



The Hospice of the Upper Galilee, ISRAEL

Providing free palliative hospice home care
and family support services



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HUG

Activity Report

Hospice of the Upper Galilee

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Reflections on the past year

The Hospice of the Upper Galilee (HUG), an Israeli NGO, was founded by the late Prof. Nancy Caroline in 1994 in Israel's northern periphery with the goal of providing free, end-of-life home hospice care for people suffering terminal illness, and support for their families.

To date, our trained professionals and volunteers have attended to more than 1,200 patients, ensuring them dignity as they leave this world, and to their family members as they anticipate and then deal with the death of their loved ones. HUG's devoted professional staff and compassionate volunteers, on call 24/7, tirelessly and unceasingly strive to ensure that patients have the option to peacefully and comfortably die at home, rather than in an acute care hospital unit, one of the primary goals of the hospice movement.

We are proud to share with you the 2015 activity report as well as plans for the future. We thank our partners and supporters, whose involvement makes it possible for the HUG team to travel to households around Israel's Upper Galilee, Golan and beyond, helping ensure that every moment counts for those facing end-of-life issues.

Dr. Asa Lev El

HUG Board Chairman

Dr. Eyal Goldberger

HUG Medical Director General

Mr. Srulik Knoll

HUG Managing Director



Photo: HUG staff gathered in our Rosh Pina office

Snapshot of 2015

- HUG cared for 130 patients and their families, 100 of them new patients.
- HUG extended its expertise in palliative care to all people of the region, of all ethnic backgrounds, including Jews, Christian, Moslems, Druze and Circassians.
- HUG handled a shifting patient load, averaging 35 patients at any given time.
- HUG's medical and nursing staff regularly lectured on the principles and practices of hospice care at local hospitals and community gatherings. Included was the launch of a new educational pilot program which will travel to different kibbutzim and community centers in the region.
- HUG increased bereavement activities for patient family members, reflecting our philosophy of integrative care for the patient and entire family unit. For example, a HUG support group for widows and widowers, facilitated by a HUG social worker, met every two weeks. Additionally, HUG's bereaved family forum held a moving memorial evening dedicated to their loved ones.
- HUG continued to provide instruction and internships for social work and medical students – an important investment in the next generation of palliative care and community outreach professionals.
- HUG celebrated its 21st birthday with 500 of our best friends!

Professional collaborations and training

Committed to advancing the significantly underappreciated and underfunded field of home hospice care in Israel, HUG serves as a center of knowledge and an example of successful professional palliative health care practices. In addition to supervising medical students and training other medical professionals, we also embrace the role of student, learning from others in the field, and sharing knowledge in order to deliver the most compassionate, professional, up-to-date care possible.

- **Yom Iyun at Lin Medical Center:** HUG's staff attended a day of study at the Lin Medical Center in Haifa headed by Prof. Eran Ben-Arye, Director of its Integrative Medicine Program. We met with the Center's doctors, nurses and therapists from auxiliary fields such as music, acupuncture, and nutrition, and learned about their work methods and outreach to the region's residents.
- **Professional exchange paves way for future collaboration:** HUG's professional team visited Bayit Balev, a hospital-based hospice initiative that cares for cancer patients, in the northern town of Neshet. Bayit Balev's staff subsequently paid HUG a return visit and learned about our outreach model. We believe that this nascent but important relationship may help inform HUG's next steps should we decide to scale up and expand into the realm of short-term residential hospice support.
- **Volunteer social workers and human service students add value:** As in previous years, through our ongoing collaboration with neighboring Tel Hai Academic College, two social work students interned in our office and in the field, considerably expanding their understanding of palliative care issues and extending our reach into the community.

- **HUG introduces medical students to new concepts in palliative care:** Sixteen medical students from the Faculty of Medicine at Zeif Medical Center in Safed participated in a day of practical experience at HUG and learned basic concepts in palliative care.
- **HUG provides training for northern area nursing staff:** HUG was honored this past year to host nine nurses, from the post-basic oncology course at the Rambam Healthcare Campus, who underwent training and a few days of practical work with our staff. Said one participant, "Thank you for the wonderful experience...your way of working is highly professional, while still warm and emphatic. I learned so much."

