. Ehud Grossman and, of course, Academy President Rivka Carmi, addressed the participants and expressed their support for the launching of the Academy.



■ Professor Sir Robert Lechler, President of the British Academy of Medical Sciences

## Medical Education in Residency Conference

» On November 11th, the Israeli Medical Association Scientific Council, held a conference on 'Medical Education in Residency', at the Dan Acadia Hotel in Herzliya.

The conference aimed to highlight the need to implement changes in medical education. The Scientific Council of the Israeli Medical Association is responsible, under the Physicians' Ordinance, for the planning and supervision of medical specialization in

Israel. The conference brought together key speakers who addressed to the creation of new specialties, specialization programs, changes to board certification, examinations and accreditation and overseeing professional training.

Central to all discussions was the need to implement Competency Based Medical Education (CBME). This new model of outcome/competency based medical education (CBME/OBME) using

examples from the UK, Scotland, US and Canada, is gradually replacing the existing model in which the duration/rotation of a course, studied material content and an examination has been the standard for decades.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Reznick, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Queens University and Chief Executive Officer, Southeastern Ontario Academic Medical Association in Canada gave an enthusiastic talk entitled 'Make no Little Plans, They Do Little to Stir Men's and Women's Blood'. Professor Gidi Paret, Chairman of the Scientific Council then talked about 'CBME – The Good, The Bad and The Ugly'.

Professor Yoram Kluger, Dr. Shmuel Zangen, Dr. Gadi Segal and Dr. Debra West all shared their thoughts on 'CBME Implementation – Speaking from the field', followed by Advocate Leah Wapner, Secretary General of the Israeli Medical Association, who shared her thoughts on 'Medical Education in Residency Training – Who is Responsible?'.

This extremely successful conference concluded with several interactive 'head-to-head' workshops.



■ Dr. Richard Reznick, Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Queens University, Chief Executive Officer, Southeastern Ontario Academic Medical Association

## CESMA Meeting Israel

» On December 6th and 7th, CESMA (The Council for European Specialists Medical Assessment) meeting was held in Israel. This is a special, advisory body of the UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists), that deals with tests and evaluation for doctors in Europe. This event was supported by the Israeli Medical Association and MSR Simulation Center at Sheba Hospital.

In 1984, the first European medical exam was established in the field of anesthesia. Its aim was to harmonize the level of physicians, from Eastern and Western Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Following the successful anesthesia model, close to 40 additional subjects in medicine have also created a European exam in their field. Some European countries have officially recognized the European test, and some

have even canceled their national test and adopted the European one.

The group that attended were invited by Dr. Zeev Goldik, who served as president of the organization for 8 years. The delegation included senior doctors, and professors from some of the best universities in Europe.

Prof. Haim Birkenstadt, Director of the Anesthesiology Division at Tel Hashomer presented the Simulation Center's activities as well as those of Sheba Hospital and the participants were extremely impressed by the tour of the Simulation Center.

A workshop was held on the first day of the conference, focusing on the role of CESMA as a body that monitors European exams in medicine and, on the second day, the conference addressed other current issues. On their final day in Israel, the participants took the



■ CESMA Workshop

opportunity to visit Jerusalem with a guided tour organized by the Israeli Medical Association. The participants enthusiastic feedback both from the meeting and the visit to Israel marked this event as an enormous success.



■ MSR Simulation Center, Sheba Hospital



■ Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem

## Code of Ethics

» We are pleased to announce that the Israeli Medical Association's Code of Ethics has now been translated into English and is available online: [www.ima.org.il/userfiles/image/EthicalCode2018.pdf](http://www.ima.org.il/userfiles/image/EthicalCode2018.pdf).

The Code of Ethics is set by doctors on behalf of doctors, to ensure that every member of the medical community acts on their behalf, for the benefit of patients and for maintaining the public's trust in doctors. The legal framework sets a legal threshold of conduct, while the rules of medical ethics set a proper behavioral

threshold that is sometimes even greater. Thus, the rules of ethics, which derive their power from the entire community of physicians, that have set and agreed to them, allow for the disqualification of a particular physician's conduct, even if the law does not prohibit it.

Medical ethics, in keeping with the medical world, are dynamic and constantly evolving. The Ethics Board will continue to discuss new issues that arise and update the Code of Ethics from time to time.

