



*Elul 5781 / September 2021*

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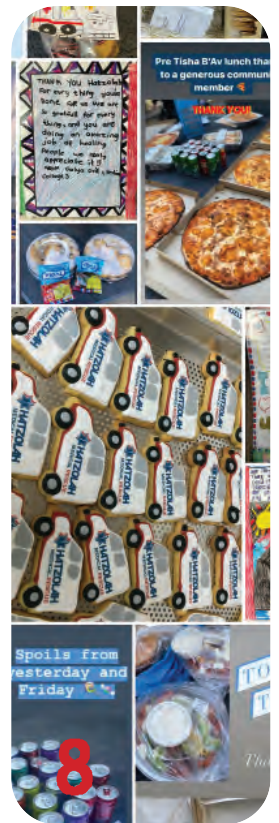
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Insignia Advertising

[www.insigniaadvertising.co.za](http://www.insigniaadvertising.co.za)









# Message From The Chairman Lance Abramson



2020 ended in the middle of the second Covid wave which certainly put a damper on the December holiday period. When it was over, we hoped for much needed rest and relief before the coming of the third wave, but just a few months later the third wave in our community started, well before the national third wave, and nobody could envisage just how bad it would be.

Once again the team was called on to step up bravely in the face of Covid. And despite being tired from the previous two waves, they did so in the most magnificent way.

In hindsight the numbers were staggering. At the peak of the third wave we were looking after nearly four times the number of patients than at the peak of the second wave.

Our ambulances were transporting Covid positive patient after patient to hospital under extremely challenging circumstances. The hospitals were full and the crews often sat with their patient in the ambulance in the hospital parking lot for many hours.

The emergency line rang continually 24 hours a day and there was no respite.

The Covid Wellness team monitored and cared for over 3,600 patients in this wave alone with an extraordinary amount of logistics required to achieve this.

Our CRU team made many, many phone calls to emotionally distressed patients to help them through the fear and anxiety that contracting Covid brings with it.

Visitors to our base during the morning rush hour could not believe the scale of what was going on - ambulance crews, Hatzolah Assist drivers, nurses starting their nursing rounds, oxygen deliveries going out and pulse oximeter deliveries being readied for new patients who were signing up by the hundreds. Staggering.

This magazine gives the reader a small insight into a truly heroic team effort to hold the community through this worst wave of the pandemic so far, as well as some of the many other projects that are being run by the team.

To the team - I humbly salute each and every one of you, in whatever role you played, for your tireless work at this most difficult of times, a truly astonishing effort!

On behalf of Hatzolah I wish our precious community a Shanah Tovah U'metukah. Thank you for your unbelievable support and outpouring of gratitude to our team during this time, it gives us strength to keep going. May the new year bring much needed relief in so many ways from this terrible pandemic!

# Message From Rabbi Yechezkel Auerbach

Years ago, someone wanted to send a telegram but was limited in how many words he could write. He was debating whether to include; "please" or "thank you"; he did not have the space to write both. He asked the great Rav Yechezkel Abramsky z"l what he should do. The Rabbi answered unequivocally that the "thank you" is definitely what must be expressed, because it is so vital and essential to be grateful towards those that help us.

Rav Moshe Feinstein z'l, the greatest halachic authority in America in the twentieth century, had wonderful memories of the four years he spent learning under Rabbi Pesach Pruskin in Shklov. Six years later, he sent a wedding gift to Rav Pesach's granddaughter, writing, "This gift is nothing compared to the gratitude I feel to my teacher and master."

This past year, during the Covid 19 epidemic, we are more than ever obliged to express our deep and heartfelt gratitude to each and every member of Hatzolah, who have dedicated their time, energy and lives to ensure the health of our Jewish community.

The Wellness Program has ensured that the many people who have contracted the virus are looked after not only medically but emotionally as well. It has been so reassuring for each patient to know that he is being cared for in the best way possible. Hatzolah lifts up the patient's spirits, which contributes enormously to his recovery.

Let us all show our appreciation to Hatzolah by increasing our financial support and constantly expressing our appreciation for their remarkable work, which will also help inspire them to carry on this incredible work during these most challenging of times.

Wishing everyone continued good health and hatzlocha in this Avodat Hakodesh, holy work.





# Message From The Chief Rabbi

## Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein



Weathering the Covid pandemic without Hatzolah's care, dedication and professionalism is unthinkable. Hatzolah has been there with our community every step of the way.

My family and I experienced this for ourselves when we contracted the coronavirus during the second wave, and were among the beneficiaries of the incredible work that they have done and continue to do daily for the many patients in their care. They called us twice a day, monitored our health stats and checked our vitals, liaised with doctors and the labs - and were an enormous source of support, assistance and reassurance.

It is not only their practical assistance that's invaluable, but also the peace of mind they provide. Knowing that there are loving professionals on the other end of the line - equipped to handle all questions, carefully monitor the progress of the disease and ensure the right interventions are carried out if necessary - lifts a tremendous weight of responsibility and a mental load from those who have become infected.

As a community, we are eternally grateful to you. Not only for all the years of being the first responders to all medical emergencies, but especially now - during the Covid pandemic - when you have come to the fore as partners of Hashem.

The Talmud identifies the verse: "And you shall surely heal" as the mandate for doctors to heal. Through this Divine mandate, healthcare professionals become G-d's partners. Hashem is the ultimate source of healing, as is evident from the verse: "I Hashem am your healer." But He works through doctors and other healthcare workers, and the medicines and treatments they provide. With G-d's blessing, heroic healthcare workers perform His holy work in this world. In this profound sense, Hatzolah is indeed Hashem's partner, bringing healing and health to our community.

As we approach Rosh Hashanah, we ask Hashem to bless the brave and dedicated Hatzolah team - its board, responders, dispatchers and wellness advisors - with a year of blessing and health. And in the merit of their mitzvahs, may Hashem bless our community, our country and our world with health and healing in the year ahead.

With blessings,

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein

# Message From The Executive GM Darren Kahn



Looking back over the past challenging year at Hatzolah, I can reflect on so many experiences within this phenomenal organisation. The enormous amount of effort, energy and expense put into our Covid Wellness Monitoring Programme, including contracting over 20 nurses and Hatzolah Assist drivers and employing tens of additional administration staff and runners. Sourcing sufficient equipment and oxygen concentrators to meet the need of our overwhelming patient numbers. Our fire hydrant project which included auditing over 2500 hydrants. We obtained a vaccination site permit. We went through an intense audit to obtain our EMS license due to new regulations. Our gemach continued to assist hundreds of recipients with various items of medical equipment.

Hatzolah also realised the great importance of the connection between physical and emotional well-being, hence introducing various projects to support the mental wellness needs of our community. We launched Hatzolah Connect for teens. Hatzolah Cares about Moms is a new brand that aims to acknowledge and highlight the struggles and achievements of all moms at different phases of motherhood. The Hatzolah emotional support line provides community members with a confidential platform to voice their feelings and anxieties.

I could continue writing about all the other projects and daily operational functions that go on behind the scenes unnoticed. For me however, what has had the most profound impact this last year, is having witnessed our amazing team in action and having felt the support of our wonderful community.

To our entire Hatzolah team, whichever role you fulfil, it has been such a difficult year. Not only have you all stood up to every challenge, but your strength of character has shone through. I applaud each and every one of you. You are the most incredible team. There is no possible way that Hatzolah could operate without the outstanding effort of each individual. What makes your achievements even more special is that all is done with such genuine care and concern. The community have really felt this in their interactions with you. We thank your families for sharing your precious time with us. May Hashem give you all strength to continue your service to the community. The community is blessed to have all of you.

To our special community, thank you for your continued support and Hakarat Hatov which has allowed us to continue operating this amazing organisation during such a challenging time.

May Hashem bless everyone with health, happiness and success and may these difficult times to be short lived.

Shana Tova!





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# Dinner 2020

Early December, we saw an opportunity to celebrate, recognise and thank our dedicated volunteers for everything they had done over the past year.

Thank you to Huddle Park for providing a venue for our "Road House" themed evening and to all the donors who spoilt the Team









# Thank You Letters

Dear Gavin, Meir and Avrami

On behalf of my husband Xxxxx, my children and myself, I would like to sincerely thank you all for your very professional, kind and caring assistance, that went beyond the call of duty to take care of my husband on Sunday night.

Thank you also, for staying with us so late, until a bed for the night had been arranged.

We really appreciated all your efforts and for keeping us in the loop as to what was happening.

May you all be showered with an abundance of brochas from Hashem, for the invaluable service that you do so willingly.

To the entire Hatzolah team

Words cannot start to express our extreme thanks for the love, caring and support we received over the past couple of weeks as my husband, daughter and I were identified as being Covid positive.

The immediate reaction of the Hatzolah's Wellness team over the past 10 days has been remarkable. Every call we got was compassionate and caring.

Today culminated in my daughter receiving a bunch of balloons to record "she survived Covid".

With all the media around this tragic virus, children have struggled to come to terms with the new way of life and then having been tested positive, she was very anxious for her own and her parents wellbeing. Hatzolah cared - and the balloons put a smile on her face that reached from corner to corner of her face.

THANK YOU, ALL SO, SO MUCH!

You are remarkable and wonderful people and I hope you all realise what a positive impact you are having on so many people.

To Whom it may concern,

I was monitored by Racheli Segal whilst being under the care of Hatzolah as a Covid patient 18th -27th June. I am moved beyond words at Racheli's sincere dedication during my illness. Even the wisdom with which she encouraged me to observe Shabbos left me absolutely moved.

My observance was inspirational thanks to Racheli. I thank you for making such a difference to my sickness. Racheli, you are a light and I shall never forget your care.

I was planning to contact you later this week to let you know how impressed and appreciative I have been with Hatzolah. I contracted Covid at the end of last month and was on the Hatzolah programme. Thankfully, my symptoms remained mild, I needed no special treatment and I have recovered quickly. Nevertheless, within about an hour of registering on the website, I had an oximeter and thermometer dropped off at my home by Calev and was then contacted twice per day without fail by Phillipa for my stats. It was incredibly comforting to know that I was being monitored carefully and that help would be at hand in the event that I needed it. This really took all the fear and anxiety off the table for me, which made a huge difference. I am very grateful that I did not need anything more. Please express my appreciation to the entire team.

At times like this its easy to believe in Angels.

Behind every successful organisation there is an extraordinary volunteer team.

Thank you all for a job well done. We felt completely safe and prepared in your capable hands.

Hatzolah, you have made yourselves the most respected and appreciated members of our community. For this we thank you.

Please accept the donation to show our sincere gratitude.


I'd like to thank the whole of Hatzolah and especially your dedicated nurses and Amy Selikson for their kindness, professionalism, care and concern.

They all made my recovery much easier and my family and I felt so supported.

Our gratitude to all of you. You made a huge difference!!!

Bit of a cheer for all of your incredible nurses. It's quite a person who can walk into a house that everyone else is running away from! Literally stare into the face of a disease! And a grumpy one at that!! Truly they are the heroes of this whole thing!!





My wife, C, is now on day 10 since the onset of her Covid symptoms and, T-G, has been well throughout. I just want to recognize and thank Hatzolah for the truly world class service you deliver and with such care and sensitivity. We are really so privileged to have such an organization for the Jews of this country.

I also want to single out Daniel Forman for his excellent care and caring. He's truly amazing.

Dear Hatzolah Legends

Last week I called with an emergency when my Mom fell at my house. The efficiency with Lauren over the phone was amazing. She was so calm, and so helpful.

The paramedics arrived in record time and so kindly assisted my mother into the ambulance and took her to Sunninghill hospital as per my request. She was due to be there the following day anyway for another procedure.

Really appreciate all from Hatzolah!  
Please note that my husband Xxxxxx does have a monthly debit order and will definitely continue with it indefinitely.

Thank you thank you sooooo much!

I have just submitted a donation to your organisation in appreciation of your efficient and timeous response to my plea for help when I was suffering from a heart attack early on Thursday morning. It was your organisations action that certainly saved my life and I am pleased to report that I survived the heart attack with very little damage.

Once again, thank you very much!

Just wanted to say a big thank you for the Saturday night team who transported to Edenvale Clinic.

Your knowledge, passion and determination in a difficult time was admirable. The service was truly impressive.

On behalf of my wife and myself, I'd like to express our sincere gratitude to the Hatzolah organisation for all the care and dedication we received when we had Covid.

I thank the dedicated team of nurses who visited every single day, the ambulance team that took me to hospital and the people behind the scenes. It would be difficult to name each nurse incase I omitted anyone. But I would like to thank Ethan Kahlberg for his twice daily calls to get the vitals, even on Shabbas morning when I asked him not to. He shows a genuinely sincere interest in the patient. And to Uriel Rosen who put it all together and to whom the whole community is indebted to.

Although I'm not quite there yet but very close to recovery I have decided to make my donation early to Hatzolah as from the rising cases in the community you may need to make use of it now.

Again I thank you all. An amazing asset of the community. What would we have done during this pandemic without you.

I really have no words to express my gratitude to Hatzolah. I recently tested positive for Covid and the support that I received from Hatzolah was absolutely phenomenal. The truth is that I don't know how I would have got through it without Tracey and Hatzolah.

The worst part of testing positive was having to deal with the anxiety of it. Tracey's morning and evening calls left me feeling calm and positive. I cannot think of any other way to describe Tracey than as a 'human angel'. Even after I had come out of isolation and had returned to work she continued to check in on me. Tracey also monitored my mother who was over 200kms away.

It gave us such piece of mind knowing that she was being taken care of. Hatzolah even went above and beyond and assisted to transport my nanny, who unfortunately also tested positive to hospital, when I was unable to do so. I feel so privileged and fortunate that I had access to this amazing organization at such a scary time. I always knew that Hatzolah was amazing but I am truly speechless and blown away by what you did for me and my family and our community. Thank you, thank you!

Good morning, I wanted to thank both Bernard and Doron for the gentle and professional manner in which they attended to me on Tuesday, when I fainted at Melrose Arch. I knew that I was in good hands as Hatzolah attended to my aunty last year.

Xxxxxx, my life partner, donated to Hatzolah just last week as he does on a regular basis, which turned out to be a blessing in a weird and wonderful way.

Our family is grateful to you - may Hashem bless you for your great deeds.



We feel extremely grateful to Hatzolah for the kindness and care shown to us when we had Covid19. Hatzolah helped us to identify that my husband was seriously ill and needed to be hospitalised.

Thankfully he made a quick recovery after that. Your wellness programme is outstanding, the daily nurses visits were so reassuring.

A special thank-you to Sharon who phoned daily with patience and kindness and adding a personal touch.

With deep gratitude and appreciation.

The care, protection and loving assistance you offer to those in crisis is amazing.

I don't believe there is another comparable rescue service like yours anywhere else in the world.

If there was a Nobel prize for a medical dedication and service provider you would be at the top of the list.

I know so many people whose lives have been saved by you and who are recovering from this dreaded Covid because of your continuous aftercare.

With my sincere thanks and respect for what you do.

I just thought you should know that I'm sending this email from my hospital bed as I just underwent a 9 hour operation.

My reason for this donation is that both my wife and I appreciate your passion in saving lives.

Dear Hatzolah Team

I am writing this to thank you for looking after and most likely saving 2 friends of mine. Xxxxxx and Xxxxx have been in your care for the last 3 months, as they have recovered from Covid.

What your organisation, and your people, have done for them has been nothing short of miraculous. Your care has been completely above and beyond. They have been looked after and loved every step of the way.

All your home care, your phone calls, your check-ins, your supply of equipment and oxygen. Your transport to the hospital. I have no doubt that you have saved both of their lives. You are all incredible, and you make the world we live in a wonderful place.

Thank you sincerely from the bottom of my heart.

A BIG Thank You to the Response Team that came around on the 18th of June 2021 to assist with a transfer to the Edenvale Hospital. I seem to have had a bad reaction, seizures, during that night. I remember 4 members of Hatzolah in the main bedroom, it was pretty scary. Long story short, after 2 days in the Edenvale Hospital, Casualty, then Resus Ward I was let home on Monday 20th June, and all appears well. A further thank you to another Dedicated Member of Hatzolah, Amy, who twice a day, once in the morning and again in the afternoon so dedicatedly calls to check on both my wife and I, our oxygen levels & temperature. Quite honestly what would the community do without you.

### THREEFOLD APPRECIATION

1. Shabbos morning February 22nd 2020 when I was called at shul to come home as my 4 year old has fallen off the bed. From being one petrified first-time mom when I saw the ambulance outside my building, until I saw Warren Katz who greeted me outside my building and reassured me that my daughter was BH ok and to Eli Lewenstein, Rael Jankelowitz and Meir Rosendorff who were sitting with my daughter in the lounge and calmed me and didn't leave my daughter and I until my daughter went to get stitches.

