Dear friends,

With the beneficent days of Hanukka at hand, I wish to express my gratitude to the staff of Magen Lacholeh—Shield and Protector of the Sick—which toils around the clock to brighten the lives of those immersed in darkness.

We labor to illuminate their lives both by helping them get answers to their questions, providing psychological support, keeping them company in the hospital, and so on.

The devoted staff makes sure that no one who seeks our assistance is left unrequited.

Recently, I spent some time abroad for Magen Lacholeh and the wonderful staff did so much to make sure those contacting us would find responses to their needs despite the geographic distance.

We express our profound gratitude to those doing the labor and to the aides who supported and helped our recent crowdfunding campaign [קמפיין גיוס ההמונים?] to succeed, allowing us to continue spreading the light of Magen Lacholeh.

Yours,
Benjamin Fisher,
Chair, Magen Lacholeh Society

———

Michal (not her real name) experienced a grave personal trauma.

Her son was killed in a heinous terror attack. She felt poorly for a very long time but attributed this to her inability to recover from the loss of her son.

Sometime later, Michal visited a doctor who informed her, after a series of tests, that she had cancer. After he showered her with stories about her condition and, speaking in medical jargon and describing various treatments that might help her, as well as their side-effects, Michal felt that she was drowning and that her world was crashing down on her.

She felt that she had nothing for which to greet the morning.

Friends and relatives who observed her plight urged her to contact Rabbi Benjamin Fisher at Magen Lacholeh. Michal made a phone call and Kobi—one of Magen Lacholeh’s devoted hotline operators—answered and listened as she poured out her woes. Kobi began to broach the question; in the midst of her words he detected her acute distress and realized that immediate care was needed. He forwarded the question to Rabbi Fisher as an urgent one. After Rabbi Fisher heard the question, reviewed the documents, and heard her story, he contacted Michal at once. He listened to her at length and learned about her medical condition, the answers her doctors had given, and her psychological distress. They wept together. Slowly Rabbi Fisher explained to Michal her medical condition in comprehensible language and described the methods of treatment and the implications of each.

Michel ended the conversation in an uplifted mood. She understood her condition and began to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Rabbi Fisher and the Magen Lacholeh staff continued to steward Michal in every sense: visiting doctors, undergoing treatments, carrying on with daily life, and all her needs.

Each time anew we see that the patient’s emergence from psychological distress with our accompaniment and support is an important part of his or her convalescence.

——

Avi (not his real name) turned to Magen Lacholeh and asked for a consultation with Rabbi Fisher concerning his case. Avi had undergone several tests and was diagnosed with lymphoma. Rabbi Fisher listened to Avi’s description of the case, reviewed all the medical documents, and asked Avi to undergo further tests. The results came in and all the doctors reached the same conclusion: lymphoma!

Rabbi Fisher, however, felt that something was amiss.

Avi continued the process in order to start treating the illness. The day for his first treatment came.

All that time, Rabbi Fisher did not give up. He sat and reviewed the case again and again and sought the assistance of experts in order to satisfy himself that Avi really did have lymphoma. The answer was not long in coming: **Avi had an infection!** Yes, it was a serious infection, one that might present symptoms of lymphoma—but it was “only” an infection.

Avi had already reached the room where he would receive his first treatment for lymphoma. Rabbi Fisher removed him from the room at once so that he would not be treated for a disease that he did not have. Avi began to receive the appropriate treatment for his infection and, with G-d’s help, is already showing signs of recovery.

We are happy to have spared Avi from unnecessary torments that might have caused lifelong side effects.

——

Hello, my name is Adina.

I’d like to tell you about something that happened to us not long ago. Our baby girl, four days old, was found ill in her crib. We rushed her to the hospital, where the doctors discovered a heart defect and advised us to have her undergo surgery as quickly as possible.

They suggested that we bring our baby daughter from Jerusalem to Schneider Children’s Hospital in Petah Tikva for the operation. We saw no alternative; the doctors insisted that the local hospital had no room for her and that we had to act quickly to save her life. We were confused and stunned. We felt alone, facing an enormous system that had no concern for us and our needs.

We contacted Magen Lacholeh for help. Rabbi Fisher immediately got in touch with the director of Hadassah Hospital in Ein Karem. Within minutes, he secured a place at Hadassah for our daughter’s operation. All of a sudden, there was no need to take a lengthy and dangerous trip to a faraway hospital. We could stay in Jerusalem and bring our daughter to a place where she’d get the treatment that she needed, without leaving town and without forgoing the family support that she needed so badly. What can we say? We were facing a huge and cumbersome system and Rabbi Fisher simply opened the door and gave us the help that we needed at so difficult a time. We will never cease to thank G-d for Magen Lacholeh and for the way they took care of us.