The Israeli Medical Association

has always been an active part of the international medical community, and in this context was also involved in the revisions and updates of the Declaration of Geneva of Medical Ethics the World Medical Association. Accordingly, we place great importance in making Israeli ethics accessible to anyone interested throughout the international community, and we are proud that the Israeli Medical Association and the State of Israel now conform with other leading countries whose rules are accessible to all.

## Thyroid Cancer Breakthrough

» In a study led by Dr. Haggi Mazeh, the Department Head of General Surgery at Hadassah University Medical Center and Dr. Iddo Ben-Dov, a senior physician in the Nephrology Department, the two physicians have developed what they are describing as a 'breakthrough' method of identifying thyroid cancer, with a 94% accuracy. The results have been published in the Cancer Journal, Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention.

As the thyroid can develop solid or fluid filled lumps or small nodules, there is the potential for some of these to become cancerous and a biopsy should be performed to determine whether a lump is benign or malignant using fine needle aspiration. However, this procedure is flawed as the thin needle

produces a very small specimen and in as many of 30% of the cases, the test results can prove inconclusive and may result in a repeat biopsy. If again the results of that test are inconclusive, the patients are left with two options; to undergo a more expensive molecular examination or to undertake a partial or complete gland removal.

As part of the first phase of this study, 274 thyroid specimens were taken, some of which were benign and some of which were malignant. The researchers then identified the different expressions of microRNA in both the benign and malignant thyroid nodules and then created a microRNA panel against which they could make comparisons.

By differentiating between the malignant and benign relationships,



further samples were taken from another group of 35 associations with an ambiguous result and in the expression of the microRNAs, the researchers were able to correctly identify the nature of the relationship, i.e., benign or malignant, within an accuracy range of 94%.

# Medical Achievements

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## The Engineered Micro Pancreas from Betalin Therapeutics is heading closer to clinical trials in humans.

» Israeli startup Betalin Therapeutics announced that it is beginning the application process for clinical trials of its revolutionary artificial pancreas.

Betalin's Engineered Micro Pancreas (EMP) aims to free patients suffering from the most severe types of diabetes from constantly monitoring blood-sugar levels and injecting insulin. About 160 million people are insulin dependent. The road to an Israeli-made artificial pancreas has been a decade in the making.

To read the full story, [click here](#).



## An Israeli study in mice showed that reducing a particular hormone signal keeps Ewing sarcoma tumors from growing and spreading.

» Ewing sarcoma is a bone cancer that mainly affects teenagers. Once it spreads to distant organs, it is hard to treat.

Researchers at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel have

discovered molecular interactions underlying Ewing sarcomas and proposed a potential treatment, which showed promise in a study in mice published recently in Cell Reports.

The study focused on glucocorticoids, receptors for steroid hormones. These receptors convey hormonal messages related to stress, wakefulness and other important functions in virtually all human cells.

To read the full story, [click here](#).



## Technion's computerized pathologist decodes cancer signatures to improve personalized medicine.

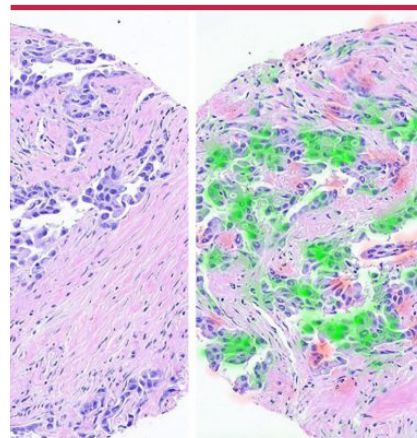
Just as every handwritten signature is unique, so is every cancerous tumor. Researchers at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology have now used artificial intelligence and big data to decode the unique signatures of certain cancer

cells.

The resulting technology – dubbed a “computerized pathologist” – could significantly boost development of personalized cancer treatments.

The researchers worked with digital images from breast-cancer biopsy samples. The new technology, described earlier this summer in the medical journal JAMA, extracts molecular information from the cell shape (morphology) and its environment.

To read the full story, [click here](#).



# International Activities

## Physicians' Exchange Program - Bolivia

» We are proud to announce that the University Mayor of San Simón in Bolivia (Universidad Mayor de San Simón) and the Israeli Medical Association have signed a Letter of Understanding creating a Physicians' Exchange Program convened by representatives of the Faculty of Medicine of the Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS) and the Israeli Medical Association (IMA) with their Scientific Council. The creation of this

agreement will benefit both parties and will contribute to improving the health systems and practice of doctors.

