THE JEWISH CHAPLAINCY REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

5772 | 2011-2012

Spiritual Care Department
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**The Year in Review** | Rabbi Jason Weiner, BCC

**In the Traditional Jewish Prayer for Healing**, known in Hebrew as the “Mi Sheberach,” we ask that God provide us with a “Refaat HaNefesh U’Refaat HaGuf,” a healing of both the spirit and the body. While many professionals in the medical center do their best to bring about that healing of the body, we in the Spiritual Care department try our best to help patients, their families and our staff experience spiritual healing. In the past year, we have intensified our efforts to accomplish this goal in two ways. First, we have increased and diversified our staff of professionally trained chaplains who are available to our patients, visitors and employees. We have also begun integrating them into the interdisciplinary care team throughout the hospital, as detailed on pages 6-7 of this report. Second, we are attempting to expand an environment of spiritual healing throughout the medical center through robust programming, including new activities such as a monthly Shabbat minyan in the chapel, in partnership with NCSY, and broadening the scope of our existing supportive services.

Our annual programming continued to feature the Rabbi Levi Meier, PhD, Memorial Lecture (detailed on page 4). High Holidays services, and a Yom Hashoah Holocaust memorial event, all of which fill the entire Harvey Morse Auditorium. Similarly, our annual public Chumashim lighting celebration attracts over 150 people to our Plaza Level; our recently expanded Sukkot is utilized throughout the Sukkot holiday; and our Purim Megillah readings fill our entire Chapel on Purim night and day. Additionally, we continue our co-sponsorship and participation in a “Yom Iyun,” day of study, in conjunction with the Southern California Board of Rabbis, National Association of Jewish Chaplains, and the Kalsman Institute. This year’s program featured Rabbi Zahara Davidowitz-Farkason on “Understanding the Nature of Disaster and How to Help Your Community Heal.” We also continued our monthly sessions on Jewish Law & Medicine with Dr. Irving Lebovics, and my weekly class on Jewish topics, during which we studied the Chayim’s living to all patient rooms, has now been enhanced by the presence of a sign language interpreter to make it accessible to even more people. In May, we had the privilege of welcoming guest lecturer, Rabbi Akiva Tatz, MD, who gave a fascinating talk on Jewish medical ethics related to reproductive technology.

It has been our experience that offering these sorts of events in the hospital is crucial to rejuvenating and inspiring our staff, as well as bringing true healing to our patients. Those who are already accustomed to Jewish activities outside of the hospital find that these programs help normalize their environment and offer an enhanced sense of well-being. Patients who are not accustomed to Jewish practice may find that such activities temporarily transport them beyond the medical reality at hand, so they can spiritually transcend the confines of the hospital walls and experience a closer connection to the Divine. All of these outcomes enhance the healing process. Plans are in the works for a number of exciting new events for this coming year, all of which are designed to contribute to the well-being of everyone in the medical center and beyond.

**Generous Donations Enhance Our Resources**

This year, our long-time friend Shayna (Shahnaz) Mossazadeh donated dozens of Siddurim (prayer books) with English translation, Tehillim (books of Psalms) with English translation, and Chumashim (Torahs) with Farsi translation to our Chapel on behalf of the local Persian community. These important books, available for use by anyone who enters our Chapel and brought to patients on request, have already benefited numerous visitors to the medical center.

We also received a wonderful new resource this year for patients and their families from the Los Angeles Bikur Cholim – Jewish Healthcare Foundation. Bikur Cholim began stocking a closet in the back corner of the Chapel with complimentary kosher packaged food and other necessary ritual items, available at all times for anyone in need.

**Rabbi Jason Weiner is Senior Rabbi & Manager of the Spiritual Care Department.**
What Does it Mean to be a Jewish Hospital?

THIS YEAR, FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL
Rabbi Levi Meier, PhD, Memorial Lecture on
Jewish Values in Patient Care, the Spiritual Care
Department partnered with the Cedars-Sinai
Center for Healthcare Ethics, with the support
of the Bernard and Gloria Salick Foundation
in Memory of Blanche and Max Martin Salick.

The presentation, attended by approximately
300 people, featured history professor Alan
Kraut, PhD, of American University in Washington
DC, on the topic of “Ethical Roots of the
Jewish Hospital: Past and Future.” In his
presentation, Professor Kraut discussed the
historical and ethical roots behind the rise of
Jewish hospitals in the United States and described a culture
of community self-help created in the face of anti-Semitism.