2. Fast forward to Monday 5th July 2021, a few hours after I got my positive Covid result and was given my oximeter and thermometer to monitor me at home, thanks to Michal who took that responsibility of checking up on me daily and who made sure that my vitals were good.

3. Finally, at this time I had Covid and was not driving and needed to go to my GP for a check-up, I thought maybe one of the Hatzolah assist vehicles would be able to give me a lift home from the GP, and sure enough I spoke to Shayna who organized one of your drivers to fetch me and bring me home.

My daughter and I are so blessed to have had such positive experiences with your team that are real Malachei Hashem and may Hashem always continue to bless you to us until 120!

Last week I had an emergency (August 2020, Sandringham) and needed the services of your medical team. My husband was concerned that I had sustained a serious neck injury and wasn't prepared to move me without professional help. Your team of 3 men arrived. They were incredible, gentle, caring and very thorough. Talking me through every move they were making to get me stabilized and moved to the ambulance as well as at the hospital. I'm pleased to inform you that I have only sustained severe muscle trauma/whiplash and fortunately nothing more serious. I wanted to thank you and your team for the services you offer.



Dearest Lesley

Thank you ever so much. You have helped me tremendously along the way. I genuinely appreciate it and admire what you do for our community as a whole.

You are an inspiration and a reminder that good people still exist... YOU are the champion here. I will never forget what you did for my family and myself

I feel that I need to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to Hatzolah, in general, and to Dan Forman, Warren Katz and Yudi Singer in particular.

On Friday night the 5th of February, on my walk home from shul, I tripped and fell awkwardly. As I was in considerable pain and could not be raised from the ground Hatzolah was called. Despite the fact that at the time of being summoned they were probably in the comfort of their homes ready to partake in the Sabbath meal with their families, these three "guardian angels" came to my rescue almost instantaneously. They then proceeded, with care and empathy, to raise me into the ambulance, make me as comfortable as possible, administer medication and convey me to the Milpark Casualty and Trauma Unit, all in the most professional manner. After the procedure of replacing my dislocated shoulder had been completed, because of the Corona virus, Hatzolah arranged for Albert to collect me at 11.30pm to take me home.

Words cannot adequately express my true appreciation. All I know is that our community is truly blessed to have an institution such as Hatzolah. May you grow from strength to strength.

I really don't know where to start or begin or show my gratitude sufficiently to this amazing and dedication organization who have not only helped myself, through this difficult and concerning period in my life, but the whole community of Johannesburg.

You are all just the most amazing bunch of dedicated people, from the drivers with their cheery ring at the gate, to the nurses, to the amazing Sharon Newfield who calls me twice a day and to Uriel for monitoring my progress and charting the way forward.

I could not have got through this horrendous time without you all being behind and beside me and I am happy to say, whilst still feeling the effect of Covid and the toll it has taken on my body, I am starting to get back to a more normal way of life and on the road, please goodness to a full and complete recovery.

I am so grateful that through your love and care I was able to remain in the comfort of my own home and to have the oxygen you kindly supplied and also the inverter and to have the able and professional help and encouragement of your nurses' daily visits to check all my vitals and progress. A big thank you and shout out to all the amazing nurses'. Daily visits to check all my vitals and progresses. They were all so professional and pleasant and also their drivers.

In this regard, I would like to give a big shout out to Nurse Mfani who visited me numerous times and was just totally amazing in every way. We built up an amazing friendship from each visit and subsequent to this original letter being sent, he supported me once my lifelong partner, has been admitted to the ICU at Morningside Clinic on a ventilator with Covid on 5 June and is please goodness making progress under their amazing team there. It is all so horrific. I just want to add, Mfani explained to me a lot about the ventilator etc, and was so caring, kind and encouraging to me and he is just the most amazing human.

To Sharon Newfield, you have been my daily rock, my sounding board and my voice of reasoning. You are a truly special human being and I cannot say a big enough thank you to you for all that you have done for me and continue to do. You are so level headed, knowledgeable and professional and I am honored to have you at the other end of my telephone line.

To Uriel, a big thank you too for monitoring and controlling whatever you have done.

To you, Hatzolah as an organization, you are just truly amazing in every single respect and we are blessed in Johannesburg, South Africa, to have such an organization which has cared for our community in our crisis and the way you do.

I have made a donation and it is a token in sincere appreciation of everything.

I would like to tender my very sincere thanks to the organisation of Hatzolah and to the two paramedics that attended to my extreme needs.

Two fantastic young men Gavin and Aaron who displayed great empathy to my wife and to myself. Chesed in the true meaning.

On behalf of my wife as well as myself I wish to tender our sincere thanks and gratitude for the truly excellent service we received.



Today I had a rather bad fall and really wasn't feeling well! I was with a friend who called my daughter ...she immediately called Hatzolah and a bunch of "angels" arrived within minutes!!!!

Hilly Reuben, Gavin Tuch and Warren Katz as well as Ashira Sackstein the dispatcher! We all say we are so blessed to have Hatzolah, today I experienced it first-hand. Such a bunch of caring, kind, gentle and such professional young people. So, devoted! They were all so reassuring and kind, and within no time at all, had treated and dressed my wounds, checked me out and made me promise to go straight to my GP for bloods.

I know how devoted my daughter is to Hatzolah... We are so proud! I want to express my gratitude to these fine people and thank you all for everything you do for our community. May Hashem bless you and yours.

I have today paid into your account a donation which is made in recognition of the amazing work and service provided by yourselves to the community and for the assistance which you rendered to Xxxx and I whilst we were infected by the Covid 19 virus.

The care and service given to us by Rabbi Eitan Ash was above and beyond our expectations.

A letter of appreciation to Lance Abramson, Uriel Rosen and Philippa Levitan.

My husband, myself and my husband's carer were all tested positive on 5th August. Our GP called to tell us the results and in the next minute she said we must register online immediately with the Hatzolah Covid Home Wellness Monitoring Programme. Philippa Levitan was assigned to check in on us. From her first phone call we connected. Some days I'd send her the vital signs as required twice a day and ask her nonetheless just to call me so I could speak to her to have the support and contact. Each morning an angel of an ICU nursing sister would arrive at our home to examine my husband. On the last day she saw the drastic deterioration and the rapidly weakening condition. The doctors and our children had unanimously decided my husband wouldn't go to hospital. We would nurse him at home. On his last Shabbat I received a call from Philippa to say the added oxygen machines were on their way with an inverter. Hatzolah had checked that we would have loadshedding that night and they didn't want us to be caught unawares. I explained to them to save the inverter for another patient as we fortunately had one. Before Shabbat I also spoke to Uriel Rosen the Operations Manager who told me he was available 24/7 if I needed him in the night and I was to call him. It was on Shabbat that I called to tell him my husband had passed away. The amazing part of this connection with Hatzolah is that we were in constant daily contact with people whom we had never met and they had never met us. Thank you for giving us the support and dignity for a very difficult time in our lives.

Hi Dani,

I have limited words which will adequately express how grateful I am for everything which you have done for me individually and my family as well. You were constantly there checking up on us, messaging and calling us no matter how early or how late. You were there for me making sure I was physically well but you were also there for me emotionally even once I had graduated from the programme. I felt safe, cared for and supported. You continued to support me when I was helping my mom which I didn't realize how much I needed it until I received it. When I received your messages or even saw your missed calls there was a warm feeling running through me. I don't know you but I can't forget you and all which you have done for me. Hashem should bless you with everything you need. He should go above and beyond for you like you went for me. With much Hakarus Hatov, a big smile and a warm heart I thank you. Thank you for helping me, being there for me and treating me as if you knew me.

Attached please find a donation in gratitude for the care and attention I received this past two weeks after being diagnosed as Covid positive.

Special thanks to Hannah who phoned me twice daily and helped me pull through this curse called Covid.

There are no words to describe the wonderful work Hatzolah does and may Hashem bless you all and keep you all safe and healthy.



This is a very appreciative shoutout in gratitude to THE WELLNESS TEAM. We are a Covid household at the moment, I joined the wellness programme when I tested positive as have asthma and wanted you guys to look after and monitor me and tell when I'm ok or not, this is a very strange virus as it passes through your body. Over the past days people keep asking me how I'm feeling, my answer is I have no idea but Hatzolah says I'm ok so I'm going with them for now.

My daughter tested positive before me but I didn't join her on because she was feeling awful but no breathing or chest issues. That's when Tanya shouted at me to join and we do what Tanya tells us so I joined her. Her beats per minute have been consistently very low, between 39 and 42, our caller Phillipa said she wanted to check out what to do, so a nurse was sent to us (Betty) and her ECG showed that her beats are very low and her heart is skipping a beat, ECG was repeated 10 minutes later and Betty called Uriel, he explained it, said we need to monitor it with a cardiologist and that we shouldn't panic, if there was reason for panic they would have sent an ambulance by now, it's the effect Covid is having on her heart.

Had Tanya not shouted at me and each of you had not done what you do on a daily basis we wouldn't have picked this up nice and early and PG can deal with it smoothly.

So if u ever feeling mundane and thankless please remember how grateful we are for what your whole programme and team in its entirety discovered for us and continues to monitor, blessings and thanks from the bottom of the XXX family hearts (and my daughters very low beats per minute heart).

It's quite weird to be on the receiving side and being the patients and words fail us and our family to thank Hatzolah for so (seemingly) effortlessly helping us during our clash with Corona.

A special thank you to our darling friend Sharon for calling us everyday and keeping us in the know with what to expect and what to do.

To Sister Mandy, a huge thank you as well, for coming every day (due to our little 18 month old Xxxx testing positive) to take our vitals.

And of course to our fellow dispatchers and responders for your messages, meals, care and concern throughout.

We want you all to know how difficult it was to be stuck overseas during the peak of Corona simply because we felt so helpless and wanting so badly to help had we been in SA.

So, we want to give a huge debt of gratitude to each and every one of you for holding the fort so valiantly and flying the Hatzolah flag so high, a banner that we can all be so proud to stand below.

With love and gratitude

Dear Hatzolah Family,

Being part of this organization is one of the hugest privileges.

Today we sent a team to take my mom in law to Linksfield.

Thank you - Gabi Chipkin, Yoni Mindel and Gabi Bender.

I know most people take for granted, that it is our 'job'. But I also know that we only have one team on a Sunday, I know that it takes extra special people to commit day after day to go to High Risk Covid calls. I know how long it takes to don and doff, I know that it also costs Hatzolah money for this whole process, even more so with the level of PPE we use. I know there is a whole decon process after the call - thank you to Albert and his team, who came in to decon after the call.

Uriel - you didn't have to be there but you came. Thank you. Thank you for managing wellness, for waiting for me to wash my mother in law's dogs so you could take off my PPE, for finding a bed in LPC (which seems to be a miracle these days).

Our wellness programme is the most reassuring thing - knowing she has been on her own but has been in Tali Ogus and the teams hands- changes EVERYTHING as a family member.

I watched this process today from a different perspective and I can't even begin to describe the nachas I felt. Knowing my mother-in-law was treated with love every step of the way and with world class care.

XXXXXX and I are so grateful.

# WE AS BNEI AKIVA WANT TO THANK YOU!

Thank you for all that you do for our community. We appreciate your constant work, care, effort and love offered to all of us!





# Mishloach Manot

Purim 2021 lurked on the horizon as we were tentatively emerging from the second wave of Covid. With restrictions in place and social gatherings not recommended, Hatzolah was in two minds about whether the Mishloach Manot fundraiser should even go ahead. A decision was taken to scale the project down and limit packing to the minimum number of individuals, in order to still provide this service to our community.

Sasfin so kindly came forward with their annual sponsorship and pupils of Glenoaks School assisted in building ambulance boxes. Amidst a sea of sanitiser, a small (distanced) team got to work, only to find that rather than diminishing, the demand had in fact grown due to our special and generous community wanting to support and thank Hatzolah for its work during the pandemic.

In record time, the Mishloach Manot were packed and just as quickly, sold out. We extend our grateful thanks to all who supported us in this venture, contributing to its great success.





# An e-card: Let them know you miss them, from anywhere in the world



Send e-cards to anyone, anywhere in the world

Send greetings to family and friends this Rosh Hashanah,  
with our broad and heart-warming selection of **e-cards**  
or **donate now!**

# Jozi 2 Jerusalem Cycle Challenge



Hatzolah is a "team" that saves lives and in that spirit of team work has built a formidable camaraderie around the Cape Town Cycle Tour and the 947 Cycle Challenge events.

Connected to the Cape Town Cycle Tour, the Hatzolah Cape Invasion cycling event is the annual ride from George to Gordons Bay. More than 50 cyclists participate in this venture and some go on to ride the Cape Town Cycle Tour. This has become an annual tradition and is a fun, team building, fundraiser.

The Covid crisis unfortunately put a hold on the event in 2021. But a good cause and a good team can never be stopped. Hatzolah, with the sponsorship of prizes from Jabra GN (Denmark) - Blue Tooth high end true wireless headphones (represented by Circuit City Electronics SA (Pty) Ltd., came up with a virtual cycling event to retain the camaraderie and team spirit that had been built up over the years with the George to Gordons Bay and Cape Town and 947 fixtures.

With extremely short notice the virtual event, which entailed achieving a combined cumulative distance of 9191 km - the distance between Johannesburg (Jozi) and Jerusalem, was set and the Hatzolah cyclists rose to the challenge. More than 70 cyclists participated in the virtual adventure that was set to coincide with week of "Yom Yerushalayim." Cyclists joined from Canada, Australia, Israel, Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. The first stage of the tour was launched on Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 and on Day 1 of the tour the combined distance covered was well over 7000 kilometers.

The tour was set to finish before Shabbat on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2021. The eventual combined distance covered was 11046 km and the prizes won were -

The 3 longest rides each won a Jabra Elite 85t top of the range true wireless blue tooth headset and they outrode reality

Martin Salkow - 738 km (Johannesburg)

Bongani Qwabe - 699km (Durban)

Bradley Smith - 576km (Johannesburg)

The team prizes of a Jabra Elite 75t went to Avron Krok (Durban) and Paul von Zwiklitz (Cape Town).

The virtual event enabled the Hatzolah cycling team that Darren Kahn, Sharon Newfield and Mark Kruger had pioneered to keep the team spirit during Covid.

This event raised some much-needed funds for Hatzolah and we look forward to doing this as an annual event. This community has a lot to be grateful for with the Hatzolah team.











- Male
- Shomrei Shabbat
- Available for 1-Year full time
- Matric Certificate
- Remain committed and respond for Hatzolah for 5 years after

# THE WORLD NEEDS MORE YOUS

*Join the Hatzolah Gap Year: Gain a Higher Certificate in Emergency Medical Care, and join our medical team as a volunteer or even full time. **Learn, travel and grow.** All covered by a full bursary.*

---

**SHIUR-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMME**  
**FULL-TIME COURSE IN EMERGENCY MEDICINE**  
**WORK ALONGSIDE QUALIFIED RESPONDERS**  
**SEA AND BUSH GETAWAYS**  
**FULL MEALS DAILY**

---

**STARTING JANUARY 2022. PLACES ARE LIMITED**

For further information email: [hatzolahgap360@hatzolah.co.za](mailto:hatzolahgap360@hatzolah.co.za)



# Team Hatzolah



## Hatzolah Board Members

From left to right:

Chairman **Lance Abramson**, Patent Attorney, Partner - Spoor & Fisher  
Legal Director **David Shapiro**, Attorney and Director - David Shapiro & Associates Inc  
Medical Director **Dr Reuven Jacks**, Medical Doctor and Trauma Surgeon  
Operations Director **Dovber Unterslak**, Head of Sales and Marketing - Xtend SA  
HR Director **Clive Breger**, Entrepreneur and Owner - Nicci Boutiques  
Financial Director **Gilly Levy**, Entrepreneur and Owner - Proraiz



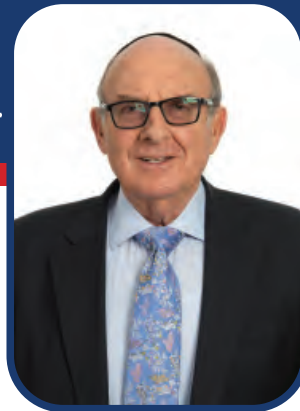
President  
**Brian Jude**



Executive General Manager  
**Darren Kahn**

Hatzolah is registered as an NPC in terms of Schedule 1 of Act 71 of 2008. Hatzolah is run and managed by a board of directors consisting purely of volunteers.