Dr. Shimshon Erdman, Director of Relations with Latin America, on behalf of the Israeli Medical Association, joined Lic. Mgr. Juan Rios del Prado, President of the University Mayor of San Simón, and Dr. José Edmundo Sánchez López, Dean Faculty of Medicine, in an historic meeting in Bolivia, to sign the agreement.

Our thanks go also to Dr. Anibal Cruz, former President of CONFEMEL and the Bolivian Medical Association, and now newly appointed Minister of Health for Bolivia, who assisted the IMA throughout the entire process.

Doctors who have graduated from the UMSS School of Medicine or other institutions in Bolivia can now apply to participate in the IMA Physicians' Exchange Program.



## CONFEMEL General Assembly, Salta - Argentina

» The General Assembly for CONFEMEL (Medical Confederation of Latin America and the Caribbean - Confederación Médica Latino-Iberoamericana y del Caribe), was held in Salta, Argentina, on November 20th-23rd. Dr. Elhanan Greenberg attended on behalf of the Israeli Medical Association.

Former President of CONFEMEL and former president of the Bolivian Medical Association, Dr Anibal Cruz, announced his appointment as Minister of Health for Bolivia following a coup d'état, and it was confirmed that the Vice-President of CONFEMEL and President of the Brazilian Medical Association, Lincoln Ferreira would hold office until the next conference in November.

CONFEMEL is an organization

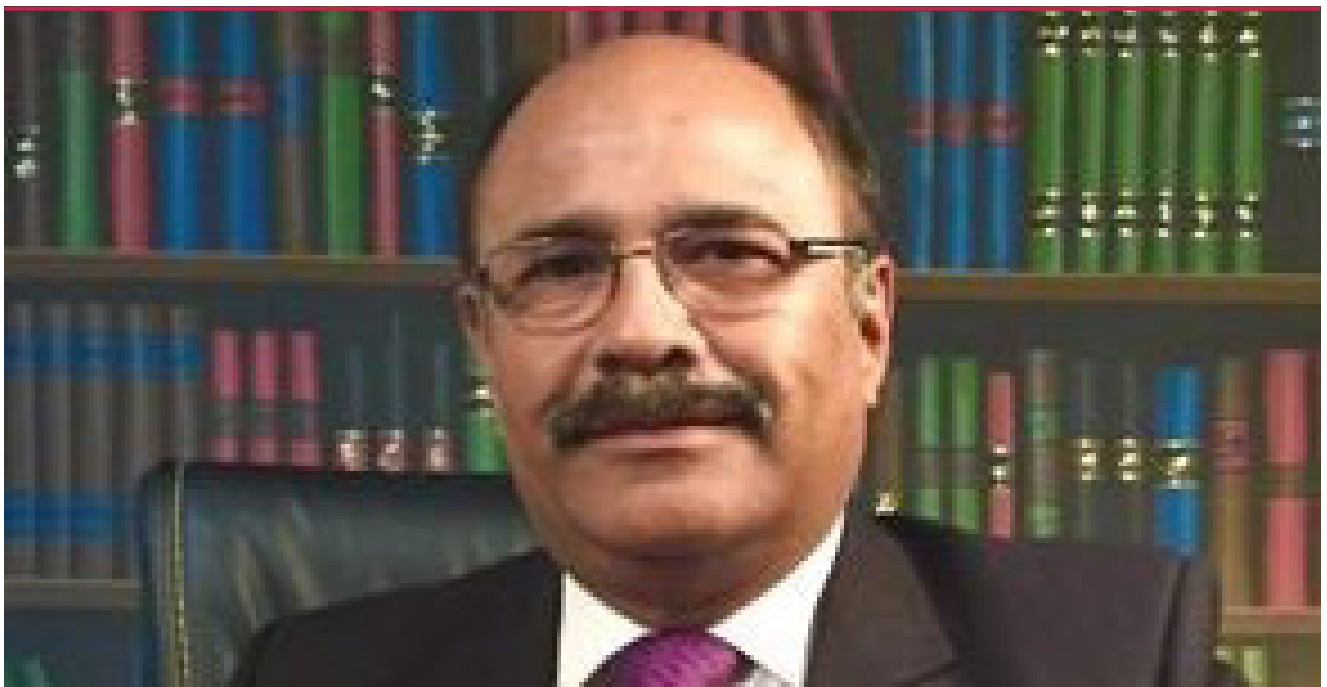
that includes all central and South American countries as well as Spain and Portugal. Israel and other countries such as Italy and France are observers and participants in the discussions, but without voting rights.

