

Welcome from the Council Co-Chairs

Welcome to the Hadassah Physicians Council Spring Newsletter.

This time of social distancing lends itself to introspection. The Jewish people, Israel and Hadassah have met many challenges throughout history with strength, resourcefulness, and resilience. We turn to what's most important: our core values and connection to each other, whether it be virtual or in person. Israel and Hadassah Medical Organization have served as examples for the rest of the world in effective managing of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in treating patients of all backgrounds and ethnicities. May we continue in our sacred professional tasks.

Thank you for all you do for your patients and for Hadassah. At this particular time of need, we are tangibly making the world a better place, practicing *tikkun olam*. Let's look forward to the future: our trip to Israel April 8-17, 2021. Next year in Jerusalem!

Stacey Keen & Laura Brandspiegel
Co-Chairs, Hadassah National Physicians Council

Member Spotlight

My name is Jo-Ann Harris, and I live in Kansas City, Missouri. I have been practicing Pediatric Infectious Disease for almost 40 years. As a Professor of Pediatrics, I have tried to make a lasting difference in children's lives. Once I retired from academic medicine, I helped start two pediatric specialty programs. I am now semi-retired. It is important to me to continue to advocate for children, and my participation in Hadassah Physician Council has helped me do that.



My path to the Hadassah Physician's Council started when I was a child. My mother was highly active in Jewish organizations in the Chicago area, Hadassah being one of them. I watched her and her friends volunteer, and that made a big impression on me. When I grew up and finished my medical training in Kansas, I moved to Massachusetts and worked at

Boston City Hospital. I began by donating to Hadassah. Then I got involved in my local chapter through my synagogue. I eventually became a Life Member.

When I moved back to Kansas City in 2004, I was only minimally involved until there was a movement to start a Physician's Council as part of the Greater Kansas City Chapter. Once I became active in the Physician's Council, I became excited to be active in Hadassah again. Our Physician's Council wants to be an asset to the Kansas City community. We started off by developing educational programs including "Stop the Bleed" and "Controversies in Pediatric Vaccination: A Jewish Approach". Due to COVID-19, we were not able to have an in-person conference, so we switched to a virtual program which went national with the help of many people at Hadassah. I also gave a virtual program nationally on COVID-19 for Hadassah members who were wanting the facts about the outbreak (see below). It is a privilege and an honor to be an active member of Hadassah again and be a part of the newly formed Greater Kansas City Physician's Council.

Webinar Recap: "Understanding Coronavirus"

On Monday, March 23, 2020, the Physicians Council along with the Nurses & Allied Health Professionals Council sponsored a very timely webinar titled "Understanding Coronavirus." The intended audience was both physicians and lay people. The webinar was presented by Dr. Jo-Ann Harris, a consultant in Pediatric Infectious Diseases, who is currently working at Overland Park Regional Medical Center. Dr. Harris gave a very informative presentation about COVID-19 just as quarantine was beginning for all of us. The presentation was followed by an equally informative and lively Q&A session. Approximately 300 people attended the webinar via computer or phone. An additional 230 people viewed the recording, which is still available [here](#).



Webinar Recaps

"Acute Leukemia: What's New in the Past 40 Years"

On March 16, 2020, Boaz Nachmias MD, PhD presented the Physicians Council webinar "Acute Leukemia: What's New in the Past 40 years." Dr. Nachmias, currently a post-doctoral fellow at Princess Margaret Cancer Research Center in Toronto, Canada, is a clinical research scientist. His current research is devoted to discovering new vulnerabilities in myeloid leukemic stem cells.

Dr. Nachmias presented a thorough review of Acute Myeloid Leukemia, from clinical presentation through diagnosis, treatment, follow up, and palliative care. He also discussed ongoing research involving genes affecting growth and viability of leukemic stem cells. Therapies

that have evolved in the past four decades, such as bone marrow transplantation, have prolonged the lives of patients stratified by risk based on cytogenetic and molecular factors. Dr. Nachmias is scheduled to return to the Hematology Department at Hadassah next year to lead the clinical and research efforts in acute leukemia. You can watch a recording of the webinar [here](#).