## Team Hatzolah Volunteer Fundraising Team



PHILIP JACOBSON



STEVEN GREENSTEIN



MARK KRUGER

## Team Hatzolah Volunteer Cycle Tour Coordinator

## Team Hatzolah Full Time Fundraising Team



AVRIL JOSEPH



LEIGH GOLDIN



MARCELLE PHILLIPS



RAEL SUPER

## Team Hatzolah Full Time Fundraising Team



## Team Hatzolah Admin Team



JUDY TEPERSON -  
Front Desk



SHARON NEWFIELD -  
Events Manager



STACY AMBER -  
Financial Manager



SHELLEY COHEN -  
Bookkeeper

## Team Hatzolah Accounts Team

## Team Hatzolah Cleaning Team



MABEL MALEGU



VANESSA ZWELIBANZI



SHERI HANSON

## Team Hatzolah Crisis Response Unit

# Team Hatzolah

## Full Time Team



**ALBERT NDLOVU**  
Logistics Assistant



**ASHIRA SACKSTEIN**  
Dispatcher  
Wellness Manager



**AVIGDOR HACK**  
Responder (ALS)



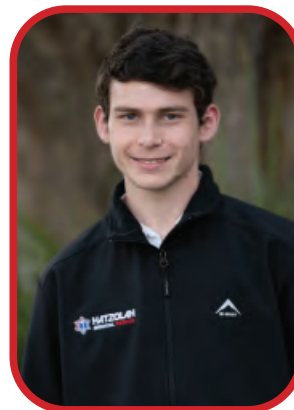
**BERNARD SEGAL**  
Responder (ILS)  
Infection Control Manager  
Special Projects Manager



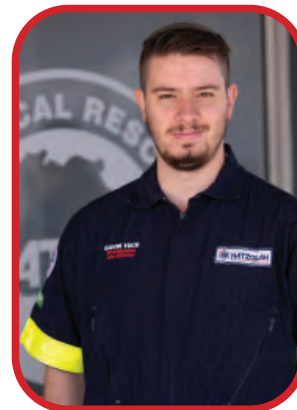
**DANI ABRAMSON**  
Dispatcher  
Marketing Coordinator  
Wellness Manager



**DORON SUSMAN**  
Responder (ILS)  
Logistics & Operations  
Assistant Manager



**DANIEL KRUGER**  
Responder (ECA)



**GAVIN TUCH**  
Responder (ILS)



**HILLY REUBEN**  
Responder (ILS)  
Hatzolah Assist Manager  
Hugo's Heroes Manager



**LAUREN SMITH**  
Dispatcher



**RYAN KRAWCHUCK**  
Logistics & Technical  
Manager  
Volunteer Responder (BLS)

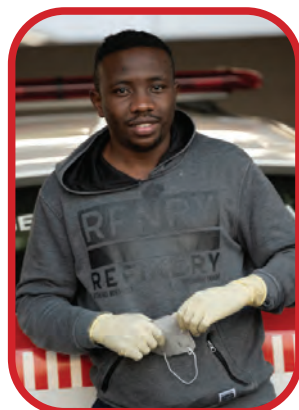


**SISQO BUTHULEZI**  
Decontamination



# Team Hatzolah

## Full Time Team



**TYE SHURO**  
Decontamination



**URIEL ROSEN**  
Responder (ALS)  
Coordinator of  
Wellness Programme  
Operations Manager



**WARREN KATZ**  
Responder (ILS)  
Hatzolah Blood Drive  
Coordinator  
Hugo's Heroes Assistant  
Wellness Manager



**YEHUDA SEVITZ**  
Responder (ILS)



**YUDI SINGER**  
Responder (ALS)  
Medical Manager  
Training Center Manager  
Vaccination Site Manager

**Full timers:**  
3 Advanced Life  
Support (ALS)  
6 Intermediate  
Life Support (ILS)  
1 Emergency Care  
Assistant (ECA)  
3 dispatchers  
11 administration  
staff

**Volunteers:**  
64 volunteer responders  
24 volunteer dispatchers  
29 volunteer Crisis  
Response Unit

## HATZOLAH CALL STATISTICS 2020/2021

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	
	31	31	30	31	30	31	31	29	31	30	31	30	
Total Calls	235	182	186	197	179	193	226	185	185	182	215	289	2454
Average per day	7.6	5.9	6.2	6.4	6.0	6.2	7.3	6.4	6.0	6.1	6.9	9.6	6.7



**HATZOLAH**  
083 222 1818

# Team Hatzolah Dispatchers



ASHIRA SACKSTEIN



CARON LEVY



DANI ABRAMSON



DAVID RONTAL



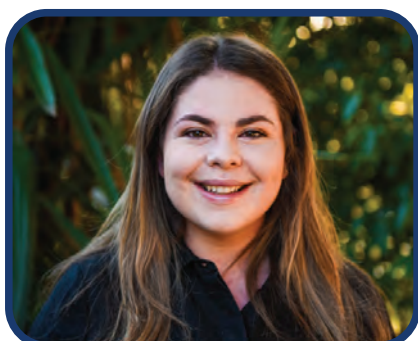
DEENA GISCHEN



DOVBER UNTERSLAK



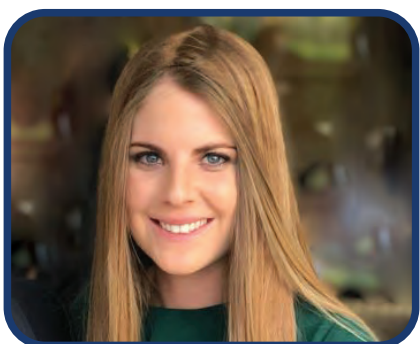
ESTER LEVY



GABI CHIPKIN



JASON NEWFIELD



KIRA JACOBS



LAUREN SMITH



NATANYA PALAY



# Team Hatzolah Dispatchers



PHILIPA LEVITAN



ROBYN KAHLBERG



ROBYN SHAPIRO



ROMY GREENBERG



RONIT JANET



RONIT KALMEK



SHEVI JASSINOWSKY



TALYA CHEMEL



TANYA JOSELOWSKY



TRACEY RIBEIRO



URIEL ROSEN



YUDI SINGER



# Team Hatzolah Responders



AARON FLEISHMAN



ALON FITTINGHOFF



ALON JOSEPH



ARIEL BENDER



ARIEL YUTER



ASHER GOLDBERG



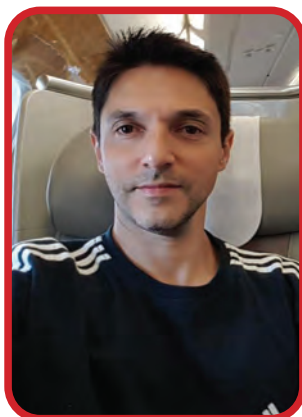
AVIGDOR HACK



AVI JOSEPH



AVRAMI NOSSEL



BEN SMOLOWITZ



BERNARD SEGAL



CHAIM SARCHI



# Team Hatzolah Responders



CHAIM SCHNEIDER



CHOLI FEINBLUM



CRAIG STOLLARD



DANI TABACK



DANIEL FORMAN



DANIEL KRUGER



DANIEL SINGER



DAVID JOFFE



DORON DEFRIES



DORON SUSMAN



DORYN MYERS



DOVI JOEL

# Team Hatzolah Responders



ELI LEWENSTEIN



GABI BENDER



GAVIN TUCH



HILLY REUBEN



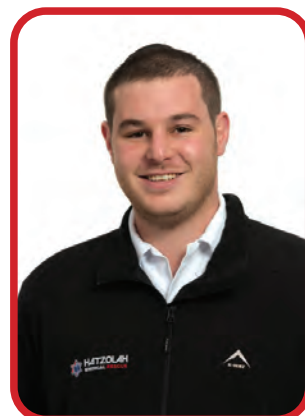
JARED LANDSMAN



JASON BOME



JAYDEN WRIGHT



JOSH GOODMAN



JOSH GREEN



JOSH SMITH



JOSH VICTOR



JUDD BAUM



# Team Hatzolah Responders



JUSTIN FRIEDMAN



JUSTIN GILLMAN



LANCE ABRAMSON



LIAV COHEN



LIOR CHERNICK



MEIR ROSENDORFF



MENDY ORELOWITZ



MICHAEL WINGRIN



MIKE LEWIS



MOSHE AMOILS



MOSHE UNTERSLAK



NETANEL AZIZ

# Team Hatzolah Responders



RAEL JANKELOWITZ



RAFI JUDE



RAPHI DRUION



REUVEN JACKS



RYAN KRAWCHUK



SAUL JASSINOWSKY



URIEL ROSEN



WARREN BAUM



WARREN KATZ



YAAKOV SUSSMAN



YEHUDA SEVITZ



YONAH EMANUEL



# Team Hatzolah Responders



YONATAN MOFFSON



YONI MINDEL



YOSEF SHISHLER



YUDI SINGER

# Team Hatzolah Shabbos Drivers



ALBERT NDLOVU



DANIEL RAKGEDI



IRVIN MUNZARA



MPHO SELEKE



PETRUS MANYANE



PROUD HOVE



SAMUEL GOLOLO



SIMON SIBANDA

# Neshama Spouses Support Group

"Our community wouldn't work and survive without the part they play."

We hear this so often from people sharing their experiences with Hatzolah during these crazy times. It seems there will never be enough "thank-yous" for the incredible members of Hatzolah, not to mention the doctors, nurses and all frontline staff who are working around the clock to help patients with Covid. This virus is soul destroying and physically and emotionally draining. Our spouses' dedication, determination and spirit inspire us, the families, to enable our loved ones on the frontline to help our community survive.



JADE SINGER



LINDSAY ROSEN

Neshama has been our support system; having someone that understands our fears, that acknowledges that our emotions are felt by our extended family too. Our Neshama family was established around showing appreciation to the spouses of those choosing to give back to the wonderful community through Hatzolah, no matter the day, time, place or situation.

Never in our wildest dreams did we think that it would turn into something so much greater.

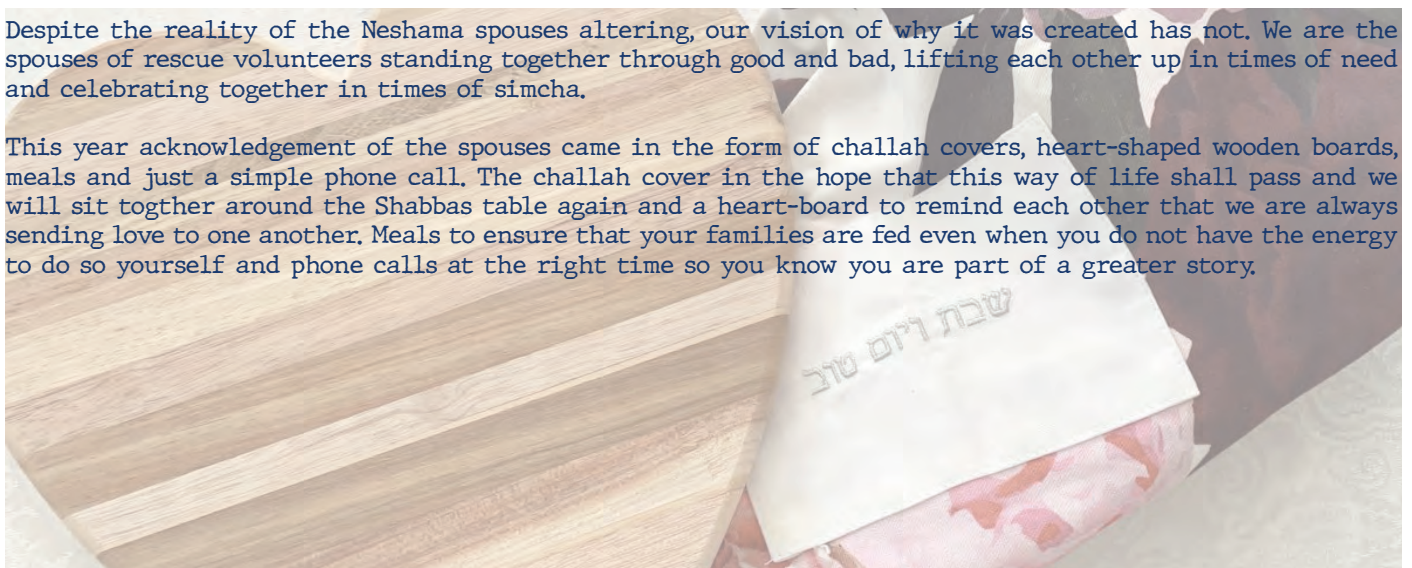
In return we gain a greater family group, the spouses of Hatzolah members, who watch their commitment with admiration and pride.

We were always the husband or wife behind every volunteer, acknowledged as supporting their dedication. We use the word "were" as with the progression of this pandemic, so too has our involvement as spouses broadened. We, as spouses, are on the frontline in a manner we would never have thought possible. We no longer sit on the sidelines with admiration and pride. Covid has unfortunately made us part of the game.

We no longer sit around tables sipping coffee, making challah, creating flower arrangements and sharing silly moments that have happened when our spouses were on shift. We no longer walk to one another on shabbas to decompress from the week. We no longer bump one another in the shops and share a giggle. We now listen anxiously while our spouses get taught how to don and doff PPE, we watch them leave home not knowing when they will return and if they will return in the clothes they left in. We now have washing baskets placed outside that everyone knows not to touch. We now wash their clothes differently and don't touch anything that they carry in from shift. We now step back and wait for them to let us know it's safe to approach for a hello hug or a chat about the day. Or night. This is our new reality; a reality where calls take triple the amount of time, or triple the amount of calls are received. A reality where we are not sure if our spouses will be sleeping next to us tonight or searching for a hospital bed or remaining on the phone calming a caller till all hours of the morning.

Despite the reality of the Neshama spouses altering, our vision of why it was created has not. We are the spouses of rescue volunteers standing together through good and bad, lifting each other up in times of need and celebrating together in times of simcha.

This year acknowledgement of the spouses came in the form of challah covers, heart-shaped wooden boards, meals and just a simple phone call. The challah cover in the hope that this way of life shall pass and we will sit together around the Shabbas table again and a heart-board to remind each other that we are always sending love to one another. Meals to ensure that your families are fed even when you do not have the energy to do so yourself and phone calls at the right time so you know you are part of a greater story.





# Message From The Medical Manager

The year that we have just experienced would previously have been unimaginable. There have certainly been some ecstatic highs, but unfortunately also some terrible lows. Just as we thought the challenges of 2020 were something of the past, along came 2021 to push the limits even further. Hatzolah faced the battles head-on, and with the tremendous dedication of the volunteers in all their various roles, we have not only conquered them, but gained much strength and proven the necessity of this unbelievable organisation.

It has made me think about the past, present and future of Hatzolah. This is quite hard to comprehend. It's quite comical how we used to have first aiders running around with a little bandage pouch and a canister of Emox, yet today we are fortunate to be driving around in the most sophisticated ambulance fleet with advanced imported equipment, such as top of the range Hamilton ventilators, Zoll X-Series monitors and fridges to keep medication in targeted temperature ranges. Hatzolah's first few responders and a family-run dispatching team have evolved to provide the community with a range of services, including elite paramedics, dedicated dispatchers, the Crisis Response Unit (the only service of its kind in SA), a dedicated Teen Help Line, a Wellness Programme to help patients combat Covid, a fire hydrant team and a group specifically attending to the needs of the spouses of Hatzolah members.

There have been times recently when we have had to plan day-to-day, and even minute to minute, as we were unsure of what the future held. This is in relation to availability of equipment in high demand, PPE (personal protective equipment) such as masks and gloves, oxygen and decontamination equipment, as well as vaccines. The greatest insecurity was continuously having available responders to service emergency calls for the sick and injured in the community. There are compounding factors beyond our control which can directly affect our ability to provide the "Treatment Excellence and Unsurpassed Response Times" for which we are so well known. For example, how many responders themselves may have Covid or which hospitals will be able to accept our critical patients, allowing our ambulances to become available for further emergencies. This uncertainty puts great strain on the organisation.

Hatzolah constantly refines and progresses with equipment, training and personnel, but the one thing that remains unchanged is the passion, dedication and innate drive of the volunteer Hatzolah member. This is not something that can be taught or bought; this is a calling and a deep desire for the selfless individuals. They are part of a devoted team dedicated to helping the community at a time of need.

There is no statement more appropriate to the year 2021 than "Gam Zeh Ya'avur" - meaning "this too shall pass."

Looking forward to the growth and what the future holds in 2022.