Staff development and professional conferences

HUG staff participated in regional, national, and international conferences on palliative care, including:

- An international conference at Jerusalem's Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital on current issues in palliative medicine, attended by 100 professionals. Participants were treated to lectures by world leaders in palliative care: Dr. Daryl Roitman, Director of the Freeman Centre for the Advancement of Palliative Care, North York General Hospital; and Dr. Daphna Grossman, Assistant Professor Department of Family and Community Medicine, Division of Palliative Care, University of Toronto.
- The annual "Tmicha" conference of The Israeli Association of Palliative Care, a volunteer organization for health professionals and trained volunteers actively involved in palliative care in Israel. IAPC supports collaboration among health professionals from different disciplines and lay care providers with the aim of encouraging maximum support for patients and families.
- A conference on pediatric palliative medicine also hosted by the IAPC which included an address by Prof. Stefan J Friedrichsdorf, Medical Director, Department of Pain Medicine, Palliative Care and Integrative Medicine, Children Hospital of Minnesota, one of the largest and most comprehensive programs of its kind in the US.
- Conferences on oncological and palliative medicine and nursing and a management workshop on oncology nursing sponsored by the Israel Cancer Association.



Photos: HUG's team

Honors and appointments

Beyond our impact in Israel's far-flung northern region, HUG is a major player on the national and international scene. We have received numerous awards both in Israel and abroad recognizing our unique interdisciplinary model of home hospice care. HUG professionals also serve on a number of decision-making committees. We are thus well positioned to promote the case for palliative care as a priority in advancing comprehensive medical care services in Israel -- one of our primary organizational objectives. Here's a look back at 2015:

- In February, in a ceremony held at the Eretz Israel Museum, HUG was honored by the OMETZ Association and the Israel Medical Association for our "exceptional contribution in the fields of medicine and science for the benefit of the community and the health of its citizens".
- Last year, following considerable effort, palliative care gained recognition as a discrete medical discipline by Israel's Ministry of Health, which identified 22 Israeli physicians as specialists. HUG's exceptionally devoted and highly regarded Medical Director General Dr. Eyal Goldgerger is among this prestigious group officially certified in May.
- In June, Dr. Goldberger was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the Israeli Society of Medicine and Law. That same month, Yael Bleich, HUG's longtime Head Nurse and Operations Manager, was appointed a member of the Ministry of Health Advisory Committee on Pain Management.



Photo: Dr. Eyal Goldberger receiving his award for distinguished service by the Israeli Society of Medicine and Law

Community Activities

- **All grown up – HUG turns 21 and throws a party!** In November, HUG celebrated 21 years of outreach with a gala evening, the third to date. Performing to a crowd of 500 at Kibbutz Kfar Blum was top composer and singer, Rami Kleinstein. Some guests were familiar with HUG's work through personal experience with loved ones; others knew us through professional channels; many simply wanted to better understand our function in the community. During the reception, guests savored a wide variety of delicacies donated by local cuisine masters. All proceeds were donated to HUG.



Gala Event

Guests enjoying local cuisine provided gratis by generous regional food artisans.

The third annual event of its kind, the evening helped raise funds and awareness of HUG's role in the region.

- **Reaching more local residents through conventional and social media:** To increase awareness of HUG's activities within Galilee-Golan communities, HUG made a concerted effort to increase our profile through greater media exposure – regular reports were published in local newspapers, broadcast on local radio, and posted on the internet. Prior to the gala evening, thousands of personal emails were sent. Billboard advertising also brought HUG to the public's attention. Most of these activities were carried out at minimal or no cost. Additionally, HUG's website and Facebook page have been upgraded and are being maintained by volunteers.
- **A pilot takes off:** The community of Moshav Almagor hosted a tribute evening recognizing the work of Prof. Gidi Gross, a world-renowned immunology and cancer researcher. Over 100 residents attended. All proceeds were donated to HUG. Given the evening success educating the public, we plan to duplicate the event in other local moshavim, kibbutzim, and community centers.