The presence of an Israeli representative was emphasized, and the opportunity was given to participate in the discussions, both because of the participant's activities within the Israeli Medical Association and within the Scientific Council. Israel's position at the conference took place thanks to the effort of Dr. Shimshon Erdman, who has submitted a practical proposal for the establishment of a Scientific Council within the organization, and discussions are being held for its implementation.

The importance of the organization



was expressed by the generous support of Professor Leonid Eidelman, in his role as President of the World Medical Association.



■ Dr. Anibal Cruz, Minister of Health, Bolivia

## World Medical Association General Assembly, Tbilisi

» Prof. Zion Hagay, President and Adv. Leah Wapner, Secretary General, represented the Israeli Medical Association at the World Medical Association General Assembly, held in Tbilisi, Georgia last October. Israeli Medical Association past president, Prof. Leonid Eidelman was also in attendance in his position as President/Past President of the World Medical Association. Prof. Eidelman gave his Valedictory speech at the General Assembly, where he highlighted the work he has completed over his presidential year and his hopes for the future of the organisation. Following Prof. Eidelman's address, Prof. Montgomery, WMA Chair

of Council presented Prof. Eidelman with the Past President's medal, which entitles him to lifetime membership in the WMA with all of the rights and privileges afforded by the WMA Bylaws. Prof. Eidelman wished success to incoming president Dr. Miguel Jorge from Brazil who was then installed as 70th President of the WMA. Dr. David Barbe from the American Medical Association was elected by acclamation as President elect and will take position as president of the organisation in October 2020.

During the two-day meeting participants discussed topics such as euthanasia, task-shifting and genetics

in medicine were discussed. The Israeli Medical Association led the revision of the statement on Access of Women and Children to Health, which was adopted by the General Assembly.

Participants enjoyed a welcome reception at Tbilisi City Hall where they listened to classical music from a student choir group. The Georgian Medical Association also organised a Tour of Mtskheta, one of the oldest cities in Georgia, which is located 20 km north of Tbilisi. Following the tour, the participants were treated to a dinner in Mtskheta, where they were able to taste traditional Georgian cuisine and enjoyed traditional music and dancing.



left to right: Prof. Leonid Eidelman, Adv Leah Wapner, Prof. Zion Hagay

## Panama-Israel Physicians Exchange Program, Signing Ceremony

» November 5<sup>th</sup> 2019, marked an important milestone in the cooperation between the State of Israel and the Republic of Panama, when representatives from both countries signed an historic agreement that will enable Panamanian students to perform rotations and residencies in Israel.

The Israeli Medical Association welcomed Thays Noriega, Attorney, Director of International Affairs at the Panamanian Ministry of Health, Dr. Carolina Jurado, Director of Medical Education at the Panamanian Ministry of Health and Dr. Luz I. Romero, Director of Health Projects at the Senacyt to their offices for the Signing Ceremony where they were joined by Her Excellency, Adis Urieta Vega, the Ambassador of Panama to Israel.

Other honored guests included Dr. Anibal Cruz, former President of CONFEMEL and the Bolivian Medical Association, and now newly appointed Minister of Health for Bolivia and his wife, Dr. Maria Ruth Rocha Cruz.

Present at the Signing Ceremony, were the five Panamanian residents who arrived in Israel at the end of October and who are currently attending an Ulpan at the IMA offices. Professor Zion Hagay, of the Israeli Medical Association, acknowledged these pioneering doctors in his opening speech and stressed that language is the key to effective communication with colleagues and patients and that the Israeli Medical Association is making every effort to ensure that these physicians succeed, as their success will be the success of

both countries.

Dr. Shimshon Erdman, Director of Relations with Latin America & the Physicians Exchange Program and the driving force behind this project, saw the agreement signed in Panama by Dr. Rosario Turner, Health Minister for Panama, formally accepted and signed by Professor Zion Hagay, President of the Israeli Medical Association and Professor Gidi Paret, Chairman of the IMA Scientific Council.

The Israeli Medical Association is sure that this important collaboration will lead to many other projects of scientific and medical importance, and to a deepening connection between the two countries.



(left to right) Dr. Luz I. Romero, Dr. Isaac Sitton, Dr. Gidi Paret, Dr. Carolina Jurado, Oren Bar-El, Dr. Shimshon Erdman, Dr. Yossi Noga, Lic. Thays Noriega, Adam Levene, Adv. Leah Wapner, Dr. Anibal Cruz, Dr. Maria Ruth Rocha Cruz, Dr. Mia Levy, Dr. Sergio Silva, Dr. Diana Bolivar.