YUDI SINGER

# Team Hatzolah

## CPR Team



Yudi Singer  
Training Centre  
Manager



Alon Joseph  
Instructor



Avi Joseph  
Instructor



Craig Stollard  
Instructor



Daniel Singer  
Instructor



Doron Susman  
Instructor



Eli Lewenstein  
Instructor



Hilly Reuben  
Instructor



Moshe Amoils  
Instructor



Ronit Janet  
Instructor



Uriel Rosen  
Instructor



Warren Katz  
Instructor





**THESE  
HANDS  
COULD  
SAVE A  
LIFE!**

Anytime, anywhere, somebody may need your help  
You can make the difference and help save a life  
**Be prepared and learn CPR**



Hatzolah Medical Rescue | Treatment Excellence | Unsurpassed Response Times

Email [cpr@hatzolah.co.za](mailto:cpr@hatzolah.co.za) to book your course.



**L'Shana Tova**

Looking after your physical well-being is crucial to your spiritual well-being.

*Wishing you a year filled with peace and good health.*



**Back to School 2**

Make sure everyone is safely buckled up.

**HATZOLAH Cares!**

Keep calm & stop the spread of germs. Hatzolah caring for the community.

#### SELF ISOLATION

For people who are sick



- Separates people infected with diseases like COVID-19 from those who are not.
- Restricts movement of sick people to avoid the spread of the illness.
- Keeps people out of the public until the risk of transmission to others is low.

#### QUARANTINE

For people who are not sick, but may have been exposed.



- Restricts movement of people to monitor symptoms for early detection.
- Prevents the spread of infection or contamination.
- Should be communicated with clear guidelines from the authorities.



#breakingthecovidstigma

I have just been informed that I have been in contact with someone that has tested positive, what should I do?



Speak to your health care provider and quarantine for 14 days.

Don't leave your house.

If you develop symptoms, self-isolate and call your health care provider and get tested.



The world is **71%** water

Your child is **100%** curious



**DROWNING IS PREVENTABLE!**



#### DID YOU KNOW?

Hatzolah has a Crisis Response Unit to help family members or bystanders at the emergency scene.

We tackle all trauma!



**HATZOLAH Cares!**

REMEMBER TO REGULARLY **WIPE DOWN YOUR**



CELLPHONE



CREDIT CARDS



CAR KEYS



HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND **SAVE A LIFE!**

First aid during COVID-19 before Hatzolah arrives.



**CONNECT LIKE SHARE**

**f** Hatzolah Medical Rescue JHB **t** @HatzolahSA **y** @hatzolahsa



## THE CODE TO YOUR MEDICAL HISTORY SPEAKS TO US WHEN YOU CAN'T.

INTRODUCING A SPEEDY AND EFFICIENT METHOD OF ENSURING YOUR WELLBEING IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.



REGISTER HERE AND FIND OUT HOW IT WORKS

## DID YOU KNOW?

Sign up at [www.Hatzolah.co.za](http://www.Hatzolah.co.za) to register for our QR code to ensure Hatzolah has your medical information.

Register your details with us for fast medical care as soon as we arrive!



# 209

**CALL-OUTS**

RESPONDED TO IN JUNE 2020



WHY ARE WE MASKING IN

# PUBLIC?

COVID - 19  
FAQ



## VIRUS ALERT

#SaferAtHome

COVID-19

## ANAPHYLAXIS

CAN BE LIFE THREATENING, BUT YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE IF YOU KNOW THE CAUSE.

### COMMON CAUSES

- DAIRY PRODUCTS
- LUPIN
- SULPHUR DIOXIDES
- LATEX
- MOLLUSCS
- PENICILLIN AND OTHER DRUGS
- FRUIT
- TREE NUTS
- PEANUTS
- SESAME SEEDS
- GLUTEN
- BEE STINGS
- EGGS
- SOYA



## Know the signs of a stroke.

**F**ACIAL DROOPING **A**RM WEAKNESS **S**LURRED SPEECH **T**IME OF ONSET

IF A FAMILY MEMBER HAS ONE OF THESE SYMPTOMS, CALL HATZOLAH IMMEDIATELY.

## 6 STEPS TO: FIRE PROOF YOUR HOME



Create a fire escape plan for your family.



Do not leave your gas heater on when sleeping.



Keep matches out of reach of children.



Keep your shabbos urn out of reach of children.



Take care with portable appliances such as irons, kettles and heaters.



Display your local Fire Department telephone number near the phone.



Keep calm & stop the spread of germs. Hatzolah caring for the community.

### PREVENTION

Clean and disinfect with water and soap or hand sanitiser.



### SOCIAL DISTANCING

Avoid crowds. Avoid travel. Avoid the elderly and vulnerable.



## WE ARE JUST A CLICK AWAY

Keep up to date with behind the scenes, helpful life saving tips and day to day happenings.

**Call HATZOLAH: 083 222 1818**

29 Durham Street, Raedene. Tel (Office): 0860 100 101, [info@hatzolah.co.za](mailto:info@hatzolah.co.za), [www.hatzolah.co.za](http://www.hatzolah.co.za)





# Memoirs Of The Pandemic



When we first started to wear the A40 suits, we would quickly take photos before jumping into the ambulance. Unfortunately due to the number of calls we responded to, the novelty wore off as quickly as it arose. The A40 suits will forever be embedded into our memories as though written with indelible ink, with many stories to tell. Imagine spending time meticulously donning your first pair of gloves, then your A40 suit, taping up, mask, face shield, second pair of gloves, more tape and then... you realise that you need to go to the bathroom! Getting into and out the A40 suits is no joke! We learned very quickly that even on a frigid winters evening, before donning the A40, as much clothing as possible needed to be removed unless a person wanted to have their own personal sauna while treating a patient.

The A40 gave rise to a number of humorous situations as the clash between Hatzolah protocols and hospital rules came to the fore. At one of the hospitals a security guard that had been tasked with measuring everyone's temperature before allowing them entrance to the facility, was having great trouble measuring my temperature while I was wearing my full PPE. Regardless of how many times we tried to explain to him that our temperatures were not required to be measured, he persisted with multiple attempts. Only once he finally realised that it was futile, did he desist and permitted us to enter. A less amusing and in fact quite a frustrating incident took place one evening when we transported a P1 (critical) cardiac patient to hospital.

On arrival, we explained the urgency to get our patient into the ED to the security guards, but they insisted on following their rules regardless of the patient's need.

Fortunately the hospital rules changed not long after this incident.

In time when we have overcome the pandemic and I am given an opportunity to reflect on all of the events that transpired, the one highlight that I will forever carry with me is the deep appreciation of what it means to be part of the Jewish community. Together with the enormous tzedakah and chesed that the community engaged in to support those more severely affected by the economic outfall of Covid, the Hatzolah Wellness Programme will always be remembered as an outstanding symbol of how caring and supportive Hatzolah is.

I had, and at the time of writing still have, the pleasure of working with the members of the wellness team in my capacity as a case manager. The dedication of the team is indescribable. From early in the morning until minutes before Shabbos the callers take care of their patients and refer matters to the case managers and further up the line as required. Not 5 minutes after Shabbos is out and the callers are back contacting their patients and discussing issues with the case managers. Regarding the management team that set up and oversee the programme, their dedication surpassed normal and then surpassed it again!

Covid will always be remembered for its gigantic disruption of and to our lives, but we will also reflect on the good it brought out in people and the care and concern that Hatzolah has for our community

**CRAIG STOLLARD - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER, CPR INSTRUCTOR & WELLNESS CASE MANAGER**



Since Covid became a reality in our lives, it has affected me so much on a personal and work level as well as in my capacity in the CRU (Crisis Response Unit.)

At the beginning of the pandemic, Hatzolah immediately made plans on how to deal with it on a physical and emotional level. A crisis phone line was set up and CRU took on the role of being available for anyone in the community who was struggling emotionally with lockdown, isolation and Covid fears. CRU also became a support to the Wellness Programme team in this capacity. This was a huge leap out of my comfort zone because I have always worked face-to-face with clients but I soon realised that most people just wanted somebody to talk to. It was wonderful to make a big difference in this way.

Working in a hospital has become a life of wearing scrubs and being covered by PPE, sanitising everything always. This has also affected my Hatzolah life – being a CRU responder usually means arriving on a scene and being able to sit with someone who is traumatized, helping them to make plans, being able to make eye contact, smile, touch... all of that is now hampered by the need to wear PPE. It has been a real challenge having to comfort someone while socially distancing from them and not being able to read facial expressions through masks. We have had to become creative and learn to comfort in other ways which makes the CRU so unique.

On a personal level, I was so blessed to receive the wonderful support of the Wellness team when I contracted Covid during the second wave. To be on the receiving end of this incredible team and feel confident and safe through the process was amazing. Being able to tell people how well looked after I was made me so proud to be part of this organisation and this community.

I truly wish that one day we will be back to 'normal' again but that we will treasure the lessons, the camaraderie, the team work and support that we gained through this time.

**ANDI BENGIS - CRU**





I am writing this during the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave of Covid, in June 2021. We hope and pray that Moshiach will come, speedily in our days, as this wave ravages our community and the whole of the country.

When we joined Hatzolah, no one could have imagined in their wildest dreams that we would be living through something like this – not necessarily the pandemic, but being a part of an organisation that is always looking to help and to go above and beyond what is expected.

Over the past 18 months there have been many new additions to Hatzolah operations, such as the Wellness Programme, Hatzolah assist vehicles, nurses and decontamination teams, without which, the devastation would have been much greater.

Volunteers in the organisation could have easily jumped ship, but instead, they ran towards the danger, doing multiple Covid calls one after the other, taking on extra shifts when necessary, doing chesed calls, dropping care packages and lots more.

A look from behind the PPE of a responder treating a Covid patient:

We are the crew treating the patients, showing warmth and care, sometimes the first face they have seen in days or weeks. We are the last face of a somewhat familiar person that our patients see before they enter the hospital and see no one else besides doctors, nurses and cleaning staff until they are hopefully discharged.

It is not pleasant to be in full PPE and, in fact, very uncomfortable. But it needs to be done and we are proud to wear our PPE to help those in need. We will sit with our patients, literally for hours, waiting for a hospital bed. The dispatchers will be phoning around, and we will be driving around, waiting for a bed to become available. We must do all that we can to save every single person and to take them to the best facility possible.

This year will go down in history as one of the most difficult years in South African health care, and when we look back we will see the massive successes that were achieved by the many cogs that make the Hatzolah machine work.

**YONAH EMANUEL - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER**



For the past few years, the main highlight of my year has been my Hatzolah ride, the Cape Invasion. Missing out on it for the first time this year, actually affected my year. It is one of those times when I really clear my head. When you fight your bike and fight your inner self, it's a release for my personal struggles. I have really felt the lack of the camaraderie and the energy that I usually get out of the event every year.

Being a Rabbi of a community involves dealing with an array of community organisations and a lot of different things. As I've said before, there's no question that one of the biggest privileges of my life is being part of Hatzolah and the Covid Wellness team. Calling people every day and just knowing that it makes a huge difference to people's days, to their anxiety, to their challenging times. We sometimes think that in order to save someone, you need to be a medic, a rabbi or a professional. The Hatzolah Wellness Programme affords us, regular people on the ground, an opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives and gives Wellness callers the capability to be able to do that.

I'd like to share a couple of cute stories from the Hatzolah Wellness Programme

One really funny story was when I was monitoring a patient who was on oxygen. This requires calling the patient a couple of times a day, for quite a while, and you get very close to your patients. I was flying to Cape Town for a Bar Mitzvah that Shabbos and I called the couple on Shabbos morning,

just before I went to shul. The patient asked me to do him a favour; Rabbi Dovid Weinberg, a Rabbi at Marais Road Shul, used to be the Rabbi of Sandton Shul and is a very good friend of his. He asked that I please send him his best regards. I'm pretty sure it was the first time ever that one Rabbi sent another Rabbi regards, on Shabbos, from a phone call that he made that morning!

The next story is about another Wellness patient who, when I called in the morning, said, "Rabbi, you don't understand, I'm so embarrassed." When I asked why, he said, "my other Rabbi phoned early this morning to say hello and see how I was doing, and I saw the name 'Rabbi' pop up on the screen, so I immediately gave him my vitals and asked how long I need to be on the programme for." After a minute of giving my vitals and saying how I was feeling, the Rabbi said, "I'm sure you're doing very well but I am just your Rabbi and you are going to need Hatzolah to look after that." He realised then that he had the wrong Rabbi!

Being a member of Hatzolah for a number of years on the CRU (Crisis Response Unit) team and now as part of the Wellness Programme, having my daughter on the full-time Wellness Team, my wife joining as well and my other daughter part of Hugo's Heroes, it has become a bit of a family business. It is a privilege to be able to say I am part of this unbelievable organisation.

**EITAN ASH - CRU & WELLNESS CALLER**



June 2021

"Hi guys. The time now is 20:38. We have a high risk emergency for a Covid+ patient. Patient saw a doctor today and the patient needs to be admitted to hospital."

Robyn's voice booms over the radio. Another patient finding themselves in that dangerous, grey area between home and hospital and in that space between, has become panicked.

My wife and I had tried to sit down for dinner between emergencies but unfortunately, those nights of one or two calls, are a thing of the past. A volunteer shift, whether primary or back up, is almost a guaranteed way to send your next day to the slaughter.

I rush off in a panic to meet my partner at Hatzolah House. We have become so accustomed to getting to our patients immediately but the rules have changed. In the world that the virus has created, we need to meet up; in order to suit up. Getting dressed in our A40 suits is a two-man process; each watching the other to ensure that nothing is missed. We, and our families, cannot afford to leave the smallest hole or piece of skin uncovered. A N95 that pulls down at the bridge of your nose; a face shield and at least two pairs of gloves. We tape our sleeves and our collars shut. Could I carry the virus? When I eventually heave myself back into bed, Will I be putting my wife at risk? She and my children have been in a full lockdown, removed from school a long time before they officially closed. If she gets it, it's my fault.

We juggle between speed and vigilance. "Unsurpassed response" times play on our minds and, I suppose, still is our mantra.

"Dispatch, this is A13 mobile..."

We arrive at the patient's home and charge in. There is chaos. His wife is confused and he is even more so. The wife is anxious because they are ill. She reports a fever, shortness of breath and persistent dry cough but the call isn't for her. The patient is in his bed, confused and in a mild Covid delirium. He doesn't know why he is on oxygen or who we are. This makes our initial assessment difficult. We split up. One of us must manage the patient and the other must manage his wife. Eventually, Dispatch asks for an update, but she is unable to hear us. My radio is in a sealed bag.

"This is dispatch again. Can I please get an update from the scene?"

A concerned neighbour and friend wanders into the room to see what is going on and how he can help. He is in their bedroom as we struggle to move the immobile patient. The friend is in the room with the two Covid positive patients and no PPE.

We eventually lift and load the patient and get him up the tricky stairs and bumpy garden path to the ambulance. There are hysterical phone calls happening between the movements and the negotiations. A

doctor wanted him admitted but what was the doctor's name? Eventually we make contact and the doctor says "Try your luck."

"Dispatch, patient needs admission. Please try to find us a hospital bed."

"Copy that. Please note that Milpark, Linksfield, Sandton, Morningside and Sunninghill are on divert." (That means that there are no beds available.)

We load the patient into the ambulance. We reconnect monitoring equipment. We re-examine vital signs and then we wait. We leave the boot door open for ventilation while we sit with the patient. Anxious and curious neighbours begin to gather. We are suited up, looking other worldly, the patient looks gravely ill and we feel like frauds as we leave the ambulance standing. We have no where to go.

I need the bathroom, I think. I managed some water when we tried to have dinner—that was a bad idea because I have no choice but to wait.

Time runs away and anxiety builds as we sit and wait. The wife is anxious but waiting alongside the ambulance. She says that she will go inside to fetch his phone and we encourage it. They need to be able to stay in contact because we are unsure when and if he will be discharged. He will spend the next few days in a bed, surrounded by others who are struggling for air and battling symptoms. Surrounded by the masked, almost unidentifiable heroes who are tasked with trying to keep each and everyone one of them alive. His phone is dead. One of the lessons learned from the ripple of this pandemic is that if you do have to go to hospital, it must be serious.

Eventually, out of absolute frustration and desperation, we decide to drive. "I'm not sure where we are going but we can't sit there as neighbors look on as we delay the inevitable."

"Saul, come for Robyn,"

"I've tried Milpark, Morningside, Sandton, Sunninghill and Linksfield. They are unable to accept and admit your P1 patient. Their casualty departments are full, also."

So we drive.

"Dispatch, please try Fourways, Wilgeheuwel, Olivedale, Unitas, Waterfall, Rosebank, Donald Gordon, Garden City, Union and Clinton."

These hospitals are full as well.


We are now over 20 minutes away from the patient's home, still driving on what seems to be the longest road to nowhere and his wife has no idea to where we are taking him.