In memory of our dear friend, Bernard E. Bell

Sadly, in December 2015, HUG lost a dear family member, Bernard E. Bell (z"l). Bernie, truly one of a kind, was president of the American Friends of The Hospice of the Upper Galilee for over two decades. A devoted, and inspiring volunteer, Bernie passed away three weeks after his 95th birthday, after a brief illness.



Says Srulik Knoll, HUG's Managing Director, "HUG benefited in numerous ways from this gentle man, so very committed to all his philanthropic work, but particularly to the hospice movement. I was fortunate enough to have visited him in his beloved Rhode Island just a few weeks before he passed. As ever, he was bright and sharp. He will be missed." Bernie's son Jonathan, the long-time Vice-President of the American Friends organization, has agreed to assume its presidency.

Photo: Jonathan and Bernie (z"l) Bell

Donation recap

Ongoing

- Our intensive community outreach activities, as well as our upgraded website and Facebook page resulted in twice the number of private donations as compared with the previous year.
- Institutional donations (communities and businesses in the Upper Galilee) also improved significantly this past year. By contrast, following two years of increased donations from Israeli funds and foundations, 2015 saw a decline.
- Philanthropic support from abroad remains stable.

Recognition and a little change can make a big difference



- **Midot:** After being awarded the Midot Seal of Effectiveness (September 2014), in May of this past year, HUG was accepted into Israel's Round Up for Good (Igul L'Tova) program, an e-commerce tool that facilitates small long-term donations by rounding up the purchase amounts on credit card transactions.
- **Round Up:** By the end of 2015, some 600 Round Up subscribers registered to donate to HUG. Our objective is to reach 1,000 subscribers by the end of the first year of activity (May 2016).

In the words of a bereaved community...

To the HUG Team

As in the past, Kibbutz Ayelet HaShahar thanks all at HUG for your blessed work. Most of us rise each morning, smile, and dress for the day ahead; others – those in our community dealing with cancer and facing end of life issues - are unable to perform even these basic activities as their disease takes over. This is where you come in – with sensitivity, patience and knowledge, as partners in helping our loved ones and supporting us as well.

Sadly, our community experienced difficult and painful losses this past year. Time and again we admired your professionalism, empathetic approach, and "here and now" availability. For all you have done and continue to do thank you...and add our personal donations on top of the general one given by the community.

On behalf of (a list of donors)

Yardena Sadeh

Health & Welfare Coordinator
Kibbutz Ayelet HaShahar

In the words of a bereaved family...

Dear HUG,

Had we known that help exists from people like you, we would have come to you much earlier. Your caring phone calls, the special attention paid not only to Imma's (mother's) needs but to those of our whole family, your availability at any time and under any circumstance, your huge help coordinating all the small details and players, and your endless sensitivity – all are things we would wish to any person in similar condition.

Anonymous

Local family

Beyond HUG's ongoing activities, in 2016 emphasis will be placed on:

- Building a multi-year program based on the guidelines set forth as part of last year's strategic planning process regarding:
 - ✓ ***Patient care***
 - ✓ ***Professional development***
 - ✓ ***Increased demand for services***
 - ✓ ***Decreased government support***
 - ✓ ***Exporting HUG model to other regions***
 - ✓ ***Fundraising for ongoing programs***
 - ✓ ***Potential to create new in-patient facility***
 - ✓ ***Community education and support***

- Expanding community ties and increasing support among residents of the Galilee and Golan.
- Exploring the possibility of opening an out-patient palliative care clinic at Zief Medical Center in Safed as a continuation of our oncological "Brilliance" initiative.
- Advancing discussion with the Ministry of Health on establishing a small residential hospice in the Galilee to supplement HUG's model of home-hospice care. Under initial consideration is the need to offer short-term care in order to provide respite to patient family members.

Help HUG Help Others

Thank you to those who helped sustain our work this past year!

HUG does not charge for its services. Government funding covers less than 30% of HUG's expenses; the balance must be secured through philanthropy from people like you.

Tax-deductible donations can be made in NIS, US\$, CAD, and British Pounds Sterling.

With the right financial resources, we can be there for more people. Help us help those in need by giving generously. Your donation really matters.

Visit our website [here](#) to donate or be in touch at hospice.ug.development@gmail.com for more information on how to make your contribution!