## INTERVIEW with Hilton Kuperman

**Full Name:** Hilton Kuperman  
**Occupation:** Not yet  
**Date of Aliyah:** 2018

**Originally from:** Brazil  
**Made aliyah with:** My wife Clara

### Personal/Professional Background

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

I graduated São Paulo University Faculty of Medicine, in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1982.

I was a Resident in Pediatrics at the Childrens Institute of the Hospital das Clínicas da Universidade de São Paulo (University School of Medicine) for two years and a Fellow in Pediatric Endocrinology (PE) in the same Institute. I joined the PE team as a Staff Team Member for around 30 years, taking care of patients, supervising Residents and Fellows, authoring and editing articles and book chapters. I did my Master's and Doctor's Degree, as well. It was a fulfilling experience.

In addition, I worked in a private clinic as a Pediatrician and recently as a Pediatric Endocrinologist.

#### How did you decide to make Aliyah? What were your reasons for making Aliyah?

The main reason for making Aliyah is that our two sons made Aliyah sixteen and ten years ago, respectively. They raised their families here, giving my wife and me six lovely grandchildren.

So, it was time for us all to be together.

### The Aliyah Process

#### Could you briefly describe the process of making Aliyah?

The decision of making Aliyah takes time and must be considered carefully, because you are leaving your native country, where you know the language, the customs, the culture and so on.

And you must be prepared for any challenges you may face.

After making the decision, we went to the Jewish Agency (Sochnut). It took around six months to fulfill the required documents and organize what was necessary. But I am grateful to Sochnut for their helping hands.

### Life in Israel

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

Israel is a fascinating country. It is so diverse, as people from around the world come to live here.

It is very dynamic, multicultural, and you feel very comfortable here.

The main difficulty besides living in a country that has different customs than you are used to, is the language. Hebrew is a challenging language.

So, my suggestion would be to start learning Hebrew as much and as early as you can before coming to Israel.



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# Medical Residencies

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## Israeli Medical Association Residency Program for Panama - Update



We arrived in Israel on the 28th of October, after months of expectation. Our team comprises five Panamanian doctors who will train in different medical specialties.

Dr. Isaac Sitton, will become a General Surgeon in HaCarmel Hospital in Haifa, Dr. Diana Bolivar will undertake her Neurosurgery training in Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer and Dr. Katherine Matos will become an Ophthalmologist at Haddasah, Ein Kerem. Dr. Sergio Silva will further his education with a Fellowship in Cardiothoracic Anesthesia at Beilison Hospital, in Petah Tikvah. Last but not least, I will train to become a Neurologist at Soroka Medical Center in Beer Sheva.

This project came as a fruitful result of years of negotiation and planning, culminating in a Letter of Understanding in the medical field between Panama and Israel. The day we arrived, Dr. Shimshon Erdman, the current IMA-Director of Relations with Latin America & Physicians Exchange Program, personally greeted us alongside the Panamanian Ambassador for Israel, Her Excellency Adis Urieta Vega, ensuring we would receive a warm welcome.

A month and a half have passed since we formally began studying Hebrew. Most of the lessons take place at the Israeli Medical Association's offices in Ramat Gan, under the

supervision of Gil Pentzak from Ulpan Aviv, a wonderful and passionate teacher who diligently shares his love for his native language. Our housing, for the duration of the Ulpan, was pre-arranged prior to our arrival and we are staying opposite Park Hayarkon, which reminds us of Central Park in New York.

Currently facing different challenges, ranging from being far away from our families, learning a new language, to the undertaking of a medical residency, I've felt not only welcomed, but very much at ease with the IMA personnel, which are equal parts of capable, diligent and kind. The process of easing into a different, yet incredibly rich culture gets intertwined with Hebrew in our everyday life. I think I speak for everybody on my team, that it is very difficult not to be appreciative of this opportunity. Before this enterprise started, it was self-evident that Israel, was a worldwide beacon for innovation, renowned from its numerous contributions, in many different fields, including medicine. Famous for their state-of-the-art facilities, the high academic teaching standards, research-oriented characteristics, medical training in the promised land, here, was a unique, and 'one of a kind' scenario.