"Our dispatcher will have to let you know".

Our patient must be a 'happy hypoxic'. Ironically, this is no laughing matter. Happy hypoxia is when the body has oxygen levels in the blood that are usually incompatible with life but do not necessarily present







as being that serious- until they do. His blood tests from earlier say otherwise. His doctor explains to Robyn that he is chemically unstable. She called him for advice, unsure of where to send him. Maybe he knows more and can push us through somewhere. He can't.

We pull up to a hospital in the Northern Suburbs - one that has already said no to us, twice - and I go in. I am met by a sympathetic nurse and when our eyes meet above our masks and our visors, she knows what's coming. From what I can see of her stare, it is tired but soft. I beg for advice and vent my frustration, but she offers no answers. There are no beds and our patient won't cope in a normal ward. The doctor on call suggests Baragwanath Hospital, if they can. We are unable to find a bed for our patient who has medical aid. Charlotte Maxeke is still closed and our answer may be in Soweto, but it's not ideal.

I exit the casualty defeated and scared. I attempt to work my phone with multiple pairs of gloves and the sealed bag and I see my call log. Eight calls to Robyn over the last hour. Calls to managers - Uriel and Yudi - as well. Our dispatchers are not only our life lines but also our friends. Our advanced life supports, too. They've all always had the answers when we are lost or unsure but tonight we are all unsure.

It has now been hours and as I drive along Rivonia Road, towards a hospital I know to be full with an emergency department on divert. The patient's wife is still unaware of where her husband is as we travel the quiet roads after curfew. The silence echoes our situation as the road begins to blur through my now teary eyes. The pressure and fear has become too much.

Dawn approaches and I'm home now, sitting in my lounge. We've showered and deconned. We have had yet another emergency after eventually finding a bed for our very ill patient.

"Hi guys. The time is 4:12. We have reports of a 34-year-old female who is not conscious and not breathing..."

Our CPR and resuscitation efforts were not successful, and I am the one that has to tell her mother.

Robyn checks in on me and me on her - the unease tonight was deafening. It is not worth getting in to bed.


"Hi guys. The time now is 5:47am..."

This night was not unusual or something my devoted colleagues and dear friends have not experienced before. However, the reason that I chose to memorialize this shift in this years memoir is very simple. That morning, my wife managed my kids - having already taken them out of school before the closure. She let me sleep. My employer, my father, after being made aware that I had barely reached my bed, excused me from the office that morning on our work WhatsApp group.

As my wife, also a Hatzolah volunteer, and I discussed the trauma of the shift the next (late) morning, through the nauseating exhaustion, she told me that this was the time, now more than ever, to recommit our efforts and do more.

For as they say in Pirkei Avot, If not now, when?

**SAUL JASSINOWSKY - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER & WELLNESS CALLER**



Over 400 years ago the Japanese explored the art form Kintsugi. This art form centres around the concept of piecing together broken pieces of porcelain with gold sealant tracing the cracks. Through this art form the Japanese embrace the idea of highlighting the beauty amidst the flaws.

23 years ago a small established South African Jewish community found their version of Kintsugi, we call them "Hatzolah". This selfless, compassionate, team of individuals embodies the idea of creating strength and spreading light in times when everything appears shattered.

Despite Hatzolah being relatively small compared to the South African Jewish community and even smaller in comparison to the multitude of ambulance and rescue services present in South Africa they never fail to sprinkle their gold around the broken hearts of our Jewish community. No price, present or expression of gratitude could encompass their unwavering and relentless pursuit of community, compassion, chesed and mitzvah.

Although the gold might be more valuable on its own, through connecting broken pieces of pottery it can make something that seems so worthless, so valuable. More so it's the concept that every single crack from a tiny chip to the slit down the middle is sealed with gold. Each individual that chooses to spend their time volunteering for Hatzolah has played a huge role in every family just by being there. Not only are they physically amazing at what they do with some of the best paramedics and nurses present, but by merely knowing that they are there they

add value and safety to the lives of every individual in the Jewish community.

For 22 years I have been giving of myself to treating patients helping them to heal, that I had forgotten how to receive.

Spending much of the past 22 years helping my patients, trying everyday to honor the oath I took when embarking on a journey in the medical field, I never imagined a day where I would be lying in my bed for almost three weeks unable to work. The fear that struck me during this period was severe and admittedly I was scared.

With bi-daily phone calls to check up on me, take my oxygen, temperature, heart rate and even remind me to take my medication, it felt as if Robyn was holding my hand and step by step guiding me to a point where I knew everything would be okay. No, I was not her only patient, no, I was not going through the worst and no, I was not going through this alone but it was her angel-like presence, advice and reassurance despite all that, that I emerged as a more enriched individual.

I cannot imagine what it must be like to have that kind of pressure on your shoulders but looking back on it I realize that her kindness and advice was the gold that repaired my cracks. In the words of my angel Robyn "life is fragile, but even if you fall and break into a thousand pieces you can be put back together, only now you will be different" and that's okay.

My wish is that Hatzolah only continues to seal the Jewish community with its gold flakes of chesed.

How could we ever have imagined life would take the turn it did. The Covid pandemic has really changed the way we think and approach our daily lives. Rewind to January 2020 when life was normal. We all heard about this virus spreading its terror in China and across Europe. We would never have imagined the devastation it would cause and how life would come to a complete standstill. On the 27th of March 2020 we went into a nationwide lockdown.

We were confined to our homes for 3 weeks with no physical contact with the outside world. In Hatzolah we were preparing for the worst. Our management was working on a wellness programme to monitor Covid patients at home to take away the strain of having to take them to hospital. There were no hospital beds available for our patients. Emergency calls that would normally take one hour were turning into three or four hour calls. When my family and I got Covid it was a truly scary time.

It took one call to Uriel and my family and I were signed up and had our Wellness kit dropped off by Eli Lewenstein. For the next 2 weeks, the amazing Robyn Kahlberg called us every day to monitor our vitals and made sure we were taken care of. The overwhelming support of the Hatzolah family from meals to messages was just incredible.

The reality for me really hit home when I lost my father to Covid and my world crashed. Where do I turn and how do I carry on? I just knew I had to continue the phenomenal and selfless work of saving lives, that Hatzolah does every day, in his memory. I am honoured and privileged to be a part of this prestigious Hatzolah organisation.

**JUDD BAUM - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER**

I have been involved in Hatzolah for the past 16 years and people often ask me what the worst call is that I've seen. Having responded to thousands of calls, I think back and go over in my mind all the medical calls and trauma calls over the years, trying to relive each stressful situation, that was someone's worst moment, their worst nightmare.

Rewind to when Covid began in South Africa at the beginning of 2020. It was a Friday night and we had just dropped off a patient at Linksfield hospital. I started cleaning the ambulance; handles, monitors, the steering wheel, stretchers, you name it, every nook and cranny was being sprayed, wiped down and cleaned, all while in PPE which is uncomfortable and hot. Little did I know this was just the beginning. I remember discussing with my partner who I was working with, that it's like an invisible terrorist hiding in our ambulance and asking ourselves if the patient had Covid, if we cleaned everywhere, if it was on our clothes and if we were taking it back home to our families. All these questions arose as we were still so unsure where this invisible virus was hiding. Instead of taking about an hour or so, these calls took 2 or 3 hours, so instead of maybe catching a bit of chicken or dessert, we were almost guaranteed of missing a Friday night Shabbos meal with family and of running from call to call the whole night, only to catch a cup of coffee the next morning.

And this was just the beginning...

On another Shabbos morning, after a busy night, the dispatcher indicated on the radio that there was another emergency for us to respond to; unsurprisingly it was another high risk emergency. The patient was Covid positive, her SATS were dropping, she was deteriorating and needed to get to hospital. Before going in we had to don our PPE(personal protective equipment) as this is our line of protection against Covid. We assessed the patient, put her on oxygen as her oxygen levels were dropping and wheeled her to the ambulance. As I jumped into the back of the ambulance to treat the patient, I noticed she was anxious and stressed and asked what was wrong. She looked at me with fear in her eyes and said, "I'm scared of dying." I held her hand and reassured her she would be fine. I knew this may not be true but it was the only hope she had and I had to give it to her. When we closed the ambulance door this was the last time her family would see her. Another victim of Covid.

Yet another Shabbos morning we were dispatched to an elderly patient complaining of abdominal pain. As this was classified as a low risk call in terms of Covid, we arrived on scene in a lower level of PPE (Hatzolah's lower level of PPE is still adequate for Covid positive calls) to find an elderly male with pain in his abdomen and legs. On assessing the patient, he was quite agitated and aggressive, but had no typical signs and symptoms of Covid other than low oxygen levels. This alone gave my partner and I certainty that we were dealing with yet another Covid case. After we administered oxygen to the patient, his agitated and aggressive mood immediately subsided, indicating that this was a case of the patient needing oxygen, which he was lacking. As my partner began wheeling the patient out of the house, his elderly wife, not well herself, had tears in her eyes and told me they were going to have their 70th anniversary in a couple of months. I signalled to my partner to stop and let her say goodbye. (In normal circumstances we would be in a hurry as this was an emergency, but with Covid it's a different story.) This was another last goodbye.

THESE are some of the worst calls. No trauma, no blood and guts, but the closing of an ambulance door and a family saying goodbye to their loved one, not knowing if it's for the last time. Covid has taken the appreciation of life to another level, it has shown even more how things can change in an instant and you may not see a loved one again. These are the things we learn and see and take out of these calls.

The support from Hatzolah, the community and family enables us to continue doing what we do. The appreciation shown by everyone during the Covid pandemic has been unbelievable and this gives us the strength to fight another day.

**ELI LEWENSTEIN - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER, CPR INSTRUCTOR & WELLNESS CASE MANAGER**





Trauma, by its very definition, is a life-threatening experience, rendering one powerless and helpless. The advent of Covid in 2020, both in the world and in the lives of our Jewish community here in South Africa, has unfortunately followed this trajectory.

At this very time of putting pen to paper, the infection rate continues to soar daily at an exponential rate and along with it, the tragic losses of dearly beloved and treasured members of our community. It truly feels as if grief knows no limits.

February 2020 was my first reality check with Covid. The unlikely speculations turned factual when the Israeli government strongly urged all foreign citizens to return home as a priority. Totally unexpected, I received a call notifying me that a passenger on my flight home from Israel had tested positive. I experienced my first bout of isolation and the fear then, of the unknown. But in the month of July, despite having taken every imaginable precaution, Covid struck. And back then it was a minimum of a 24-48 hour wait for results. Oh, to have had the answer to that million dollar question fired by everyone at the other end of the phone – “But where do you think you got IT?” As if “IT” could be seen and so easily circumvented.

Without a moment's hesitation, I knew that my go-to place was the ingenious Hatzolah Wellness Programme run by Uriel Rosen. In no time my oximeter and thermometer were delivered.

Knowing that Uriel was monitoring my progress daily behind the scenes, afforded me a constant confidence and calming reassurance. Robyn Kahlberg's twice daily check-ins became my emotional and psychological support. I waited eagerly for those calls. We formed a strong mentorship and bond and I missed our daily chats once I was blessed to be on the road to recovery.

Then followed the in-depth training by Yudi Singer with his stringent attention to detail on the donning and doffing of PPE. There is simply no room for error if you might be faced with a Covid environment whilst on a CRU call-out.

On a personal level, having to master the technical side of counselling online via Zoom or WhatsApp Video was an interesting challenge and a huge learning curve. Who would ever have believed that our office-space could be converted into our home or room-space?

Being able to respond telephonically now as part of the CRU team and field calls around anxiety and trauma, is the ultimate pay-back time for me. Having literally “been there, done that” I am able to empathise and step into the shoes of someone needing urgent emotional support. I guess it is as close as one can get to offering a supportive hand or warm hug when social distancing is an imperative.

**JULIE SHILL - CRU**

It was 01:20. We had just dropped another Covid positive patient at Linksfield hospital during the second wave. We were hot and exhausted after spending a considerable time looking for a hospital bed for our patient. This was the third Covid patient we had transported since our shift started at 18:00.

All we wanted to do was to get back to the base to get out of the A40 suit, remove the constricting Ng5 mask and be able to breathe normally again. We handed the patient over and walked back to the ambulance. On the windshield was a piece of paper with a few simple words “You guys are awesome.” Those few words written by someone we had not met (and probably never will) made the world of difference. It lifted our spirits. We felt buoyed. Those few words written on a lined A4 page ripped out of a notebook and placed onto the ambulance's windshield made us realise we were not fighting this pandemic alone.

From that day on, whenever I feel weary, tired and despondent, I think of those few words and find the strength to push through one more shift, one more week, one more month to try make a difference to this wonderful community. I feel truly privileged to be part of this amazing family.

**AVI JOSEPH - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER, CPR INSTRUCTOR  
& WELLNESS CASE MANAGER**



We are more than 15 months into this pandemic (at the time of writing) that has stalked our world and in many ways brought us to our knees. It's been a long and relentless haul. A stress-saturated time. We have stared down the barrel of yet new lockdown measures, with the grim realisation that instead of pinning our hopes to the fantasy of a brave new world post vaccination, not much is different.

The distress and toll on human life has been staggering. We are nearing four million deaths worldwide. Each Covid death leaves approximately nine bereaved family members. Behind every statistic is a story of human tragedy and loss.

We are a bereaved planet. This pandemic has brought with it, a side order of loss of everything we are used to.

It has been a slow incremental trauma, oblivious to borders, race, creed or country.

The acronym VUCA sums up our unsure world in the third wave – Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous . .

An ordinary cough or tickle in the throat sends us into a tailspin. Many of us have become ill, or know plenty people who have. Almost all of us know some among the more than 60 000 South Africans who have lost their lives to this implacable virus. It is the hunter, and we the hunted, waiting for a Covid ambush at any time.

People are highly activated and many are not sleeping well. Covid has proved the ultimate shape changer, mutating and showing up again even more intrepid in its contagiousness.

We are constantly vigilant as we play cat and mouse with our unwelcome viral companion in a game of guerrilla warfare. In our third rodeo, we are hyper adrenalized, and on a short fuse, many of us hitting the pandemic wall.

We have maxed out our resources, and there is a feeling of malaise. Covid fatigue has set in where we've reached our threshold, feeling physically and psychically worn out, battered and bruised.

We wonder will school reopen, will I still have a job, how will we make ends meet, will my wedding take place and will my elderly parents be ok? Everything remains a calculated risk. Can I go to Woolies safely? Meet a friend for coffee? Can

my child have a play date? Will university stay online? Lines between what's okay and not okay are murky. Our safety remains a moving target and the not knowing exhausts us.

We feel restless and hemmed in. We have gone from being the most mobile generation, to being unable to move around freely for over a year.

Tragedy mongering and catastrophizing have become the order of the day.

Anxious has become a way of life; those of us who always were are worse, those of us who never were suddenly are.

Against this backdrop, Hatzolah has had a lighthouse effect on a community reeling and struggling to cope, as our numbers soar and our personal resources continue to dip.

Hatzolah, with its innovative and creative leadership, realised early on that apart from assisting people with the life or death emergencies channelled by the pandemic, the second crisis would be an emotional one .

Enter Hatzolah's Wellness programme, which aside from the daily monitoring of patients' vitals, also recognises the critical need for emotional support.

Humans are hardwired for connection. The terror and isolation that are often part of the set menu of Covid, see people in a state of heightened anxiety and panic. In times of crisis, contact is the antidote for the malaise of isolation, worry and fear. The power of a phone call, a human voice in what feels like a wilderness of angst, is a salve on the wound. The impact of the kindness of a stranger reaching out to check in when somebody is struggling, is a panacea that can totally rewire a person's day. The simplicity of one human being broadcasting the message "you matter" or "what you're going through is real, we are here to support you with whatever you're feeling," is an experience that many have articulated as a lifeline that steered their recovery.

Being a part of this initiative has been a deeply humbling experience. The organisation has distinguished itself and risen to the occasion in a way that many hundreds will always remember in their battle with this novel virus.

**SERENNE KAPLAN - CRU**

I spent the majority of 2020 in New York, where my reality of Covid was far away from home. I was privileged enough to see how Hatzolah's reputation reflected throughout the world in the most remarkable way and it always made me feel proud to be part of the organisation.

