

# COMMUNITY BULLETIN



October 2016 · Tishrei 5777



CARE. COMPASSION. COMMUNITY.



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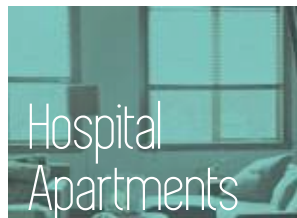
Rabbi Jason Weiner  
*Senior Rabbi & Manager of  
Spiritual Care Dept. at Cedars-Sinai*



## OUR MISSION

Ateres Avigail is a volunteer-driven organization dedicated to assisting and supporting Jewish patients and their families in the Los Angeles community facing medical crises. The heart and soul of Ateres Avigail is our team of over 200 dedicated volunteers. These remarkable individuals carry on a proud tradition of selfless devotion for the benefit of others. For over 37 years, Ateres Avigail has been serving the needs of the LA community, providing vital services to thousands of people.

## OUR SERVICES



Comfortable accommodation for family members of Cedars-Sinai patients located in West Hollywood, a short five minute walk from the hospital.



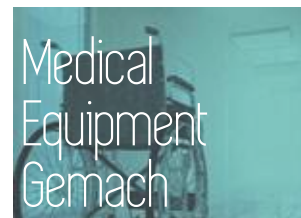
Volunteers are available upon request to drive patients to and from medical appointments.



We can help you find a reputable specialist and get appointments with physicians in a timely manner through our wide network of doctors.



Healthy and nutritious meals are prepared regularly in our commercial kitchen for hospital patients and their family members.



Wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, knee scooters, etc. are available for free short-term use with locations in both Hancock Park and Pico- Robertson for convenient pick-up and delivery.



We have fully stocked food pantries at local hospitals, including items needed for Shabbos and Chagim.



Our volunteers provide home cooked meals for sick individuals or families dealing with illness.



Dedicated volunteers are available to visit patients who are homebound or hospitalized.



Certain specialized medical supplies and equipment are available for purchase at or below cost price.

## DEAR FRIENDS,

It is gratifying to once again reflect on a fantastic year for Ateres Avigail. Our already established programs and services continue to prosper and we are working diligently on new initiatives and ways to better serve our community. I am most enthusiastic about the formation of our **Virtual Clinic** where those in need can receive **consultations with medical professionals at no cost**. Also, I anticipate more big developments to stem from our inaugural partnerships with UCLA Health and Providence St John's. Our long standing friendship with Cedars-Sinai is thriving and thanks to their wonderful staff, we've been able to do some incredible work there this year. And finally, to our volunteers, there are really no words to adequately thank you for your constant and unwavering willingness to help those in need, you are the driving force behind our organization and I am sincerely grateful.

Wishing you the best for a happy, healthy, peaceful and prosperous year.