Furthermore, the experience came alongside unmatched cultural exposure which unquestionably comes when moving to a different country; even more so considering Israel was built by a polychromatic mixture of people from all corners of



■ Dr. Katherine Matos, Dr. Diana Bolivar, Dr. Shimshon Erdman, Dr. Isaac Sitton, Her Excellency Adis Urieta Vega, Panamanian Ambassador to Israel, Dr. Mia Levy, Dr. Sergio Silva (left to right).

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the world. In a very Oslerian fashion, we are devoted to the trait, or should I say devoted to the people, and in those lines, this is the place to be. Thinking of myself as a “Panameña Vida Mía”, and as proud as I am of where I come from, it is my firm conviction that we will become a sort of “doctor without borders” and ultimately, citizens of the world.

We are all very happy and thankful to be here, hopeful for what the future brings, and ready to show what Panama has to offer, and give back. Wish us luck.

Dr. Mia Levy.



■ Dr. Isaac Sitton, Dr. Mia Levy, Dr. Sergio Silva, Dr. Katherine Matos, Dr. Diana Bolivar (left to right).

## Jewish Medical Association (UK), Medical Elective Update



During the Spring of 2019, I was privileged to complete my medical elective at Nazareth EMMS Hospital with support from the Jewish Medical Association.

I was mainly based in the Pediatric Department there which consisted chiefly of Neonatology and the Pediatric Emergency Bay. Any pediatric admissions were transferred elsewhere. The placement provided me with the opportunity to become very familiar with the main neonatal presentations whilst also feeling part of a very vibrant and welcoming team of clinicians and nurses.

The EMMS hospital at Nazareth was smaller than I had expected. Several times, I witnessed consultant neonatologists calling up colleagues at other hospitals who were further subspecialized as Pediatric Nephrologists or Cardiologists for example.

In the time I spent with the Israeli medical students on the wards, I was surprised to find that the renal team might be caring for just a couple of patients; the Neurological Department was similarly small. On the one hand this meant that the students and medical trainees were perhaps not being exposed to a very wide range of pathology within the hospital. On the other, I was able to appreciate how being in such a small hospital resulted in the students and trainees knowing absolutely everything about their patients, being very well looked after within their teams and also knowing in advance about every possible learning opportunity and taking advantage of them. For example, I went with a few medical students to watch the insertion of a PEG tube and found on arrival that the rest of the medical students were already in the room! Not only this but they had researched the procedure before and knew all the details of this patient's medical history. I have not often seen this level of educational engagement in the UK. Despite being small, the hospital seemed to have all the facilities



it needed. On occasion I witnessed patients who were critically ill in the resuscitation area being prepared for transfer to Haifa, where I was told, there were more facilities. On the whole though, the hospital at Nazareth had all it needed in terms of physical and human resources. The staff were incredibly kind and

welcoming to me. I was allocated to a lovely pediatric junior trainee who took me under her wing and, with her flawless English, explained to me everything that was going on. The consultants took the time to quiz me on all sorts of neonatal conditions during and after the ward round of the neonatal intensive care unit each morning. The standard of their questions was extremely high, but this ensured that I was intellectually stimulated each day and was accumulating new knowledge all the time. Not only did they make the work interesting, but they made me feel like I was a real member of the team, inviting me to staff birthday celebrations and to spend time socially with the team.

I would undoubtedly recommend this placement to other students seeking a highly individualized elective. One might not see as wide a range of pathology as elsewhere, but it is an excellent place to both consolidate the basics and learn new material in a very thorough manner with an excellent team around for support.

I had a wonderful stay in Nazareth. I was very sad to leave the neonatal team and not to have more time with the Israeli medical students.

My sincerest thanks to the Jewish Medical Association for their financial support of this elective. I know I have gained so much from it, both in terms of medical knowledge and, perhaps as importantly, in terms of cultural enrichment.

Bethan Cleary  
Warwick

Jewish Medical Association UK, Newsletter, October 2019

## Chapter Tidbits



### AUSTRALIA

#### » Australasian Jewish Medical Federation (Victoria)

All good things must come to an end, so this is my final president's report. I have enjoyed being president over the past 6 years. There have been a lot of events that have occurred personally, professionally and within the AJMF during this time. For me as I reflect back probably the highlights have been the 3 weekend conferences we have organised. All the conferences provided an opportunity for AJMF members to spend a relaxing Shabbat together and to hear from interesting speakers as well as to present their own clinical or research work. I really enjoy hearing about medical work outside my own specialty field and I think that the AJMF provides regular opportunities for updates on interesting medical developments.