However, it was only once I returned home and continued volunteering as a CRU (Crisis Response Unit) member, particularly during the pandemic, that I was able to comprehend how unique Hatzolah JHB is. We aren't just another successful branch of Hatzolah Medical Rescue from around the world. From the Crisis Response support line to the Covid Wellness Programme, I didn't just feel proud to be a member but especially grateful to be part of a community where Hatzolah upholds the commitment and responsibility

to 'love your fellow like yourself' so meticulously. No gaps exist in meeting people's needs for help and support, especially in such difficult and isolating times. There is so much unknown around Covid and people feel unsettled and anxious when there is so much that is out of their control, but it was humbling to see how just having someone on the other side of the line listen to their worries, empathise with their concerns, monitor their progress or symptoms and offer support through genuine care, can make one feel less alone and intimidated by what they are confronting. Hatzolah JHB represents going 'above and beyond' one's call of duty and is the perfect example of a community organisation that is so much more than what it was intended to be.

**JESSICA VINOKER - CRU**







I love the sea: watching the waves rolling in and out and the feel of the sand on my feet, the smell of the salt and the horizon so clear. It was very late December 2019, and I was sitting alone on a beach near Umdloti on the beautiful Northern Coast of KZN. I had my phone with me and I was using my data to scroll through News24.

Something caught my eye. It was a report of a strange new virus that had hit the province of Wuhan in China. People were getting very sick, and the hospitals were full of dying people of all ages. But this was far away. Very far away. I read the article quickly and thought to myself – how interesting. I read further and learned of what was called a lockdown. The city was surrounded with soldiers ensuring the residents were not allowed to leave their homes. Armed police patrolling the streets in masks. Masks. How very sad I thought and then turned my attention once again to the blue horizon and the crashing waves. Far away.

Fast forward to Sunday 15 March 2020 (it is not called the Ides of March for nothing.) It was after Purim 2020 and Covid was a reality in our midst. The messages and WhatsApps were incessant. The rumour mill had gone into overdrive. Urgent community meetings were scheduled, and an extraordinary meeting was called for that afternoon for all Heads of Schools. Usually, we are a rowdy bunch. Calling to each other and laughing, as the collegial group we are. This time though, we sat apart. We were quiet. And then Professor Barry Schoub stood up.

That was when the letters went out. Schools were closed with immediate effect. Schools closed? Really? How can that be? Impossible? But at home, I sat still, while it became dark. It was here, this funny Covid thing was here.

I remember visiting Hatzolah House in April 2020, and I remember Uriel asking us to please stay away from each other. This was quite insane I thought to myself. I remember Uriel moving his office from a quiet nook in his corner of the Operations Room to the large Board Room. I remember him and Wazza Katz hunched over his computer talking about a programme called the Wellness Programme with algorithms and the like. I remember the calls I got from Uriel asking me to help call Covid positive patients and to monitor those that had contracted the virus. This was July 2020 and we had no idea what was to come. Calling patients was really a commitment of time, energy, and compassion; our patients were scared. We did not know anything about this Covid thing. My patients fussed about with their oximeters and thermometers. Most welcomed my daily calls, other were irritable at the intrusion. And the joy when by and by my patients were graduated. Those were the best of times! This was the first wave. And the numbers declined, and we reopened schools.

Fast forward to December 2020. The energy around was palpable in the excitement that was summer in Johannesburg - green trees, thunderstorms, and school was out for the summer! Holidays at the coast beckoned. Matrics finished finals. And the kids went on holiday!

And then the frantic calls started. We had entered the second wave firmly and decisively. And the numbers

escalated. And it was back on the phone, calling patients. Once again, they were scared and alone and being victim blamed for causing the second wave. Calling them from Uvongo. Calling them from the beach, before the coast was closed by President Ramaphosa, calling them from the pool in the apartment building that we had rented away from the madding crowd – and then by and by they graduated from the programme.

Schools opened cautiously for the 2021 academic year. Some sanity resumed. Covid compliance protocols increased. We were vigilant. But the kids were back where they belonged.

Five months at school and the numbers increased again, with the onset of winter in Johannesburg, lax protocols in the general Johannesburg surrounds and a sense of complacency in that – we have beaten this thing! We certainly had not. At all.

June 2021. De je vu. School was closed. Again. Not for holidays at all but because now our kids were getting the virus. And staff were getting sick. Back to online teaching and learning. Back to fear, isolation and anxiety and now, more than ever, sick and dying members of our community.

Dispatching during this time is challenging too. The calls received late at night are ones of despair and confusion. Covid is in the air literally and figuratively and people are terrified. Hospitals are full. Our ambulances and responders must sometimes wait in the parking lot of the hospitals for patients to be stabilised in the emergency department and then diverted on to another hospital, bed availability notwithstanding. The calls received as a dispatcher are worlds apart from the calls received 18 months ago. Now people are calling us as their first point of reference for advice/help/guidance when previously they would not have made that call to 083 222 1818. The sense of confusion and fear is pervasive and not one dispatch shift goes by without nerves and heightened tension as to what that shift may bring. In the dead of night, with only our dispatch phones and dispatch radios for company, this can be a lonely ride.

However, I would not give this up for anything. The individuals that make up Team Hatzolah are inspirational, each doing what they do in the very best way possible. The collegiality, laughter and commitment, dedication and professionalism are awe inspiring. Each segment of Hatzolah works like a well-oiled machine and is a tribute to the individuals who manage each part of the whole. The focus and attention on each patient are astounding. The sense of belonging to such a magnificent organisation is humbling. I am forever grateful to be a part of this team.

I pay tribute to them all. Kol hakavod. May Hashem bless Hatzolah always.

#HopeTakesHelp #StrongerTogether #TogetherWeCan

**CARON LEVY - VOLUNTEER DISPATCHER, CRU & WELLNESS CALLER**



It's a warm winter's afternoon and it's about 20°, but sitting in a motionless ambulance wearing an A4o suit, N95 mask, facial visor and three layers of high risk gloves, it might as well be 40°.

After four hours sitting in PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) my clothes are drenched, with more beads of sweat trickling into my boots. The constant feeling of claustrophobia has been sweeping over me. For the last three hours all I have been wanting to do is rip off this N95 mask and breathe in the cool refreshing air. I chase those thoughts away by focusing on the next movement the ambulance would make when a breeze from the open window could come and give me some temporary relief.

This is Covid. This is our reality.

We now on our way to the third hospital, hoping our patient will be accepted, and that a bed will be available. The previous two didn't. All they had were ambulances' queuing outside like people waiting for their vaccine. The bittersweet irony. The average waiting time? Two hours if you're lucky, sometimes four. I just hope our patient does not crash on us while we wait.

This is Covid. This is our reality.

We drive past a street lined with restaurants. Patrons sitting inside - eating, drinking, laughing, and some even smoking. No masks. No social distancing. No open windows or doors. Playing Russian roulette with their lives for that fleeting moment of self-indulgence. How reckless, how ignorant people can be during these auspicious times. No one is above this.

Perhaps if they saw my patient, it would hit them? The patient - a casualty of direct ignorance and indirect selfishness. Scientists and Doctors have told us how this spreads, how you catch it, what precautions to take. They plead with us to take necessary precautions. It is met with appalling denial and unfounded conjecture, while thousands die.

I can't ask my patient how she thinks she contracted it. She can hardly breathe, and sadly at this point, it does not matter. Oxygen saturation levels keep dropping. Other vitals are unstable. The mask on her face is the only thing keeping her alive right now. The need for a hospital bed is extremely urgent.

This is Covid. This is our reality.

At least she was lucky enough to have family around

her when we left. They said their goodbyes in a heart wrenching moment. We all knew the truth. She was too unstable, and her condition had deteriorated too fast. They knew that this was a one-way trip. This was the last they would see their family's oldest matriarch. It was sad yet moving. Even more sad, is that she was one of the lucky ones.

Many have no one with them to say goodbye. If they are not already sedated and on a ventilator, a patchy telephone call is the best/only option.

Almost at our third hospital. Say a quick prayer that we won't be here long. The urge to just get a few moments of fresh cool air on my skin intensifies, a simple natural pleasure that is taken for granted, yet suddenly so unreachable. It has been four hours since donning these suits more akin to a Hazmat horror movie, and yet truth can be scarier than fiction.

Our patient needs more aggressive treatment than we can give, and she needs it now!

45 mins later we are back in our ambulance, the patient has thankfully been accepted and will receive the much-needed treatment only a hospital of that calibre can offer. However, she is not the only one, not by a country mile. Beds with ventilators have become rarer than diamonds.

Such a sombre journey back to base, lost in our own thoughts. Processing.... Accepting.... There was only so much we could do, her prognosis - poor.

This is Covid. This is our reality.

We've arrived at our base; we need to carefully strip off our now standardized white uniform. Have a shower, decontaminate the ambulance, and restock the ambulance. All to have it ready for the next call out.

It will be at least one more hour before I can head home to my family. The last time I got to see them was when I gave my children their Shabbos brocha just before Kiddush the night before. Hopefully, I will be home in time to enjoy the last bit of Shabbos and to make Havdalah and put my children to bed.

I don't. The radio goes, it is another Covid call, the cycle starts again.

This is Covid. This is our reality.

**MOSHE AMOILS - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER, CPR INSTRUCTOR & WELLNESS CASE MANAGER**







I would like to share with you just a few thoughts about the past year or so from my perspective and hope that when we all look back at this time, and this magazine, the pain, illness and suffering of our community will be long past us and that Covid will be something that we have to remember and not know.

It is actually surreal to think that almost a year and a half later we are still calling Covid positive patients on the Hatzolah Wellness Programme. We are still caring for hundreds of people and utilising every resource possible to care for our community.

As one of the first callers of the Wellness team to start monitoring patients, I think it was around Pesach 2020, I remember sitting with Uriel whilst he showed me an Excel spreadsheet which had been created to record the vitals of our Covid positive patients who signed up. I began calling about six patients and recording details on this system. Fast forward to a year and a half later and we are now using the most unbelievable, updated system, that has been created as a monitoring tool for our community. This raises an abundance of mixed feelings for me. Although the Wellness Programme has become an extremely 'well-oiled machine',

down to the nurses, volunteer callers, managers and every other aspect that makes this remarkable programme viable, it's also heart wrenching to think that there was such a need for this. There was a need for an entire new section of Hatzolah to be built and managed over and above the 'normal' operations and emergencies that occur.

To all the managers, responders, dispatchers, Wellness volunteer callers, nurses, drivers and donors who have played such a vital role in keeping our community afloat during this pandemic, you represent what it means to be selfless, you represent what it means to do the work of G-d and you represent what it means to care for your fellow Jew.

As I always say, I am unbelievably privileged to be part of this organisation and I am amazed to see how we adapted to changing times without ever forgetting our underlying aim which is to save lives and do the holy work of G-d.

**KIRA JACOBS - VOLUNTEER DISPATCHER  
& WELLNESS CALLER**



One call that really had an impact on me and changed my whole perspective on Covid calls was erev Shabbos during the very first wave. I was on the primary response team, and we were called to take a Covid positive patient to the JHB Gen Hospital, as he had been deteriorating from his Covid, amongst other complications and unfortunately didn't have medical aid.

On arrival, we noticed what seemed to be some family tensions, so we made a point of quickly assessing the patient, moving him onto our stretcher and getting mobile to the hospital.

We arrived at Joburg Gen Hospital, handed over our patient to the nurse of the Covid ward and rushed to get back home before Shabbos.

I heard that this patient had sadly passed away two days later due to further Covid complications, and it broke my

heart! Not because of the Covid, not because of the death as those are both out of my control, but rather because I rushed the patient out of his home without him having a chance to properly say goodbye to his kids and family.

It was after this call that I made a decision to make a concerted effort, even on an erev Shabbos, even in full PPE and even in mid summer, to slow everything down just enough that a patient can say their proper goodbyes to their families before they are whisked into the unknown of Covid hospitals, not knowing whether they'll ever come home again and see their loved ones.

Those extra few seconds can mean the world to a sibling, partner or child and it's my responsibility as a first responder to make sure those extra few seconds are made available.

**JOSH GREEN-VOLUNTEER RESPONDER**



The last year and a half has been jarring. It started with hearing the news on my December holiday in 2019 that a virus had started in China. I did not take it as seriously as I should have because it changed my next two years till today. The first lockdown brought the anticipation of what will be coming. We heard of this person or that person, that is semi-related to a friend, who had Covid. Then we realized what was going on. Every emergency call could mean putting our families at risk for the virus. Hatzolah took every precaution to keep us safe but there was always the possibility of putting our family in harm's way. Now a call had to be done in full PPE that is uncomfortable and makes the job a bit more challenging. Calls took longer and more resources had to be used.

Then the second wave came and with it the reality that as a responder you needed to push that much harder to make

sure that, as Hatzolah, we help those in need. Sometimes there were four or five calls all at the same time.

Now we're in the third wave where taking a patient to hospital is only part of the job because you may have to wait two hours just for your very seriously sick patient to be seen.

The hours of work that management and the Hatzolah board have given me make me a better medic. They make sure that as responders we have all the resources that we need to do our work for the community. The support from other medics and management has made this pandemic a manageable process, that as a community we can overcome.

I am fortunate to serve the community under the banner of Hatzolah

**A RESPONDER**



When the pandemic first hit, my initial response was to lock down our home and keep everyone safe, including my husband who is a volunteer responder. I was very nervous for him to respond. My mindset slowly shifted as I saw this as a time to step up, and an opportunity to directly help the world and more specifically our community in such an unprecedented time.

I'm not saying the fear factor is not still there but I feel it is an absolute privilege to have a husband who is helping save lives in a time when our community needs it most.

It has been rough, especially on shabbos when my husband is often on shift and can be gone for hours, not knowing where he is or how long he is going to be and I am left with our VERY energetic two & four year old boys. Thankfully my kids think it is very cool and have become used to it, often playing "Hatzolah Hatzolah." With the third wave, Josh has taken on extra shifts over and above his regular day job, which means holding the home front on my own a lot more

My neighbour asked the other day if everything was okay as she heard one of us driving out at 3am. This was of course Josh on one of many calls. Being home alone at 3am with two small children can induce anxiety but I know Hashem is protecting us.

Another side of being a responder's spouse is being there to support them. We have worried and cried about patients together, especially when they have had to go to hospital in relentless waves.

There have been some really funny moments too, like my husband arriving at the shabbos dinner table in a hazmat suit because a call he suited up for got stood down and he didn't want to waste a good hazmat suit incase he got another Covid call (although certainly not designer, they are expensive). The kids thought he looked like a marshmallow. Also in the summer months, I would make him jump in our chlorinated pool to decontaminate even after doing so at the Hatzolah House. Lucky for him in winter months I let him get away with a hot shower.

Being a Hatzolah spouse comes with a whole host of conflicting emotions. On the one hand wanting your spouse to do everything possible to save someone's life but also just wanting them to be around. Ultimately through Josh volunteering, we hope to pass on the importance of the values of tikkun olam and Ahavat Yisrael to our children, even in these extremely trying times.

**JESSICA GOODMAN - A RESPONDER'S WIFE**



I have always felt so proud and privileged to be part of the Johannesburg Jewish community and of the Hatzolah family in particular.

I'm not sure that we fully appreciate the individuals and the organisations of our amazing community.

One particular emergency call highlighted this for me. A very brief summary of the call, which actually took over six hours, will demonstrate what I'm talking about.

My partner and I responded to a very ill man. It turned out that the person who called Hatzolah had been looking after the patient both emotionally and financially for a long time.

We were turned away from hospitals as there were no beds. One of our responders contacted Sandringham Gardens who agreed to accept our patient. The Chevra Kadisha nurse performed a rapid Covid test in our ambulance which unfortunately came back positive.

We decided that he was too unstable to leave at Sandringham Gardens. Our dispatcher tried but could not find any hospital with available beds. I contacted a good doctor friend of mine who also volunteers for Hatzolah.

He made a call and arranged for our patient to be accepted at a hospital quite far out of our area.

On arrival we were greeted by two young community member doctors. They were so happy to be able to treat a fellow Jew and went far beyond their call of duty to assist us and our patient.

Unfortunately our patient deteriorated during the night. One of the doctors arranged for a rabbi to say viduy with him over the phone. In the morning my friend went to work at the hospital and arranged for our patient to contact his only family, a brother in Israel, over WhatsApp so he could say goodbye before he passed away.


There is another group of men who arrange for a minyan to be present at every funeral and they offered to get a minyan together.

Even though the outcome was not good it really drove home how privileged we are, and how grateful we should be, to be part of such a wonderful caring community, from the individuals to all the different communal organisations.

**RAEL JANKLOWITZ - VOLUNTEER RESPONDER**







It's what we do...

To our dearest community

Working at Hatzolah for the past seven years is an honour that I have never taken for granted. The Hatzolah identity permeates one's psyche even at the most normal of times.

At Hatzolah we rise to any challenge with courage, in order to serve our community.

It's what we do...

So it was with the advent of Covid.

Dispatchers were trained in new protocols to continue offering the best care to our patients while all the time protecting our responders from exposure.

