



CHILDREN'S HEALTH ALLIANCE FOR ISRAEL

Supporting Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel



Quarterly Newsletter
September 2020

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of our quarterly newsletter!

We are thrilled to announce that we have changed our name to **Children's Health Alliance for Israel [CHAI]** - formerly Medical Development for Israel [MDI]

Our new name more accurately reflects CHAI's mission: to ensure that all children at Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel [SCMCI] receive the best care that pediatric medicine has to offer. We have expanded our Board of Directors, re-invigorated relationships with key partners in Israel, and established a Scientific Advisory Committee to guide our work. CHAI is also embarking on bold new programs with SCMCI to support the translation of scientific discoveries from the bench to the bedside.

Since March 2020, the global pandemic has touched all of our lives and tested our resilience. At CHAI, our commitment to supporting SCMCI has never been more urgent. We are determined to expand on Irving and Helen Schneider's legacy to build a comprehensive children's hospital that would serve as a beacon of hope and a bridge to peace in Israel and neighboring countries.

*We invite you to enjoy the **short video** and the **stories** and **pictures** in our newsletter to learn more about our work to advance children's health.*



**We are grateful for your interest in the Children's Health Alliance for Israel.
Please be in touch with any questions or suggestions.**

With warm appreciation,

Michael Lesser, MD
Chairman & President

Mindy Schneider
Secretary & Treasurer

Kenneth J. Blum
Executive Director

DREAMING OF A HEALTHY FUTURE



At CHAI we are committed to ensuring that every child receives the finest care that pediatric medicine has to offer. Our partners at SCMCI are helping us meet this bold objective. Together, with leading doctors at the hospital, we have identified four critical areas of focus:



Meet four of the SCMCI trailblazers who are helping us achieve these goals:

Dr. Silvana Fennig

Director of the Department of Psychological Medicine

is set to bring about a fundamental shift in the way we approach child psychiatry by integrating emotional and mental health into all medical care while developing strategies for early detection of mental illness.

Dr. Moshe Phillip

Director of the Institute for Endocrinology

is committed to developing advanced technologies to care for children with diabetes by creating the Digital Diabetes Center.

Dr. Avraham Beigelman

Director of the Institute of Allergy and Immunology

aims to reverse alarming trends of severe children food allergies by establishing The National Food Allergy Center, which will focus on the use of autoimmune therapies, research and education.

Dr. Shai Izraeli

Director of the Department of Hematology-Oncology

is determined to cure every child with cancer by developing improved cancer therapies at the Institute for Future Precision Cancer Medicine for the Young.

In each quarterly newsletter, we will highlight the progress CHAI and SCMCI are making to launch these innovative projects. You can also read more about our programs with SCMCI on our new website by clicking [here](#) ▶



THE NEW SOUTHERN WING



We are excited to announce that construction of new Southern Wing of Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel [SCMCI] remains on schedule.

Set to open in 2022, the 7 floor, 400,000-square-foot building will expand the number of hospital beds by 70 and include a variety of departments, such as Adolescent Medicine, Organ Transplantation and state-of-the-art Neonatal and Pediatric Intensive Care Units. The Southern Wing will also house the Clinical Research Center, a hub for CHAI and SCMCI to develop breakthrough clinical programs, raise the level of children's healthcare and train physicians and basic scientists. **We look forward to sharing updates on the progress of the construction.**

CHAI DELIVERS 400 MEDI TEDDYS, INVENTED BY 10-YEAR-OLD



Ella Casano of Connecticut knows how scary needles can be.

At 7 years old, Ella was diagnosed with Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura [ITP], an autoimmune blood disorder requiring intravenous [IV] infusions every two months. Ella quickly learned that IV treatments are scary and stressful for an entire family. A veteran of hospital wards by the age of 10, Ella harnessed her entrepreneurial spirit and in 2016 created the Medi Teddy to disguise intimidating IV bags with a comforting teddy bear. The back is mesh so doctors, nurses, and parents can easily monitor medication, while from the front the child sees a smiling teddy bear.

Based on her ingenuity, Ella launched a nonprofit organization to distribute Medi Teddys to children around the world. CHAI was inspired to learn about Ella's commitment to help children. In an initiative led by Katie Schneider Lesser, 400 Medi Teddys were delivered to SCMCI in June 2020. Surveys from parents and caregivers indicate that Medi Teddys have a positive impact, with 95% reporting emotional wellbeing benefits for children and 87% claiming the Medi Teddy improved the experience of caregivers.

CHAI thanks Ella for her incredible innovation, her boundless courage, and for bringing joy and smiles to children at SCMCI and around the world.

QUARTERLY UPDATE

from Prof. Joseph Press, MD - Director, SCMCI



Dear Friends,

I hope my letter finds you and your loved ones keeping well and safe during these strange and unusual times of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic.

Most unfortunately, the coronavirus situation in Israel has spiked dramatically as I am sure you are aware. All employees in the health services are bearing a tremendous burden while making every effort to contain the contagion and keep up with the growing number of infected people. SCMCI is no exception. Many of our previous regulations such as online consults, reduced admissions, and isolation units have been reintroduced. Special arrangements in the ER have been instituted such as speedy isolated cubicles/sections for examinations and admissions of substantiated COVID-19 cases.

There are many reports daily in the media about ongoing research for a vaccine including current trials, speedier testing, and new innovations. At the same time, statistics are starting to appear concerning the long-term effects or even side effects that have been seen in COVID-19 patients across the globe. It may take a while until the medical arena has a proven, viable vaccine in hand and further knowledge of potential side- and long-term effects of COVID-19.

Yet we must continue to be optimistic and vigilant. It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to maintain scrupulous hygiene, maintain safe distancing and wear our masks outside of the home. Together, we will see this through!

On a happy note, I am pleased to tell you that SCMCI has signed an agreement with the Weizmann Institute of Science to conduct joint research studies. It was found, following prior collaborative research in various areas, that cooperation between doctors and scientists can promote the application of “bench to bedside” research. We are very excited about this development and have no doubt that it will bode well for both institutions, not to mention the millions of children worldwide who will benefit from the joint initiative.

Warmly,
Prof. Joseph Press, MD