The resulting institutions, he explained, were not just
a place for Jews to be healed, but soon became a place of
learning for Jewish medical professionals and for other
minorities excluded from the mainstream.

Kraut defined the Jewish hospital as a facility staffed,
administered, and supported
by the Jewish community and rooted in a
commitment to enacting Jewish values. The
first Jewish hospitals in America were built in
response to the cholera epidemics of the
1850’s to provide Jews with a place to receive care.
When 2.25 million Jewish immigrants moved to
America in search of a better life between
1880 and 1924, however, they found a country
both ignorant of and often hostile to their
needs. During those decades, Jewish hospitals
sprang up throughout the United States at a
rapid pace.

Jewish hospitals served kosher food, offered
Shabbat services, ensured that patients had
access to a rabbi, and met ritual needs. They kept
Jews from being dependent on the non-Jewish
community during times of grave illness, when
non-Jewish clergy sometimes attempted “death-bed
conversions,” Kraut said. The anti-Semitism of
that era led some doctors to create a clinical
diagnosis for the condition of being Jewish,
misstilled “Hebraic disability.” “Another good
reason to have a Jewish hospital,” Kraut added.

Having explored the history of Jewish hospitals
in the United States, the focus of the program
turned towards Cedars-Sinai. Rabbi Weiner gave
a brief summary of Rabbi Meier’s views on the
meaning of being a Jewish hospital, based on a
lecture Rabbi Meier gave on the topic in 1995.

During that lecture Rabbi Meier referred to Cedars-Sinai as the
“Beit Hakeheset Lerefuah” or “Temple of Healing,” in which
Jewish values guide the hospital in addressing each patient’s
universal human needs of personal nurturance and collective
meaning. Rabbi Meier also addressed the various Jewish
offerings available at Cedars-Sinai, such as the Shabbat elevators,
kosher kitchen, and Mezuzot.

Cedars-Sinai Innovates: Jewish Expectant Parent Workshop

Each year, more than 7,000 babies are born at
Cedars-Sinai, and over 20% of their parents self-identify
as Jewish. Recognizing a need, the Jewish Chaplaincy
team has developed a unique Jewish Expectant Parent
Workshop to educate new parents from across the
spectrum of Jewish life about the critical questions
they will face in bringing a Jewish child into the world.
Not only a childbirth preparation class, it’s a parenthood
preparation class.

Many new parents request a visit from a rabbi in the
hospital because they are suddenly being faced with
questions they had never considered before, such as
how to choose a Jewish name, how to find a mohel,
which prayers to say, or how to create a Jewish home.

Now, when an expectant parent looks over the list of
official prenatal education, labor and infant care classes
offered by Cedars-Sinai, one of their choices is the
“Jewish Expectant Parent Workshop.” This three-hour,
one-time session, led by Rabbi Weiner and Baruh, gives
participants the opportunity to learn and ask questions
about such important issues as naming traditions,
baby welcoming ceremonies, making one’s pregnancy
meaningful, and much more.

While offering this resource to expectant parents,
there is another unique opportunity. With fewer

Jewish families affiliating with synagogues, many
participants may not be attracted to or willing to
enter a synagogue, but are nonetheless curious about
Judaism. In an effort to ensure follow-through and
create a bridge from the medical center to the local
Jewish community, 21 local synagogues have partnered
with Cedars-Sinai by offering a one-year complimentary
membership to class participants. That is another reason
why this isn’t a typical parenting class. Rather, it is
about shoring up the future of the Jewish people, one
family at a time.

In addition to matters specific to Jewish parents, the
class also deals with general psychosocial issues that
each family faces when a child is born. It creates a safe
space to explore such concerns as how the new baby
will affect the family structure, shift the dynamics
between parents and grandparents, and the couple’s
relationship. If the Jewish parenting workshop continues
to prove successful, Cedars-Sinai plans to expand
it to other religions and cultures, since many of
these questions and concerns are universal. Each of
the workshops has attracted approximately twenty
participants, many of whom have kept in touch with
each other after the class.

For additional information or to sign up, please contact
the Spiritual Care Department at 310-423-5550 or go to
www.cedars-sinai.edu/prenatal

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Participants in one of the first Jewish Expectant Parent Classes.

Jewish Expectant Parent Workshop

This program is so innovative that it was
named by Time Magazine in April of this year.