The Covid Wellness Programme swiftly became functional to assist patients in the community infected with Covid.

Fear and desperation within our community, necessitated the extension of the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) into a telephonic emotional support team.

Being involved in all three of these aspects ensured that I was fully immersed in the Hatzolah experience. I took over as a Wellness caller from the ninth patient on the programme, and after 16 months of caring, cajoling, empathising, encouraging, listening and definitely learning, we've cared for over 6000 patients. Long, difficult recoveries were celebrated and beautiful connections and special relationships with patients have been forged.

At the height of the pandemic, Covid patients needed to be called in time to begin a night shift on the emergency line. Night shifts ended at 7am, just in time to be put onto the CRU phone for the week. Twice daily patient

calls were made while manning the CRU line. This has been a sad, stressful, rewarding, draining, consuming and exhilarating time. This was expected.


It's just what we do...

What we didn't expect was the enormous outpouring of gratitude and acknowledgment from our special community, who showered us with love and appreciation in so many forms.

There were gifts for the whole team and for individual Wellness callers, lunches, snacks, meals delivered daily for the night shift, a Nandos meal for every Hatzolah member, Havdalah sets, olive trees and more, dedicated by Bati girls and Barmi boys in lieu of celebrations, coffees and muffins sponsored at coffee shops, discounts at stores, restaurants, websites and car workshops, generous donations, jewellery, care packages, endless notes, messages, pictures, Facebook posts and e-mails of thanks, specially produced videos, challah bakes and tzedakkah collections in Hatzolah's honour, meals for our nurses and drivers, notes on ambulance windscreens, huge thank you cakes, messages of chizuk from Rabbis and organisations, and honestly... this list is incomplete.

We were truly astonished and humbled. We were doing only what we were meant to do but our community responded in the most magnanimous way. Each gesture was noted by us all and so deeply appreciated. It impacted our morale, it bolstered and encouraged us and gave us the strength to continue. To our wonderful community, your gratitude was evident, it meant so much, and we thank you for looking after team Hatzolah.

**ROBYN KAHLBERG - VOLUNTEER DISPATCHER, CRU & WELLNESS CALLER**



Being a part of Hatzolah has always been an honour accompanied with great responsibility. During the pandemic in which we find ourselves, this has never been more true. Hatzolah as an organisation has taken the phenomenal responsibility of monitoring and facilitating the wellness of all those in the community affected by Covid directly, as well as assisting those needing emotional support during this time. In addition, fellow Hatzolah responders, dispatchers and CRU (crisis response unit) members have really taken the responsibility for each other in terms of support, being open to listen and advise, as well as expand and innovate to ensure a smooth operating system for all involved - on the providing and receiving ends!

I will never forget the first shift when as a dispatcher, I experienced full divert of all major private hospitals in Johannesburg. The patient involved was known to a well-recognised hospital in the area, with several of his specialists practicing there. Despite this and a recent admission there, this hospital and others in the vicinity, were at maximum capacity on the night of the emergency. There were moments of disbelief when trying unsuccessfully to secure a place for our responders to transport the patient.

But at the same time, there were so many moments of wonder at how supported I was as a dispatcher, with fellow Hatzolah members assisting and even the patient's family being so understanding and accommodating of the situation. We were finally able to arrange a bed for the patient at a hospital in Benoni. Our responders phenomenally maintained all communication via cell phone as there was no radio signal in that area and thankfully returned safely a few hours later. Remarkably, one responder also maintained ongoing communication with the patient's family as they were not able to accompany him due to the regulations.

This experience was a reflection of the tough reality of the Covid pandemic within the healthcare system. But it also reflected the possibilities and lengths that individuals and our organisation would go to in ensuring that the best possible care is provided, even beyond the interaction with Hatzolah itself.

May Hatzolah be blessed with the continued ability to support and assist our community and also to grow and develop its fantastic and robust systems which are one of a kind!

**DEENA GISCHEN - VOLUNTEER DISPATCHER**



In mid-June, when Covid cases began climbing to unprecedented levels in our community, I was privileged to be asked to become a Hatzolah Covid Wellness caller. I, a university student without a medical qualification, joined a team of at least 80 other more experienced and trained individuals (now numbering 110), many of whom had been caring for Covid-positive patients since the beginning of the pandemic.

My responsibility? To call twice daily at least 25 patients infected with Covid who were considered high risk due to their age or comorbidities. I captured their vital statistics and general well-being on an ingenious data system, as well as taking action to assist them if their health deteriorated.

So, what was it like being a Hatzolah Wellness caller during the height of the third wave?

It was like being an amateur swimmer trying to rescue those drowning in the Covid wave on shore while trained lifeguards were consumed with taking care of those stuck in deep, choppy seas.

It was waking up at four in the morning in a start, thinking that I had heard the bone-piercing sound of my Hatzolah phone ringing, just to realise that it was only a dream.

It was having nightmares about talking to patients who were deteriorating, and not acting wisely enough to help them. I had dreams of oversleeping, and missing the time to call my sickly patients. I also had visions of coming into contact with Covid, and having to be the one to take care of my deteriorating family at home.

It was telephonic exposure to the virus, making me see it everywhere. Hearing my patients ask, "How did this happen to me? I was so careful, I didn't go anywhere?" caused me endless fear. I feared for my own parents as they did, indeed, leave the house (only to shop for food). If my overly cautious patients who never went out could contract Covid, so could we.

It was hearing all the Covid symptoms and thinking that every time I had a bad night's sleep, an itchy eye, or heard a single sneeze in the house, it definitely was Covid. I would insist that we all test immediately. I was becoming "the Covid police" of the house.

It was doing calls on my favourite day of the week – Shabbat. (We were given halachic exemption to do calls on Shabbat and chaggim.) So even the day of rest was infiltrated with the worry of "should I have alerted my supervisor [who also keeps Shabbat] for this", and "did I do enough?"

It was hearing about the suffering my patients were going through and sometimes not being able to do more than just listen. I heard about their physical pain, their emotional hardship, their financial trouble, and sometimes, unfortunately, their losses too.

It was having patients who were bubbly and cheery over the phone be admitted to hospital and return home sounding utterly exhausted and no longer in the mood to chat.

It was the knowledge that all healthcare workers and health facilities were swamped, and my job was to take care of patients to relieve the pressure. I bore the weight of knowing that patients who should ideally be hospitalised were my responsibility instead.

It was the worry that every time I asked for help from one of the incredible paramedics or from the admin team at Hatzolah, I was adding to their burden and inconveniencing them.

It was having patients say, "Stop calling me, I'm fine", and put the phone down on me, when all I wanted to do was help.

But, it was also the small triumphs of a normal temperature after days of fever; when a patient completed days on an oxygen machine; or once a patient had finished isolating and could finally see their grandkids.

It was the feeling of relief when a patient came home from hospital and sounded more energetic and happy.

It was the friendships made over the phone, sharing muffin recipes, learning Hebrew from a patient, and chatting about our shared passion for music.

It was a patient who completed the programme calling me on a Friday weeks later to wish me "good Shabbos".

It was the kindness I received in a sweet thank you message, warming up my heart and making my day.

It was the knowledge I gained, and the patience I had to learn.

It was hearing a 90-year-old patient with a number of comorbidities have absolutely zero symptoms, and an 100-year-old patient return home from hospital, feeling much better.

It was proudly telling a patient at the end of 14 days that they were doing well, and had "graduated from the programme".

It was having the privilege of being part of an unbelievable team, whose members were willing to help one another. I'm so grateful to have witnessed their selflessness. There were my fellow callers, who were always there for advice and tips, and the crisis response team, which looked out for the mental well-being of everyone – even my own.

I'm in awe of the incredible nurses who ran into the fire of infectiousness every day from morning until late, as well as the knowledgeable and patient paramedics who the callers could turn to for any medical advice. Then there were the drivers, who probably drove the equivalent of Joburg to Cape Town and back in order to deliver equipment to many patients. Also, I loved the Pop team, which organised hundreds of balloons for recovered kids, bringing light and joy to their precious lives. Then, there was the superhuman admin team, which probably didn't sleep for six weeks while it held the lives of more than a thousand of our community at the peak of the wave in its caring and capable hands. I'm inspired and in awe of all of them.

It was the opportunity, finally, to be able to help during the pandemic in a way that wouldn't threaten my family.

I'm so privileged to have had this opportunity. Thank you, Hatzolah!

What you do is unmatched. It was humbling to witness the lengths you go to in order to care for the happiness and well-being of the community. We are blessed to have you.

**FOUND IN THE JEWISH REPORT**



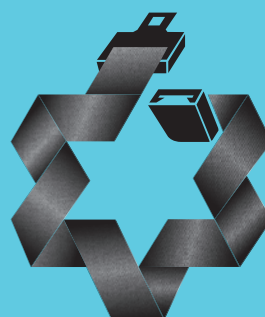


# Protect the ones you love and always buckle up.

It's not just around the  
corner or down the road.  
A high percentage of car  
accidents occur within  
10kms of your home.

Driving out of your driveway, down the road, or around the corner may seem a quick and simple task, but an accident could happen at any time, especially for those short distances when we don't expect it. As drivers and passengers, we all know that buckling up is essential, so buckle up every time, even if you're driving just around the corner.

THIS MESSAGE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY HATZOLAH, IN THE  
INTEREST OF ROAD SAFETY.



**BUCKLE  
UP.  
EVERY  
TRIP.  
EVERY  
TIME.**

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# HATZOLAH EMOTIONAL SUPPORT LINE

IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOUR  
MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL  
WELLBEING!

Recent events in South Africa have left most of us shocked, concerned, and stressed out – to put it mildly. And while there are many people who are facing physical recovery because they have contracted COVID-19, there are many others who are mentally struggling with what is happening.

## IF YOU ARE FEELING:

- ✓ anxious
- ✓ overwhelmed
- ✓ worried
- ✓ confused
- ✓ scared
- ✓ the need to talk to someone
- ✓ too isolated and alone
- ✓ depressed

**EMOTIONAL  
SUPPORT LINE**



**010 140 3270**

Our operating times are 7am – 10pm daily.

Our trained counsellors are here to help you! Hatzolah's Emotional Support Line is specifically tasked with the responsibility of seeing to a patient's mental wellbeing. You can rely on our expertise and professionalism when you or a family member need emotional and mental support during this challenging time. Ask for help when you need it - turn to the organisation that's always been there for its community.

\*Disclaimer: if there's an immediate threat to your life or wellbeing, please call the Hatzolah emergency number on 083 222 1818.



**Hatzolah Medical Rescue | Treatment Excellence | Unsurpassed Response Times**

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# Team Hatzolah Crisis Response Unit



After facing three waves of Covid, it has become clear that anxiety is playing a major role in those affected by the virus, as well as those who are witnessing the effects of this pandemic. Hatzolah places great value on the connection between emotional and physical well-being and as a result, a Crisis Response Unit (CRU) was carefully selected and trained in May 2018. To date the unit has been successfully utilised in several scenarios related directly to Hatzolah call-outs. These call-outs have ranged from personal crises such as drownings, accidents, suicides and natural deaths, to social challenges such as domestic violence, murders and the isolated elderly. Little did we know that this unit would form a crucial part of the Hatzolah Wellness Programme during the Covid pandemic. Although the unit continues to respond (in full PPE where necessary) to such emergencies, the majority of the work has been around containing people's Covid-related anxiety telephonically. Studies are starting to show a scientific link between anxiety and an increased risk of hospitalisation and serious illness and deterioration with Corona. (CDC March 2021).

Hatzolah's Emotional Support Line became operational during the first wave, in order to provide community members with a confidential platform to voice their anxieties around their illness, other people's illness and the general sense of loss and isolation.

The Crisis Line calls have been reflective of what has been happening globally on an emotional level. At first, people were feeling very anxious about contracting Covid and also concerned about transmitting it to others, particularly family members with high-risk comorbidities. In addition to the psychological stressors associated with Covid, people have been feeling the stress of financial burdens arising from loss of jobs, lockdown and businesses closing. As time has passed this has become a real concern for those whose earnings have been negatively affected by Covid restrictions, resulting in a mental health crisis. For some people lockdown has been a wonderful opportunity to bond with their family members. For those who had difficult or abusive family dynamics before lockdown, but were able to have a breather from this on a daily basis by going to work or school, life has been much more difficult. Being confined to a home with difficult circumstances, and no relief, can be very challenging. For those in the community (particularly the elderly, pregnant and those with comorbidities) who have been cocooning on their own for fear of contracting Covid, the social isolation has been brutal and often a debilitating depression has set in. Covid has brought with it an enormous sense of uncertainty. This has increased already high levels of anxiety as people have been unable to put a finite timeline to this new normal of masks, sanitisers, isolation and economic stress.

Those celebrating simchas have been severely restricted, not being able to mark special milestones with those they love, in the way that they had imagined they would. Bereavements, which are already difficult to deal with, have been further complicated by people not being able to attend funerals and being stripped of traditional mourning rituals specifically designed to assist with this process. As such the Crisis Line has been available to assist people in dealing with all these emotional difficulties that Covid has presented. The Crisis Line has been there to help people air their painful feelings and reduce the enormous sense of loss and isolation. In particular, the CRU has been utilised to provide psychological support to those patients on the Wellness Programme that have needed extra emotional care during their illness. The unit has been responding telephonically to the debilitating effects of anxiety, as patients bid farewell to their loved ones, attend funerals on Zoom or deal with the general fear and apprehension that Covid brings.

Our community is blessed to be well resourced in terms of providing physical, emotional and social support to those who have needed it and the different communal organisations have worked well collaboratively. Our Crisis Line volunteers are there to listen should anyone need emotional support and will make referrals to other resources should this be necessary. Even though we are isolated in our homes, no community member should ever feel alone.

**SHERI HANSON**

# Team Hatzolah Crisis Response Unit



ALON JOSEPH



ANDI BENGIS



ARI KIEVMAN



ARIELLE SUSMAN



AVI JOSEPH



BERNARD SEGAL



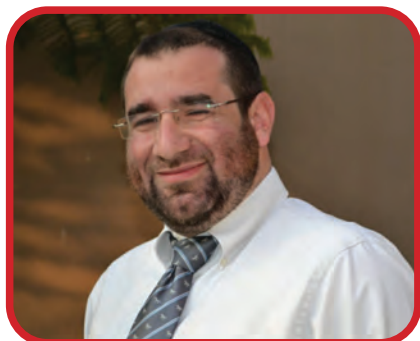
CARON LEVY



CLIVE BREGER



EITAN ASH



ELIMELECH GARTNER



GILLY LEVY



HEIDI BOME



# Team Hatzolah Crisis Response Unit



JESSICA VINOKER



JULIE SHILL



JUSTIN GILLMAN



LANCE ABRAMSON



LEE-ANNE LEWIS



MARC SMITH



MICHA KAPLAN



NIRELLE CHERNICK



PINCHAS SHIEL



REUVEN JACKS



ROBYN KAHLBERG



ROBYN SMUKLER



# Team Hatzolah Crisis Response Unit



SERENNE KAPLAN



SHEREEN SACKS



SHERI HANSON



TANYA JOSELEWSKY



URIEL ROSEN



YUDI SINGER





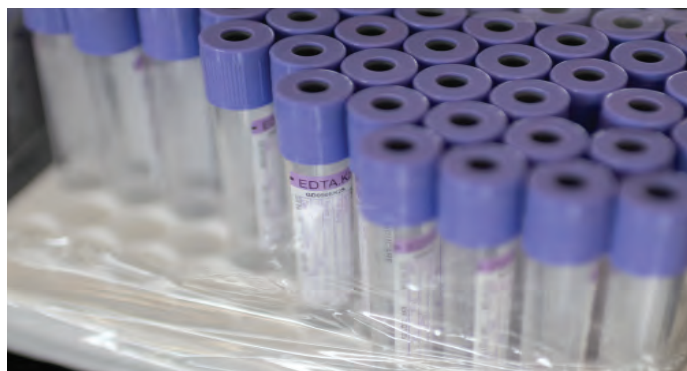
# Blood Drive 2021

If someone had suggested prior to Covid that Hatzolah would be running blood drives during a pandemic, we probably would have brushed it off as a great but entirely impractical idea.

One day in the midst of the pandemic we received a phone call to alert us about a serious shortage of blood in the country. Hatzolah recognised the potential damaging consequences and proceeded to launch, in partnership with SANBS, a Covid-safe blood drive.

The feedback, encouragement and support of the community in response to the four drives that eventuated was inconceivable. With each blood donation, a person can save up to three lives. As a result of these four successful Hatzolah blood drives, over 2136 human lives were saved.