"Controversies in Pediatric Vaccinations"

The Kansas City Physicians Council shared their webinar, "Controversies in Pediatric Vaccinations," on March 31, 2020. Moderated by Dr. Adam Kaye, the webinar's featured speakers included Rabbi Monica Kleinman; pediatrician Dr. John Lantos; Dr. Jo-Ann Harris, specialist in Pediatric Infectious Disease; and Dr. Lee Norman, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).

The webinar covered several aspects of the controversies surrounding vaccination. Rabbi Kleinman addressed the Jewish religious perspective, and Dr. Lantos discussed ethical issues of vaccination. In addition to debunking myths and misconceptions about vaccine safety, Dr. Harris added the global perspective, along with her professional and personal experience. Dr. Norman addressed public health concerns, including the need for strong laws supporting public health. Thank you, Kansas City, for inviting us to participate and learn from this webinar and thorough discussion. This webinar and others related to health and wellness are available for viewing [here](#).



"Breast Cancer Treatment in the Time of COVID-19"

In honor of Mother's Day, the Physicians Council presented the webinar "HMO COVID-19 Update & Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis in the time of COVID-19" on May 11, 2020. It was open to all Hadassah members.

Dr. Stacey Keen, co-chair of the Hadassah Physicians Council and diagnostic radiologist specializing in breast imaging, discussed current recommendations. Dr. Keen noted that breast cancer and other illnesses don't stop during a pandemic. Now patients and health care providers are balancing local risk from illness or death from healthcare-acquired COVID-19 with the patient-specific risk of illness or death from postponing an examination or procedure. Breast cancer patients are still being treated, mitigating risks, and patient care is not being compromised.

Dr. Karen Ezrine, HMO Chair, then gave an update on the COVID-19 situation in Israel. When it was evident that there was a global pandemic, the Hadassah Medical Organization sprang into action. Within one week in March, two floors of the Round Building were converted into ICU beds for care of COVID-19 patients. With extensive testing of patients and staff, Hadassah Hospitals were vigilantly separated between the COVID-19 unit in the Round Building and the COVID-free Sarah Wetsman Davidson Tower and Mount Scopus campus, thereby maintaining care for all patients requiring hospitalization. Hadassah has also been at the forefront of research in the development of effective treatments and vaccines for COVID-19.

You can watch this and other webinars [here](#). And to support Hadassah Hospitals during the COVID-19 crisis, go [here](#).

Hadassah Physicians and Healthcare Workers Making News



Hadassah Hospital recently made major news with an astonishing front-page story in the *New York Times* titled: "In Israel, Modern Medicine Grapples with Ghosts of the Third Reich." The story follows an Arab Muslim surgeon at Hadassah Hospital who operated on a Jewish patient injured in a terrorist attack, using illustrations from an anatomy textbook written by a Nazi professor from Vienna. Incidentally, Dr. Madi El-Haj, the surgeon featured in the story, joined the Physicians Council's breakfast at Hadassah's Convention in NYC in July 2019, where the council members got to directly hear from him about his life and his relationship with this particular patient. [Read the entire incredible story.](#)

You can find many stories about our healthcare workers and hospitals on Hadassah's [COVID-19 update webpage](#) and also on the [website news page](#).

As always, the Hadassah On Call podcast has insider stories about Hadassah Medical Organization doctors and specialists, patients and nurses. A special bonus episode had an insightful and important update, titled "Where Are We Now? COVID-19 Update with Hadassah's Dr. Ran Nir-Paz." You can listen [here](#).



Help Us Raise Funds:

In Memory of Dr. Nancy Dintenfass

The Physicians Council is raising funds in memory of Dr. Nancy Dintenfass, an esteemed Hadassah and Physicians Council member who passed away in 2018. In

addition to the caring, warm person we remember, Nancy was a wonderful radiologist specializing in Breast Imaging. Our goal is to raise \$36,000 for a fully equipped double patient room in the Hematology Oncology Department in the Round Building. Please join us in creating this legacy. The link to the Hadassah special page about Nancy including the donation code is available online [here](#).

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