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New Chaplains Join the Jewish Chaplaincy Team

Chaplain Laura Young

CEDARS-SINAI WELCOMES THREE NEW chaplains to the Jewish Chaplaincy team. Laura Young, MJS, was hired in November 2011, after serving as a chaplaincy intern at Cedars-Sinai from 2008 to 2010. Laura has a master’s in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles. She completed the two-year Wagner Human Services Training Program at the American Jewish University before earning a master’s in Jewish Studies, with a specialty in Jewish Chaplaincy, and a certificate in Jewish Chaplaincy from the Academy for Jewish Religion. Laura has also completed four units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), having worked on-site at both Cedars-Sinai and at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center.

In her first year, Laura has played a crucial role in the interdisciplinary rounds on the 6th floor cardiac and transplant unit and on the 7th floor Medical Intensive Care Unit. She also provides spiritual care to Jewish and interfaith patients throughout the medical center.

Rabbi Sarah Barukh joined the Spiritual Care Department in June 2012, after serving as a rabbinic intern at Cedars-Sinai from 2011-2012. Sarah has begun covering various units throughout the hospital, including the Cardiac Telemetry and Monitoring Unit, and she provides service to Jewish and interfaith patients throughout the medical center. She earned her ordination and master’s in Rabbinic Literature from the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies at American Jewish University. Sarah has also worked as a CPE intern for Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, as a congregational leader at Community Tikvat Jacob in Manhattan Beach, and as an educator at both Camp Alonim in Sari Valley and at Los Angeles Hebrew High School.

Along with Rabbi Len Muroff, who has begun providing weekend coverage to patients, Laura and Sarah are important additions to the department, enabling the Jewish Chaplaincy team to provide high level around-the-clock care to even more patients in need, seven-days-a-week.

What does it mean to be a Jewish hospital?

and explained that they are simply external symbols of the internal values and messages which every person must integrate into their healing.

Dr. Glenn Braunstein, Vice President of Clinical Innovation, who has been at Cedars-Sinai for 39 years and served as the Chair of Medicine for 26 years, then discussed the history of “the Chiefs of Medicine of the Jewish Federation Hospitals” and its goals for the future. The program concluded with remarks from Larry Platt, Chair of the Board of Cedars-Sinai, who shared personal reflections as well as his vision for the future.

Mr. Platt explained, “Despite all the change around us – or because of it – I believe it is important for us to remain a Jewish hospital. I want to hold tight to the values that drive us to help and heal people. The heritage that built Cedars-Sinai will motivate us into the future and help us take on challenges that lie ahead.”

He concluded with the charge that, “It is up to us to be a blessing for our community, today and tomorrow. We can continue to honor our roots by doing good in the world by simply doing what we do best: healing people, body, and soul.”

Spiritual Care Department Expansion Results in Improved Care and Increased Referrals

Cedars-Sinai’s role as a Jewish hospital has always been to provide compassionate care to people of all faiths and backgrounds. Our values motivate us to offer celebrations of many major holidays for our diverse community and to provide excellent spiritual care to all patients, their visitors, and our staff.

This vision has been at the forefront of the Department’s increased staffing, so that we can provide patients with a chaplain of their own religion whenever possible. We also now offer three full-time interfaith chaplains, one during evenings in the Emergency Department, one in the Palliative Care team, and another in the Cancer Center.

Over the course of the past year, we have increased our efforts to educate hospital staff about the importance of spiritual care and ways in which the team can be of service. In addition to this extensive outreach, chaplains have become fully integrated into the interdisciplinary healthcare teams by attending rounds and building relationships on more than 20 units. As a result, the department achieved a major milestone this summer, surpassing 1,000 referrals per month, a 156% increase in one year. Referrals come from multiple sources, ranging from nurses and social workers, to volunteers, doctors, patients’ families, community members and others. The tremendous number of requests for spiritual support demonstrates the importance and need for professional spiritual care. In addition to increasing the number of chaplains, we have also begun a Clinical Pastoral Education program in order to train future chaplains and clergy. This will result in having interns available each semester to assist with patient consultations and deepening collaboration with the various units.

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This innovative program seeks to engage our communities and deepen relationships with one another, and will include a community-wide series of events, lectures, workshops, and experiential classes hosted by dozens of community organizations and synagogues throughout Los Angeles and Southern California.

The Week of Learning will be interdisciplinary, offering programs across the spectrum of Jewish life around the theme of Judaism, health, and healing.

For more information visit www.jewishwisdomandwellness.org

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