Yisroel Zev Rechnitz  
Chairman of the Board

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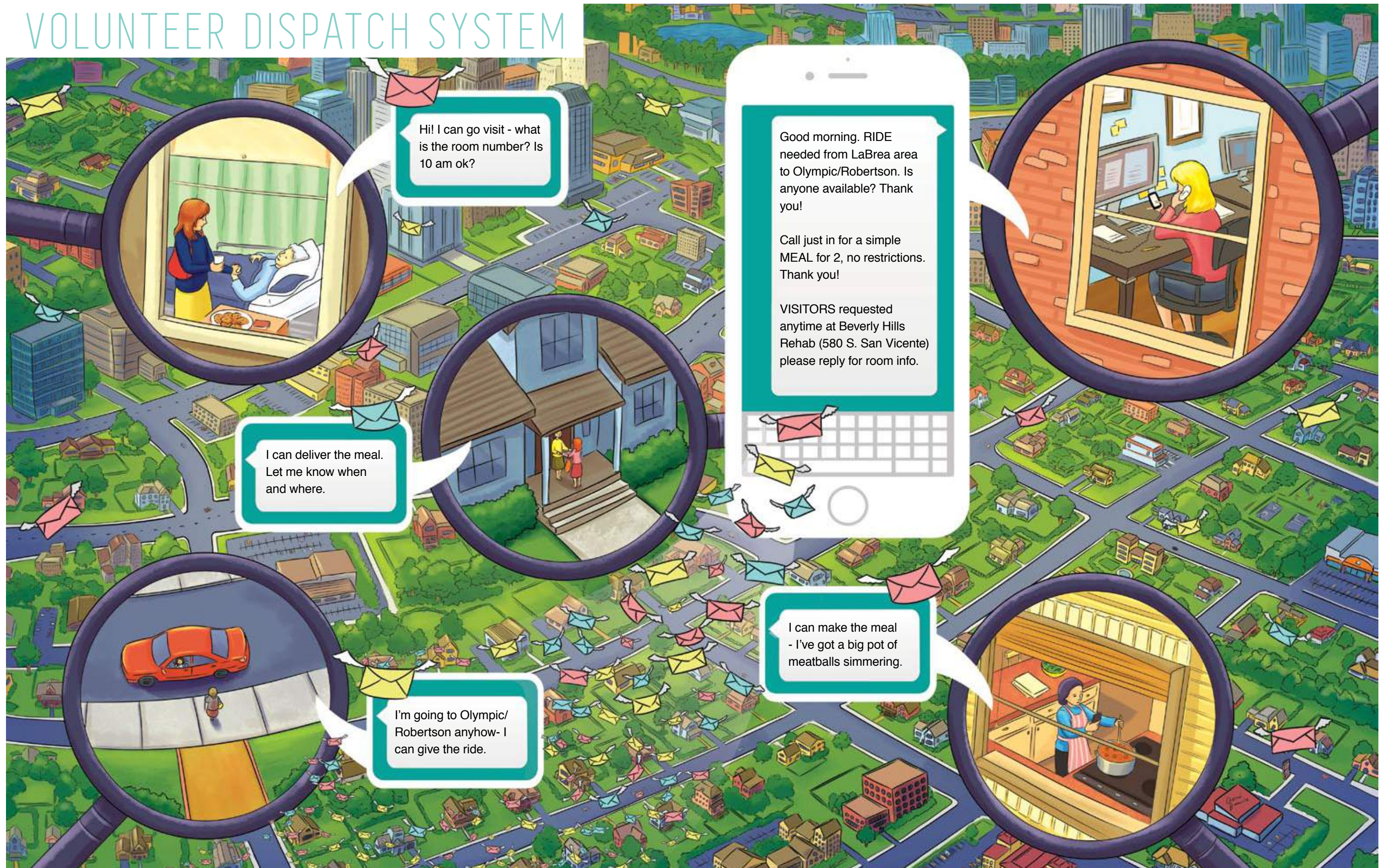
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# VOLUNTEER DISPATCH SYSTEM







# COMMERCIAL KITCHEN

What happens when you combine one certified nutritionist, a serving of wholesome ingredients, a dash of tried and true recipes and a generous dollop of wonderful volunteers?

You get the **Ateres Avigail Commercial Kitchen** and a steady supply of delicious, healthy meals ready to go at a moment's notice to people in need. While we still rely heavily on our volunteer home cooks, the meals produced in our kitchen cover any last minute Shabbos and Yom Tov requests.

Additionally, these meals allow us to service people in remote facilities with no kosher resources. We have tremendous hakaras ha'tov to the staff and students of Toras Emes for allowing us the use of the girls junior high kitchen and even stop by to lend a hand occasionally. The kitchen is one of the most successful programs our organization launched this past year, we can't wait to see what they cook up next!



# MEDICAL PANEL

Being diagnosed with a serious illness presents a myriad of difficulties for patients and their families. Making important medical decisions, covering medical and pharmaceutical bills, and navigating complex insurance claims can be extremely overwhelming. Ateres Avigail has formed a panel of MDs and other professionals to consult with and assist people in understanding these challenges.

We hired a specialized team of medical lawyers who developed a fully HIPAA compliant system, in which a patient's medical history is transferred directly to the consulting provider. This also serves to mitigate potential unintentional misrepresentation of information by the patient, family, or other advocate, to the advising professional. Patient confidentiality is one of our highest priorities.

Our panel includes professionals in the following areas:

Internal Medicine	Neurology
Hematology	Rheumatology
Gynecology	Psychiatry
Oncology	Eating Disorders
Orthopedics	Medicare/Medicaid
Social Work	Medi-cal
Pathology	Private Insurance
Radiology	Pharmacy



# NON-PROFIT VIRTUAL CLINIC

A PROJECT OF ATERES AVIGAIL & DR. JONATHAN NISANOFF

**THE NEED:**  
Over the past few years private insurance premiums have risen considerably, forcing many of our community members to switch their primary insurance to HMO or Medi-Cal coverage. Consequently, their access to quality healthcare in a timely manner has become limited.

