On the Front Line of Saving Lives
Emergency Medicine and Trauma at Soroka Medical Center
Emergency and Trauma Care at the Sole Medical Center on Israel’s Southern Front

Soroka Medical Center, located in Beer-Sheva, is one of Israel’s largest, most active, and most strategically significant hospitals, serving more than 2 million residents in a region that comprises 60% of the country’s land area. In light of the hospital’s location, the Department of Emergency Medicine and the Trauma Unit face unique challenges. We are proud that this department was declared a National Center of Excellence by Clalit Health Services this year.

When it was opened in its new format in 2001, the Emergency Department (ED) at Soroka was the most modern such facility in the country. Even then it was busy and crowded. Today, it has become the busiest and most crowded in Israel, with more than 248,000 visits annually. It is safe to say that few EDs around the world have a comparable scope of activity.

This heavy patient load reflects the fact that the rate of population increase in the Negev is higher than that in the rest of Israel. In addition to natural population growth, the national project of moving Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) bases to the Negev has brought tens of thousands of additional soldiers and their families to the region, further challenging our ED and trauma capacity. Forecasts of additional natural growth and immigration to the region project a population increase of 30% from 2015 levels in Beer-Sheva and the surrounding area within less than a decade.

The annual rate of increase of ED and Trauma visits surpasses even the rate of population growth. In terms of everyday functioning, the urgent need to expand the Emergency Department and Trauma Unit at Soroka is very clear. This need becomes even more pressing in light of the security situation in southern Israel, with the constant threat of rocket attacks on our cities and towns, which presents Soroka with an additional set of significant challenges.
Operation Protective Edge: Facing Complex Challenges in the ED

Soroka Medical Center found itself once again on the front lines of emergency medical and trauma care in its role as "Israel’s Iron Dome for Health" during the IDF’s Operation Protective Edge. The Negev region, Israel’s southern front, was subjected to heavy barrages of rocket fire from Gaza. The ensuing ground operation resulted in hundreds of our soldiers and civilians being wounded, many critically.

Over the course of this difficult, stressful, and uncertain two-month period, as a direct result of the conflict, Soroka’s devoted ED and Trauma Unit staff cared for 1,259 patients, including 775 soldiers and 484 civilians who were wounded or suffered trauma during the military operation. Soldiers sustained internal injuries and wounds to the head, eyes, and limbs. Civilians suffered from shrapnel injuries and emotional trauma. The most severely wounded were brought by evacuation helicopter directly to Soroka Medical Center.

On more than one occasion during the operation, in addition to multiple casualties designated for treatment at Soroka’s ED and Trauma Unit, many of the wounded originally destined for other medical centers landed simultaneously at the Soroka helipad as the on-board flight surgeon decided that saving a few additional minutes of flight time – Soroka is the medical center closest to the battlefield – was critical to saving lives.

Operation Protective Edge brought home the clear need to expand the facilities of the Department of Emergency Medicine and the Trauma Unit in order for us to be able to provide our patients with the very best care and meet all challenges that the future will most certainly bring. The security situation in the area continues to be unstable and we remain under threat from Gaza, as we have been repeatedly throughout the years.
Saving Soldiers Wounded in Operation Protective Edge

Whoever saves a life...it is as if he has saved a whole world.
Babylonian Talmud Tractate Sanhedrin 73a

The brave combat soldiers of the IDF are our sons and daughters, husbands, fathers, brothers and sisters. For us at Soroka, treating those who defend our country is an honor, a privilege, and a duty that we take on with a sense of enormous responsibility and pride. Seven hundred and seventy-five wounded soldiers were brought to Soroka during Operation Protective Edge. All of them arrived at the Emergency Department/Trauma Unit at the first stage of their hospitalization, many in critical condition. Our dedicated staff ensured that they were immediately diagnosed and cared for, in many cases saving their lives, and then transferred them to the appropriate departments within the medical center for continued evaluation, surgery, and treatment. Here are some of their moving stories.
Ohad: On the Way to Rehabilitation