The other areas that I am proud to reflect on include our advocacy as an organization against the Lancet publishing a virulent attack on Israeli doctors and academics. This unprofessional behaviour by the Lancet was subsequently addressed,

but I consider it part of the broader issue of demonizing Israel. This year my letter to the Israeli Medical Association in reference to the Malka Leifer case was published in Haaretz and in the Australian Jewish News. Unfortunately, to date, we do not have any resolution as the extradition to Australia has not occurred despite over 50 court cases involved in hearing this matter.

The other areas I am pleased about are our joint functions with other community groups. As anyone active in the Jewish community will realise there are multiple events scheduled every week and I really believe that cooperation between different groups is the way of the future. We have held joint meetings with Australian Jewish Psychologists, Friends of Shaare Zedek, MDA, Australian friends of Hebrew University, Hadassah Australia



and others. I hope this collaborative approach will continue in to the future.

One of our main areas is supporting Israeli doctors who pursue further clinical and research experience in Australia. We have been able to give scholarships to many Israeli doctors and I consider this assistance helps them to broaden their knowledge and skills, which they then take back to Israel. We have also provided scholarships to many medical students undertaking their electives in Israel. This gives the students an opportunity to witness Israeli medicine and society through a different lens, which I feel is invaluable.

At our recent talk we heard Dr Michelle Gold speak about the new voluntary assisted dying act which has been legislated in Victoria. We also heard from Professor Rabbi Steinberg speak about euthanasia and halacha. Both gave interesting perspectives on the complexities of these end of life decisions.

So, as I reach the end of my presidential term and the end of this report, I want to wish the incoming President, all the best in his new role. All organisations undergo change and evolve with time. I am sure the new President will bring to the AJMF his enthusiasm and his good humour to chart the future direction of the AJMF.

Dr Miriam Kuttner



## UNITED STATES

### » American Israeli Medical Association

At UCLA's iconic Royce Hall on October 29th, technologists, engineers, executives, business leaders, activists and celebrities gathered for Internet 50: From Founders to Futurists, an event celebrating the internet's 50th birthday. Ben Drillings, Director of the American Israeli Medical Association, was proud to attend the day-long event celebrating how the internet has evolved throughout the years to become what it is today.



## ITALY

» Following an illustrious career as a Clinical Psychologist and individual & group Psychotherapist, trainer and teacher in Milano Italy, we are happy to announce that Dr. Silvera, a former member of the AME (Association Medical Jewish), has now made Aliyah to Israel and is now enjoying her retirement in sunny Tel Aviv. Dr. Silvera has shared that she has found Hebrew a little hard



to master, but that she now enjoys the freedom of doing what she wants without concerns regarding her Jewish

identity. We wish her a long, happy and fulfilling retirement.



## ITALY

### » Association Medical Jewish (AME)

The Association Medical Jewish (AME), held a study day on 'Circumcision, Religious, Cultural, Sociological and Health Aspects' at Ferrara Jewish Community on Sunday, September 22, 2019.

In attendance was Germano Salvatorelli (AME Advisor), Rosanna Supino (President of the AME), along with Rav. Caro, Chief Rabbi and key members of the Jewish, Muslim and African religious communities.

In his speech on "Circumcision in the Jewish Tradition" Rav. Caro points out that it is the father of the newborn who must carry out the circumcision himself or have it implemented by a competent person so that the child can participate in community celebrations as an adult and see it as obedience to a divine precept, a factor of cleanliness and health of the body and a sacralization of the sex life.

Hassan Samid, President of Young Muslims, states that Islam, almost entirely agrees with the Jewish conception of circumcision and underlines how the Jewish presence in Italy helps the implementation of this practice also for Muslims. Circumcision is not an absolute obligation in Islam,

however as a hygienic-sanitary norm it is practiced in all Muslim countries at the birth or before puberty by a doctor (even non-Muslim). Currently the problem in Italy consists in the high cost of the operation in Italian hospitals, so that many immigrants return to their country of origin to carry it out.

The Jewish circumcisors (Mohalim) with specific certification can practice circumcision according to Jewish law. The ruling opens a series of questions on equality of citizens' rights because it does not speak of other religions and this difference in treatment was also underlined by the intervention of Dr. Enrica Martinelli, professor of Canon Law, who recalls the fact that not all religions have signed agreements with the Italian state which, being a secular state, should not deal with religion!