Additionally, as a result of insurance cutbacks, many prominent doctors no longer accept private insurance. Moreover, many doctors who continue to accept private insurance are now limiting their appointments for patients with plans from low-paying insurance companies.

**THE OBJECTIVE:**  
Dr. Jonathan Nissanoff, in conjunction with Ateres Avigail, has formed a group of physicians, both primary care and sub-specialists, who have agreed to service a number of patients each month at no cost. This service is for first and second opinions only; it will not cover procedures or treatment.

Specialties include: Cardiology, Orthopedics, Pulmonology, Rheumatology, Ophthalmology, ENT, and Neurology. Expanding this clinic will be an ongoing process, and we will continue to provide updates as our scope of services broadens.

**THE OUTCOME:**  
Beginning November 1st, anyone with private insurance who has had trouble scheduling an appointment with a specialist will now have access to care in a more timely fashion.

Anyone with HMO or Medi-Cal plans will now have access to private physicians for first and second opinions at no extra cost.



# DR. JONATHAN NISANOFF

As a medical professional in today's day-and-age it pains me greatly to see patient's access to quality medical care with quality doctors rapidly diminishing. New laws are pushing doctors to stop accepting Medicare, Medi-Cal and sometimes even good insurance, as the reimbursements are dismal. Many in private practice are not open to new patients and some are leaving their practices entirely to work for the HMOs and Kaisers of the world.

As Jews we are resilient and as a community we find solutions. One such solution has finally taken shape after several years of hard work. The Ateres Avigail Virtual Access Clinic is a not-for-profit program allowing qualifying Jewish patients with any insurance, or no insurance, access to top clinicians and specialists, regardless of whether their practices are closed to the general public.

This is a program that I have dreamed of establishing for a number of years, and with the help of many including Rabbi Hirschman and Mr. Rechnitz, along with the endorsement of several physician friends, this dream has now become a reality.

We will work with patients for whom further treatment or medical procedures are necessary on the options available for them to affordably obtain care.

**HOW TO APPLY FOR SERVICES:**  
Apply online at [www.ateresavigail.org/virtualclinic](http://www.ateresavigail.org/virtualclinic) OR Call (323)937-8300 to have a form faxed or sent to you by mail.

*On the form, you will be asked to provide both general and personal financial information.*



# OUR HOSPITAL SERVICES



## DR. STEVE TABAK

### EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

Major advances have been made in the diagnosis and treatment of coronary artery disease (CAD) over the past 30 years. Despite these advances, however, CAD remains the leading cause of death and chronic illness across all ethnic groups in the United States. The high prevalence of CAD, combined with our ability to prevent clinically significant CAD in many people, presents a compelling reason to focus on early diagnosis.

For many years, early diagnosis of CAD often meant exercise testing in asymptomatic patients. Routine stress testing had been used in many clinical scenarios, and it remains an important diagnostic tool, particularly in evaluating chest pain or other potential heart symptoms. Why can't we regard routine exercise testing as a good test for early CAD? We now know that it generally takes at least a 70% blockage in a coronary artery to cause an abnormal exercise test. Who could possibly refer to this as early diagnosis?

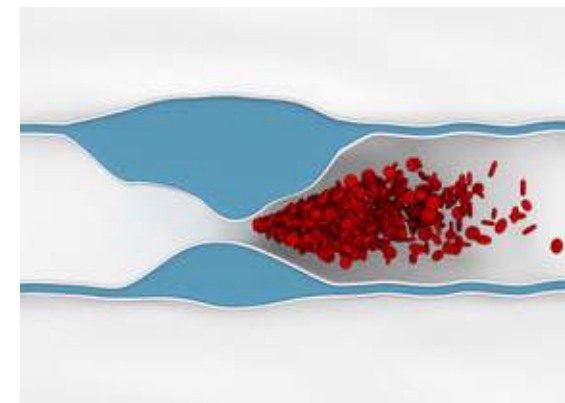
The Coronary Artery Calcium (CAC) scan, a noninvasive CT scan of the heart, has the potential to

detect the earliest stages of coronary artery disease, by detecting microscopic calcifications in the coronary arteries. We know that future cardiac events rise in direct proportion to the CAC score, thus allowing us to focus aggressive risk factor modification on patients at highest risk of cardiac events. Similarly, a negative CAC score identifies a very low risk group with a 10-year risk of approximately 1%, a group for whom we do not need

to expend resources to lower an already low risk of future events.