At the height of Operation Protective Edge, after entering the ground battle in Gaza, combat soldier Sergeant Ohad (19) of the elite Egoz unit was brought by helicopter to Soroka Medical Center with critical head injuries. He was treated in the Trauma Unit and the Intensive Care Unit and by a team of doctors from the Department of Neurosurgery. He underwent two urgent and complex surgeries within the space of only a few hours. Ohad was unconscious and on a respirator for a long period of time. He was subsequently released to a rehabilitation facility for further care. His mother, Erica, expressed her gratitude to the staff at Soroka: “We haven’t the words to thank you for saving Ohad’s life. Of course, we have a long way to go to recuperate, but I have no doubt that the initial care and support that Ohad received at Soroka will stay with him for life.”

Rasan Eliyan: A Commander Returns to Battle

Among the critically injured soldiers treated in the Trauma Unit during Operation Protective Edge was Colonel Rasan Eliyan, commander of the Golani Brigade, who was brought to Soroka during the ground offensive. He was transferred to the Ophthalmology Department, where he received treatment, and released and returned to his unit in the field several days later. Following his release, Eliyan called the director general of Soroka to personally express his gratitude for the devoted and professional care he received.

Omri Michaeli: An Emblem of Patriotism

One of the most iconic images of wounded soldiers from Operation Protective Edge, and one that will remain forever etched in our collective memory, is the photograph of Omri Michaeli. A reserve soldier in a special combat unit, Omri was wounded by a bullet that struck his leg. Flown to Soroka by helicopter, he emerged on the helipad and covered himself with an Israeli flag.

Ran Abitbul: Putting a Smile on a New Face

Golani soldier Corporal Ran Abitbul (19) sustained a severe injury to one side of his face on the first day of the ground operation in Gaza during Operation Protective Edge. A bullet entered the right side of his face and exited through his throat, severely injuring his eye socket, chin, and ear and damaging nerves. Ran was evacuated to Soroka in critical condition and rushed to the operating room. The initial operation, led by Prof. Daniel Kaplan and Dr. Nevot Givoli, took 10 hours. Ran underwent a series of subsequent surgeries aimed at restoring normal functionality. Using the undamaged side of his face as a “mirror,” Soroka’s skilled surgeons reconstructed the damaged side of his face with flexible titanium plates.
Needs

Our past experiences, including Operation Protective Edge and many escalations since then, most recently with a critically wounded soldier, who was airlifted directly from within the Gaza Strip to Soroka, and left the hospital walking a week later, have brought to light new and crucial needs that must be met to ensure that we are as prepared as possible for the future:

1. The number of currently available treatment bays in the ED is not sufficient for patient needs, and certainly not for the expected growth in the population of the Negev. Adequate space for multiple casualties was lacking during the last major security emergency. Ever-increasing patient loads demand that we expand to open additional treatment bays. [donation secured]

2. Six stations are not enough for our Trauma Unit. Operation Protective Edge demonstrated very decisively that we are in urgent need of at least two additional trauma stations. [donation secured]

3. The ambulatory emergency area is too small. We need to add treatment stations in this area for the benefit of our patients.

4. The triage area is where patients, especially battle and disaster victims, are first diagnosed and treatment is allocated according to a system of priorities designed to maximize the number of survivors. This area is too small for our actual needs and must be expanded.

We are in the process of expanding the Department of Emergency Medicine and the Trauma Unit. Subsequent to this expansion, there is great need to significantly renovate, reorganize, and upgrade the existing Emergency Room infrastructure and facilities to enable us to be prepared in the best possible way for emergencies of all kinds, to provide our ever-increasing number of patients – civilians and soldiers – with the emergency medical services they need, and to save lives in times of peace and war.
The Project

1. We are expanding the total area of the ED by 21,500 square feet. [donation secured]
2. The Trauma Unit will be expanded by 2,640 square feet for a total of 6,190 square feet, with the number of beds increased from six to eight. [donation secured]
3. We will need to renovate, reorganize, and upgrade existing sections of the Emergency Medicine Department, including ambulatory and non-ambulatory sections and triage.
4. Family waiting areas, physicians’ exam rooms and offices, and treatment bays will need to be added.
5. A new ambulance port will be constructed. [donation secured]

Funding and Naming Opportunities

Below is a list of funding and naming opportunities. Your generous donations will allow us to renovate, reorganize, and upgrade Soroka’s Emergency Department and Trauma Unit so that they can provide the best care and treatment of our patients from throughout the Negev, soldiers and civilians alike, on Israel’s southern front.

