



Department of Hematology

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מחלקת המטולוגיה

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To whom it may concern

**RE: Darkei Miriam דרכי מרים from the perspective of a hematologist**

Of the many misfortunes that can befall an individual and his or her family, the most feared is a serious chronic illness requiring hospitalization. While state of the art medical care has risen to unprecedented levels of sophistication and is increasingly successful, this care continues to take a toll, emotional and financial, on the patient and his family. The burden of these costs was recognized in 2003 by the late Rav Yisrael Weingarten, of blessed righteous memory, who lost his wife Miriam, may she rest in peace, to cancer.

For two years, Rav Weingarten cared for his wife. Throughout that time, he saw before his eyes the urgent need for help and assistance to cancer patients who travel to the hospital with great difficulty and the great financial burden associated with these trips, which is incurred by the patient and his family. During his wife's hospitalizations, he saw that there was no quiet and welcoming corner that the patients and their families could seek out, and he noted the lack of social activities for patients and their families.

Therefore, immediately after the death of his wife, Rav Weingarten fulfilled his dream and established the Darkei Miriam (translated: the ways of Miriam) Association to keep alive her virtuous memory. The goals of the organization are to provide support and assistance to Israeli cancer patients and their families. These goals are realized using a variety of activities.

1. Transportation for cancer patients to medical appointments. Darkei Miriam transports approximately 150 patients and family members a day. For patients receiving prolonged treatments in the hospital, the transportation is provided free of charge in the private vehicles of volunteer drivers, for maximum comfort and individualized service to the patients. Until Darkei Miriam was established, patients and family members were obliged to come to treatment by public transportation or by taxis at great cost and inconvenience, and discomfort to the patients following therapy.

2. Pinot Chamot Refreshments (in Hebrew: Pinot Chamot, "Warm corners"). Darkei Miriam presently operates 43 Pinot Chamot in family rooms of Hemato-oncology and Oncology Departments in the three main hospitals in Jerusalem: Hadassah Ein Kerem, Shaare Zedek and Hadassah Mt. Scopus. At these refreshment stands, patients and their families can partake of hot and cold refreshments (including coffee, tea and a variety of baked goods) which are available 24 hours a day, to soothe the souls of patients and their families. Until these Pinot Chamot were established, there was no welcoming place that a patient or family could seek for



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respite in any of the departments in which the Pinot Chamot are located. This is a much blessed service as it is available at all times, precisely where it is most needed, where the patients are being treated, and in addition, saves the families and patients substantial sums for basic refreshments which can be costly.

3. Financial assistance: In exceptional cases, Darkei Miriam provides financial assistance for unusual medical expenses. During the holiday seasons, Darkei Miriam provides coupons for patients and their families for food, clothing and also for household help for maintenance of the home during prolonged illness, as needed.

4. Personal assistance: Volunteers from Darkei Miriam are ever present in the Oncology and Hemato-oncology Departments to provide emotional support and skilled guidance to patients and their families.

5. Other medical services: Darkei Miriam can provide assistance in transporting various medical necessities such as equipment and in acquiring various medications.

6. Emotional support: Darkei Miriam organizes social activities such as musical events (Songfests), birthday parties, and holiday celebrations, and trips including flights over various parts of Israel, for patients and their families.

In conclusion, this outstanding organization has filled a gap in the care of the cancer patients of Israel by providing at no cost, a variety of simple yet much needed services directly to the patient and his/her family. These are available on request, or even (as in the case of Pinot Chamot or volunteers) without even having to ask. This worthy organization provides Chesed in the truest sense of the word, helping the souls of the patients and their families as the physicians strive to cure them of their diseases. Darkei Miriam needs the support of donors to continue their mission. We hope you will be generous with your gift during this holiday season, for giving charity is such a great mitzvah and an important part of sealing our judgment for upcoming New Year.

Sincerely

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