In summary, the practical implication of CAC scanning is that it finally gives us a tool to identify high risk patients for whom aggressive risk factor modification may be indicated. This may

include lifestyle modification (weight reduction, regular aerobic exercise, heart healthy diet, no smoking), as well as aggressive treatment with cholesterol lowering medications. CT scanning of the heart may be the breakthrough that finally allows us to dramatically reduce the consequences of unrecognized coronary artery disease.







# HOOPS H4HOPE

## BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

In May of this year we launched Hoops4Hope, a community wide 3-on-3 basketball tournament and barbecue banquet. We are happy to report that this was our most successful fundraiser to date. One hundred and fifteen players made up 32 teams, and they put on a spectacular show of athleticism and sportsmanship. After giving it their all in the final round, the fun continued when the winning team, coached by the incomparable AC Green, played an exhibition game against NBA stars Jordan Clarkson, Robert Horry and Metta World Peace in a match that had everyone riveted. The positive feedback from players and attendees alike has been phenomenal and we are already hard at work planning next year's tournament which promises to be bigger and better than the last.







## THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS:

“I cannot thank you enough for helping [us] during our very difficult times. You have such a kind and generous spirit and I am so grateful for your organization.

I truly feel like it was life saving.”

“Thank you for all your loving care!”

“What a difference it makes to be able to speak to someone... to be advised of so many services that are available if needed.”

“Thank you for all the help you have given me to date. Still ill, hoping to get well.

Many blessings for all that you do.”

“Thank you for coordinating meals the first week out of the hospital and a ride from the hospital. Please thank your volunteers for me next time you speak with them.

Everything was very good and delicious and really, really a HUGE help my first week.”

“I was overwhelmed and delighted with the wonderful Shabbat meals and generosity.

I’m sure the pleasure it gave me speeded up my recovery.”

“In appreciation for the kind Shabbos provisions for my son’s recent hospital stay at Cedars Sinai.”

“May Hashem bless you for your great chessed.”

“For the first time in years, I have hope that my diseases can be managed and treated. This would not have been possible without your help, Ateres Avigail.”

“We are especially grateful to... who helped us use Uber to get food to my husband at Santa Monica and UCLA hospitals during his mother’s recent stay in those institutions.”



**VOLUNTEER LEADERS**  
*Junior Co-ordinators*  
Yaeli Braverman · Esti Garber

*Volunteer Co-ordinators*  
Ruti Berger · Orah Berkowitz  
Ruchie Klein · Minna Majer  
Karina Mann

*Commercial Kitchen Nutritionist*  
Shuly Berkowitz

*Commercial Kitchen Coordinator*  
Chaya G. Hirschman

*Social Media*  
Lauren Weiner

*Housing*  
Leah Mandel

*Event co-ordinators*  
Tabitha Dror · Lisa Friedman  
Shoshy Klein · Devoiry Krause  
Chani Weiss

*Visitation*  
Aliza Solomon · Racheli Rubin

“WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET -  
WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE”

## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Huvi Abramczik  
Ayala Addison  
Esti Alter  
Hannah Rina Banayan  
Adina Barkhodar  
Melissa Beck  
Rivky Beren  
Sara Leah Bienstock  
Soochie Blonder  
Eliana Blumenstrauch  
Shanna Bobroff  
Kathy Boxer  
Esther Braun  
Michal Braun  
Shevi Braverman  
Yocheved Brecher  
Malka Breitman  
Leah Brenner  
Faigy Brescher  
Shana Brisk  
Sandy Bruker  
Shiri Burkowitz  
Shoshana Caplan  
Chanala Chopp  
Judith Cohen  
Leah Coleman  
Tzipporah Coronel  
Alti Davidi  
Elisheva Dorfman  
Shalva Drebin  
Debbie Dubin  
Rochel Duchman  
Linda Ebrami  
Lila Eilat  
Racheli Elyasazadeh  
Gitty Engel  
Roz Eschwege  
Chana Feingold  
Gitty Feingold  
Shirin Fialkov  
Sarah Fisher  
Ahuva Fisher  
Ahuva Fleischman  
Rochelle Frankel  
Menucha Friedman  
Yanky Friedman  
Gila Furer  
Tali Gershov  
Sara Leah Gohary