ER and Trauma Equipment, Naming: $2,000,000
Surgical ER, Naming: $1,500,000
Orthopedic ER, Naming: $1,500,000
Internal Medicine ER, Naming: $1,500,000
Ambulatory ER, Naming: $1,500,000
Trauma Unit, Naming: $1,500,000

Prominent donor recognition will be provided at Soroka Medical Center on site in the ED and Trauma Unit and on the Donors’ Wall of Honor. In addition, donors will be our honored guests at dignified public dedication ceremonies.

Each Trauma Bay can be named for a gift of $150,000
The Triage Area can be named for a gift of $100,000
Each Physician Office can be named for a gift of $40,000

Prominent donor recognition will be provided at Soroka Medical Center on site in the ED and Trauma Unit.

The following specific items of emergency medical equipment are also required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Naming</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital mobile x-ray</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>View anesthesia delivery system (including monitor)</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile ultrasound</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endoscopic system</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Mobile operating tables</td>
<td>$50,000 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Central axis trio - TruLights</td>
<td>$45,000 each</td>
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</tbody>
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Plaques recognizing the donors' generosity will be prominently displayed on site.

Thank you for considering this proposal and our requests.
Soroka Medical Center

Soroka Medical Center is among Israel's largest, busiest, and most advanced hospitals. Soroka is the only major medical center in the entire Negev, serving a population of more than one million inhabitants, including 400,000 children, in a region that accounts for 60% of the country's total land area. Soroka serves as the teaching hospital of both the Medical School of Ben-Gurion University, whose Faculty of Health Sciences is located on the hospital campus, and its Medical School for International Health.

On par with leading international institutions, Soroka specializes in areas that include early detection and treatment of breast cancer using minimally invasive procedures, non-invasive removal of malignant tumors, trauma rehabilitation of children and adolescents, pediatric infectious diseases, and more.

Each year, excellent care is provided for more than 595,000 visits at outpatient clinics; 248,000 patient visits at our Emergency Medicine Department (the busiest in the country); 83,000 inpatient admissions; over 30,000 surgical procedures; and more than 17,000 babies are born.

Soroka is a level-one trauma center and includes centers of excellence in fields such as genetics, pediatric trauma and infectious diseases, cardiothoracic surgery, cancer care, clinical research, and more.

Soroka’s Trauma Unit is one of the largest and busiest in Israel, always on call, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Soroka serves as the regional trauma center for victims of terror and for all Israel Defense Force bases in and near the Negev. This need for these services is unfortunately constant and increasing in light of the ongoing security situation in areas bordering Gaza.

Soroka Medical Center stands at the forefront of medical progress and is currently upgrading and enhancing research capabilities and the healthcare it provides. Soroka’s staff is dedicated to advancing research and providing optimal medical and emergency care while treating the patient as a whole human being.
Contact:

Soroka Medical Center

Dr. Shlomi Codish
Director General
Tel: +972-8-640-3408, Fax: +972-8-627-7364
E-mail: shlomico@clalit.org.il

Orna Myara
Director of External Affairs and Friends of Soroka Medical Center
Tel: +972-8-640-3963, Fax: +972-8-636-5478
E-mail: ornamy@clalit.org.il

Dr. Gerry Showstack
Resource Development
Tel: +972-54-220-2608, Fax: +972-8-646-7435
E-mail: gerry@stack.co.il

American Friends of Soroka Medical Center

Rachel Heisler-Sheinfeld
P.O Box 184-H Scarsdale, NY 10583
Tel: 914-725-9070, Fax: 914-725-9073
E-mail: americanfriends@soroka.org

website: www.soroka.org