Aspects such as the right to self-determination of minors, the right

to bodily integrity, the right not to suffer unnecessary medical-surgical interventions, to perform interventions without causing pain are great issues addressed in various international treaties. The practice of circumcision somewhat questions some of these rights. However, bioethics must be able to create distinctions, recognize the ethical values underlying this practice and try to guarantee good practices.

Dr. Giorgia Mortara, a surgeon and circumcisions doctor, spoke of the "Problems and perspectives between bioethics and religious duty". Dr. Mortara stated that circumcision is a religious act that prevails over medical action while having to follow precise and scrupulous sanitary rules; moreover, according to Jewish tradition, an uncircumcised child will find difficulties in the development of his personality and in his religious freedom. Even if the Convention on



■ Brit Milah is a sacred connection to past, present, future

the Rights of the Child establishes that States must prevent acts prejudicial to the health of the child, many doctors believe that circumcision is useful for health. According to some principles of bioethics, the consent of the patient is required for every medical act, the right to physical integrity and the non-necessity medical acts are prohibited.

The relationship between the right of the child and the decision of

parents who are free to educate their children according to their ethical and religious principles is also very delicate. Religious circumcision is a surgical act without therapeutic motivation, it is irreversible and involves a permanent body alteration.

Dr. Mortara continued his speech by recalling that in 2015 the Council of Europe limits the possibility of conducting circumcisions to people with

specific skills in line with the regulations for sepsis and the practice is included in the chapter on religious freedoms. Different laws exist in the various European countries; in Italy there are no specific rules and it is considered sufficient, to admit circumcision, to Article 19 of the Constitution. But in practice things are not simple because since circumcision is not a medical necessity, it is not free; moreover, the various regions have different health rules and only a few health facilities operate circumcisions at controlled prices.

Since Jews can perform non-therapeutic circumcision, the Union of Communities has created a register of circumcisionists who must follow precise medical practices before, during and after the operation until complete healing. Dr. Mortara concluded with the hope that specific courses will be implemented within healthcare facilities to manage diversity.

With this hope of a “freedom in diversity” the Conference ended.



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## UNESCO Chair in Bioethics 14th World Conference on

## Bioethics, Medical Ethics & Health Law

May 11-14, 2020  
Porto Palacio Hotel  
Porto, Portugal

[www.bioethics-porto2020.com](http://www.bioethics-porto2020.com)

### Schedule\*

	Monday, May 11	Tuesday, May 12	Wednesday, May 13	Thursday, May 14
08:00-08:30	Registration	Registration	Registration	Registration
08:30-10:30	Opening Session	Plenary Session	Plenary Session	Plenary Session
10:30-10:45	Light Refreshments	Light Refreshments	Light Refreshments	Light Refreshments
10:45-12:15	Sessions	Sessions	Sessions	Sessions
12:15-13:45	Sessions	Sessions	Sessions	Sessions
13:45-14:00	Light Refreshments	Light Refreshments	Light Refreshments	
14:00-16:00	Sessions	Sessions	Sessions	
16:00-17:30	Sessions	Sessions	Sessions	
19:00	Optional Social Evening	Optional Social Evening	Optional Social Evening	

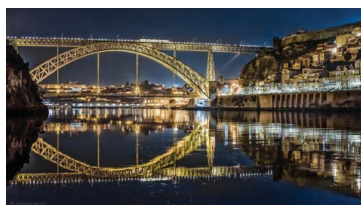
\* Subject to change

The UNESCO Chair in Bioethics is pleased to invite you to become an active participant at the *14<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Bioethics, Medical Ethics & Health Law*, to be held in Porto on May 11-14, 2020. The Conference is designed to offer a platform for the exchange of information and knowledge and to hold discussions, lectures, workshops and exhibition of programs and databases.

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- physicians • nurses • dentists • social workers
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- philosophers • researchers • writers • ethics committee members • teachers • educators • rectors, deans and administrators of academic institutes • hospital managers
- teachers and students of medical, nursing, ethics, psychology, philosophy and law schools and faculties • professional, cultural and volunteer organizations and associations
- governmental & public bodies • speech and language therapists • veterinarians • nutritionists & dietitians

**Language:** The World Conference will be held in English



**Abstracts** of approximately 200 words on any of the listed topics are invited for oral or poster presentation. All submissions must be written in English. Each participant may present only one lecture or one poster. See website for submission information.  
Deadline for abstract submission: November 30, 2019

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