Yaeli Gohary  
Tova Goldman  
Yossi Goldman  
Devorah Gordon  
Sandy Gordon  
Margot Grabie  
Bassy Gradon  
Estie Gradon  
Ayala Grama  
Miri Gres  
Suzanne Haber  
Rochel Haberman  
Malkie Halberstam  
Avital Hanasabzadeh  
Miriam Hendeles  
Chavi Hertz  
Jael Hertz  
Liba Hertz  
Sasha Hess  
Annie Hier  
Rena Hirsch  
Alona Horowitz  
Boruch Tzvi Ingber  
Judy Kagan  
Sabrina Kamionski  
Batsheva Kanter  
Abi Katz  
Tami Katz  
Ariela Kauffman  
Devora Kaufman  
Chaya Kimmelman  
Yocheved Kimmelman  
Tohar Kochav Lev  
Yali Kornfeld  
Zisi Kornwasser  
Michael Kragen  
Chana Malka Kreisberg  
Michelle Krich  
Chaya Kuriansky  
Tzirrel Landau  
Rachelli Lebovics  
Libby Lehman  
Lieba Lerner  
Leah Lesserson  
Beth Leventhal  
Miri Levy  
Etty Mainstain  
Zippy Mainstain  
Aviva Maller

Chevi Mandelbaum  
Dvorah Mandelbaum  
Naomi Manela  
Yael Manela  
Leebee Mann  
Elisheva Manoucheri  
Lisa Manoucheri  
Rachel Margolis  
Elisheva Marquis  
Hindy Mayer  
Golda McCormack  
Lea Mendell  
Sender Mermelstein  
Linda Mirman  
Esther Morgan  
Gilit Morris  
Soheila Nafisi  
Pessy Nissanoff  
Eli Oscherowitz  
Danya Parker  
Sasha Parker  
Chani Perkowski  
Machla Perkowski  
Zack Plotzker  
Sara Polon  
Leah Presser  
Aviva Rabinowiz  
Chana Rechnitz  
Tamar Rechnitz  
Faigy Revah  
Bracha Richler  
Mimi Rieder  
Tehiya Ripps  
Dini Ritvo  
Sabrina Rosenberg  
Michelle Rosner  
Blimi Roz  
Aviva Rubanowitz  
Bracha Rubanowitz  
Elisheva Rubanowitz  
Elimore Ryzman  
E. Safron  
Elinore Saghiam  
Esti Saltz  
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Perri Schlissel  
Sarah Schlusell  
Yehudit Schneerson

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Zila Schwartz  
Bruria Seigel  
Daniella Selah  
Orly Shadovitz  
Avigail Shadrooz  
Rochel Shanblatt  
Shelly Shapiro  
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Esti Silber  
Aliza Solomon  
Rifky Solomon  
Aliza Sorani  
Hadassa Spalatt  
Chany Stern  
Chani Suffrin  
Shuly Taban  
Rivky Tangy  
Eitan Tashman  
Gila Tashman  
Sara Tendler  
Sari Toledano  
Dafna Topper  
Sara Tress  
David Tuch  
Esti Tversky  
Ayala Udler  
Chaya Ullmann  
Esti Vickman  
Chavi Wakslak  
Chani Webber  
Shoshy Weberman  
Dassy Weiner  
Lauren Weiner  
Tally Weinstock  
Devorah Weiss  
Shaindy Winter  
Dena Wolmark  
Tehila Wolmark  
Yocheved Wolmark  
Ruti Yenowitz  
Tzirrel Younger  
Devorah Zack  
Tamar Zaks  
Batya Zirdok



## DEAR COMMUNITY MEMBER,

With Hashem's help, Ateres Avigail has expanded considerably this past year. We have evolved into a community-based bikur cholim organization, led by a board of community activists and physicians under the auspices of local rabbonim. As the year comes to an end, I would like to applaud our team of **two hundred volunteers**, the heart and soul of Ateres Avigail, who consistently meet the needs of fellow community members facing medical crises. It has been inspiring for me to witness how our volunteers, many of whom are working mothers and wives, find the time and energy to reach out and support others in their time of need.

I am proud of our accomplishments this past year, especially the launch of the Non-Profit Virtual Clinic. This is a much needed program in the forever evolving healthcare system, and I am especially grateful to Dr. Jonathan Nissanoff for his tremendous dedication of time, expertise and energy to actualize this project.

May the coming year bring Bracha, Hatzlacha, and Refuos to all of Klal Yisroel,

Rabbi Avraham Y. Hirschman







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