Hatzolah hopes to continue saving patients in need of blood, with the generous assistance of the community. We need and appreciate your support. Keep a look out on our social media platforms for the next drive and sign yourselves up.



# It's Okay. Let's Talk.

Download the Telegram  
App today.



## Chat to our Hatzolah Connect Counsellors

Are you having trouble with school? Or is your home situation bothering you? Let us help you sort things out!

### FREE TO USE!

The Telegram App is completely free to download and use! Download the App on the App Store or the Google Play Store, and make sure to add Hatzolah Connect as a contact!



### COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS

We have no idea who you are! The only thing we know is that we are here to help you!



### OPEN TILL 12 AM

Yup, we also can't sleep.

Most of us experience our anxiety and emotions later in the night when the day has ended and we're alone with our thoughts.



### TRAINED COUNSELLORS

Don't worry, you're in good hands!

Hatzolah Connect has trained counsellors to help you! Our counsellors are here to attend to your every need and emotion. They have been trained to deal with situations at hand, so don't be afraid to let all your thoughts out!



060 012 4124

 **HATZOLAH**  
*Connect*





# Hatzolah Connect



It was easy to say goodbye to 2020. Who would miss the daily emptiness and the draining stress of the Covid pandemic? We had expectations of vaccines and immunity and we were ready to make up for lost time. 2021 unfolded and socialising, sporting activities and cultural events began to fill our diaries. Normal life was within reach and as we prepared to rebuild, our teens prepared to reconnect.

But all too soon came Covid's devastating Third Wave and we were forced to retreat to our private spaces, locked down with that familiar, isolating feeling of loss and anxiety.

Navigating the teen years is difficult enough without the added complications of Covid. Teenagers have completely different developmental needs, and challenges, to adults. Adolescents need to connect socially; they need to develop their social skills and empathy for others, as well as their sense of identity. The current pandemic disconnects our already stressed-out teens from social outlets and peer groups. After many months of online education, we understand that academic institutions are as much about content as they about are contact. The social and emotional holes left by virtual learning will have far-reaching and long-term consequences; trapped in circumstances they cannot change, children and young adults are facing more loneliness, insecurity and frustration than ever before. In addition, many are now facing the loss of a loved one, or are finding themselves supporting a grieving friend. The Third Wave has brought devastation, loss and heightened anxiety to our entire community.

What can a parent do for a teen?

- Help your teen formulate some kind of routine, especially around sleep - a lack of sleep and poor sleep routines result in increased anxiety and depression.
- Focus more on what screen time they have instead of how much screen time they have - screen time may be their only social outlet at the moment.
- Do not minimize a teenager's grief or stress, it is all relative - telling teens that others have it worse off than they do elicits resentment rather than appreciation. Help teens feel understood by empathizing with their situation.
- Help teens to access support systems - reinforce that idea that reaching out for help is a strength not a weakness.

What can Hatzolah Connect do for teens?

At Hatzolah, we understand that being a teen is not easy and that Covid has brought with it loss, loneliness and isolation. As a teen your job is to learn and grow and we know that stress, anxiety and depression can interfere with that. It may feel like no one understands what you are going through, and that there's no one to share your feelings with. Talking to someone can really help which is why we launched Hatzolah Connect - a secure, confidential and anonymous online platform where you can share anything that's on your mind. We have a team of dedicated and trained volunteers who are ready to respond to you. All you need to do is download the free app and reach out. We're here to help you. You are not alone.

Download Telegram and Connect!

All it takes is three easy steps:

1. Download Telegram in your App Store (remember to switch off location)
2. Save Hatzolah Connect in your contacts 0600 124 124
3. Open Telegram and connect to a counsellor on Hatzolah Connect

SHERI HANSON

A photograph of a woman and a young girl, both wearing red superhero masks and capes, looking upwards with joy. The woman is holding the girl, and they are both smiling broadly. The background is a bright, sunlit room with a chalkboard visible on the left.

# Moms: always looking out for others, but who is looking out for them?

**We have all used the saying “not all superheroes wear capes” to describe our moms, but have you ever used the saying “even superheroes need help”?**

It is time that we start supporting, acknowledging, and taking care of our moms, because while they may be superwomen, sometimes they need some help too.

Hatzolah Care’s for Moms initiative is for this exact intention – to acknowledge the highs and lows of being a mom, and to raise awareness about the importance of looking after our community of mothers.

If you are one of the incredible moms in our community, or even if you are not and you want to understand more, please look out for more exciting articles on our website as we launch different campaigns for the fabulous women and mothers in our community.

To the expecting mommy, we know this period can be quite daunting, especially during a pandemic, which is why we have put together a Hatzolah Cares for Moms pack to help you on your journey. Because sometimes a little bit of help can go a long way.



**Sign up to receive yours**

**<https://forms.gle/5JWAnf8cDFv9jzgG6> or email Sheri - [Sheri@hatzolah.co.za](mailto:Sheri@hatzolah.co.za)**

29 Durham Street, Raedene. Tel (Office): 0860 100 101 Email: [info@hatzolah.co.za](mailto:info@hatzolah.co.za)

 HatzolahSA  @HatzolahSA  @hatzolahsa  [www.hatzolah.co.za](http://www.hatzolah.co.za)



# Hatzolah Cares About Moms



Being a new parent is challenging. The Covid pandemic has amplified the normal stressors that come along with bringing a new baby into the world, making things even more difficult. At Hatzolah we are aware of the enormous contribution that mothers make in our community and the importance of looking after their physical and mental well-being. Hatzolah Cares about Moms is a new brand that aims to acknowledge and highlight the struggles and achievements of all moms at different phases of motherhood, right from moms of newborns to moms of adult children.

There are a number of challenges that new moms are now facing during the pandemic. Women are reporting that their hospital experience has been difficult and lonely. Hospitals are discharging moms quicker than they previously would have in order to decrease the possibility of contracting Covid whilst in hospital. Staffing shortages have also resulted in a different postpartum care experience, as nurses have been pulled to support other units or have been off work due to their own illness. Having to give birth without partners and grandparents present has also changed the nature of support that one would usually receive when becoming a new parent. Social distancing, stay-at-home rules, and cancelled family visits are leaving big gaps in care structures too, forcing parents to physically care for a child without the assistance they may have expected. The effects are profound, as parenting is not something that should be done in isolation. Statistics surrounding maternal mental health are already astounding. Isolation, a lack of access to a support system and managing high levels of stress and anxiety have become the new normal and this has resulted in around 1 in 4 women experiencing perinatal depression or anxiety. The good news is this can be treated. Usually, new parents can seek out social supports and external help. During this time of the pandemic when we have to restrict our movements, socially distance and limit contact with friends and family, this becomes difficult.

Parents are also having to face other difficulties such as job loss, childcare challenges and other lingering fallouts from the Covid pandemic. Here are some helpful tips for new parents during Covid:

**Pay attention to your own needs.** The challenges of new mothers can certainly feel overwhelming sometimes. Rest as much as you can-try sleeping when the baby does. Find time for yourself when your partner or other caring adult watches the baby. Put on your headphones, give a friend or relative a call, have a cup of tea, or just relax.

**Connect with others.** Social distancing and isolating during the Covid outbreak can be depressing and make one feel all alone. Try video chats or social media to stay in touch.

**Prioritise.** What once was important (like a super tidy home or three course meals) may have to take a back seat. Go back to basics and prioritise your physical and mental health. Make sure you are eating three healthy meals a day, getting out in the sunshine for some exercise (this may be walking your baby, it doesn't have to be an intense exercise class) and try to get as much sleep as possible.

**Seek help.** Speak to your GP, gynaecologist, paediatrician or a friend and get the help you need. Professional help can happen over the internet using Telehealth if you do not feel comfortable consulting in person. Post-natal depression is no one's fault and is not a reflection on your ability to be a good mom. Most importantly it is treatable.

**Find a forum.** New mothers may find it helpful to discuss their experiences with other new mothers. In addition to seeking help from friends, relatives, neighbours and medical professionals, look for discussion forums and communities of moms dedicated to sharing problems, stories and tips with each other online.

**Access professional help.** Never hesitate to call for advice. Your paediatrician is an excellent resource for understanding your baby and your own needs, including those related to postpartum depression. All new moms are out at sea. Every baby is different and because babies do not come with a manual, no question is ever stupid.

Please look out for more exciting articles on our website as we launch different campaigns for the fabulous women and mothers in our community.

SHERI HANSON



**#HOPE TAKES HELP**

**LET'S KEEP HOPE ALIVE AND LOOK  
OUT FOR EACH OTHER BY  
PLAYING OUR PART.**

**#HopeTakesHelp**



**SHABBOS  
DINNER FOR  
MY HUBBY,  
MY KIDS  
AND ME.**

**#HOPE TAKES HELP**



**WE  
NEED TO  
DO OUR  
PART.**



**#HOPE TAKES HELP**





# #HOPE TAKES HELP

Over the last year, there is one thing that each and every one of us has held onto and that is hope. It's a powerful driver that keeps us motivated. If we truly want to have hope, then #HopeTakesHelp.

**BE A PART OF THE MOVEMENT  
VISIT [WWW.HOPETAKESHELP.CO.ZA](http://WWW.HOPETAKESHELP.CO.ZA)**

To raise awareness, we ask that you follow us on facebook or instagram. Post a video or a picture of yourself on the Hatzolah Facebook page @hatzolahSA or tag @hatzolahsa in your instagram post, showing us what you or your family are doing to help hope along, using #HopeTakesHelp. **It may be socially distancing at a Shabbos table, sending flowers to a friend instead of a visit or working from home. Whatever it is, we'd love to see how you're doing your part to help. So, get posting and while you're at it, tag a friend or family member and challenge them to do the same.**  
Because hope takes all of us.



29 Durham Street, Raedene  
Tel (Office): 0860 100 101  
info@hatzolah.co.za  
www.hatzolah.co.za

**EMERGENCY NUMBER 083 222 1818**

**FOLLOW US ON**

@hatzolahSA

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# Fire Hydrant Project

Over the years Hatzolah has been called to many fire scenes to treat the victims of burns and smoke inhalation. Often while on scene, we would watch the fire department struggle to locate a suitable fire hydrant as a source of water to battle the fire. Even after a fire hydrant was found, many were not functional, and there would simply be no water to supply the dry hoses. This process unfortunately could take well over 30 minutes.

Hatzolah could not stand by any longer and took on the task of trying to obtain maps of the water lines and hydrant systems from the relevant municipal departments. After trying unsuccessfully to obtain this information for well over 18 months, we decided that we were going to make a difference, even if it meant starting from the beginning. So we did...

A communication was sent out to the community asking for residents to assist in locating all the fire hydrants in their areas, and to post the exact location, image, and condition of the hydrants to Hatzolah. We had an astounding response from the public, from which we formed the beginning of a map to work with. One community member approached us knowing that this was a space in which the company she works for could be of assistance. A meeting was set up immediately and in the blink of an eye Esri SA, an international company specialising in geolocating and mapping, stepped up and sponsored their services to assist us. Esri SA developed an app, mapping system and a dashboard for Hatzolah to work with, and guided us day and night with their specialised software and infrastructure to capture what would previously have been unattainable. Dedicated specialists were allocated to assist with software development, enabling Hatzolah to set up our Fire Hydrant Verification Team (HVT).

Phase two of the project was to issue our HVT members with standpipes, hydrant keys and other hand tools to be used throughout the project. With the help of our community-uploaded hydrant images and locations, we went street by street, corner to corner, to flag hydrants in the greater Jewish Johannesburg area.

We identified, located, pinned, geolocated and tested every single fire hydrant. We physically marked the presence of each hydrant using customized weatherproof, highly reflective signage to aid emergency services in easily locating fire hydrants during an emergency. We then used special equipment and elbow grease to clean out, service and flush the hydrants, to ensure they were in the best operational state possible. It was alarming how many hydrants were not in a usable condition, due to either being covered with debris, copper and metal parts having been stolen, hydrants that were leaking, as well as those that were flooded and required suctioning tools just to get access to the hydrant couplings themselves. We found many hydrants that were stashed with drugs, broken beer bottles and clothing, and many hydrants had hidden beehives inside. These were dreadful accidents waiting to happen. We contacted beekeepers who cleared the hives, preventing potential harm to fire fighters who might open a hydrant unaware of the swarm of bees lurking within.

The HVT crew would come back drenched and muddy, after working a long day in the baking sun or rain, successfully having verified many hydrants. Nothing was going to diminish the spirit of our team or prevent them from ensuring our community was kept safe - not even the small spider that caused one of our members to require antibiotics.

As this project developed, Esri SA assisted us to build a mobile app, as well as a web link, capturing all the data that would be shareable with the relevant emergency services such as the fire department, Zaka fire containment unit, Joburg Water, and Hatzolah responders. One can now simply arrive on scene, open an app or web link, use the scene address or current location and identify the closest hydrants, as well as their operational state, to drastically improve the firefighting operations.

We have added all fire stations, police stations and hospitals to the same map with a layered system, allowing one to select what they would like to see. We have already engaged with several EMS services in Johannesburg, as well as Cape Town and Durban, to help populate their maps and further protect these Jewish communities. The fire departments have been elated with the infrastructure, and we are in the process of handing over the systems to them which will improve their service and save many lives.

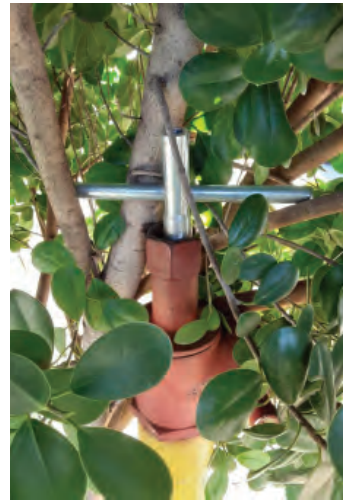
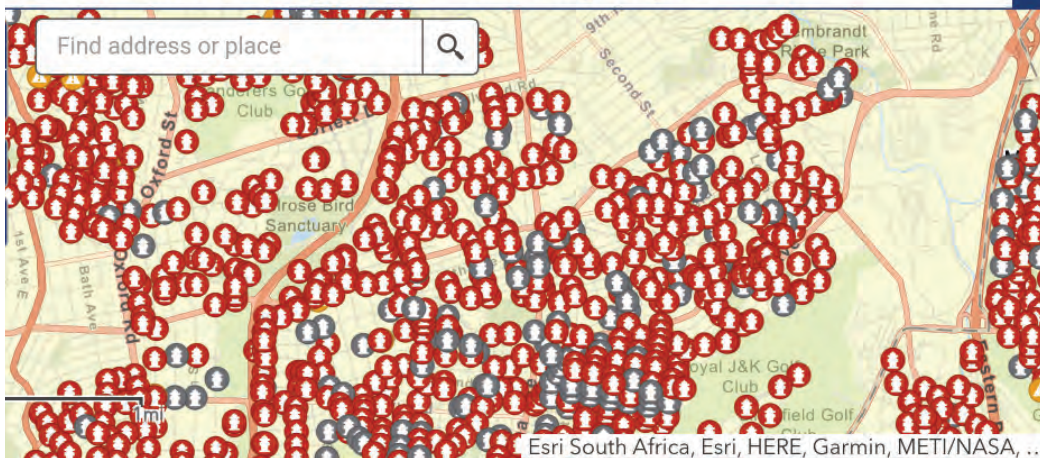
To date, we have captured well over 2000 hydrants, and identified several hundred faulty ones, requiring immediate repairs by the relevant municipal departments. We have engaged with them to get this done as soon as possible.

Thank you to all those involved in making this project so successful!





## Hatzolah Fire Hydrant Community Project





# Message From The Operations Manager

## Finding Positivity

Where do I begin?

In last year's article I was hopeful that by this time I would be writing on how as an organisation, Hatzolah has recovered from the Covid pandemic, how we overcame its challenges, how we bounced back and how we are so relieved it's over.

How wrong I was...

In December and January, during the second wave of the pandemic, we were short staffed as many were away on holiday, but Hatzolah vowed to look after any member of the community with Covid, wherever they may be. At one stage we were looking after 333 patients; it was tough, but we pulled through. We thought that was it, the highest it will ever go.

For the months of May, June and July, during the third wave, we were so overwhelmed with patients infected and suffering with Covid, that it made our second wave look like a small hump on a graph. Over 1200 patients. Some recovered well, some unfortunately lost their lives, others are still battling with the effects of Covid.

Responders, dispatchers, Wellness volunteers and Crisis Response Unit responders were at breaking point. Let me try and explain the chaos that we went through.

We had somewhat forgotten what it's like treating patients without having the fear of catching a virus that has caused so much destruction. An emergency call-out that used to last a maximum of an hour, was now lasting a minimum of three hours, and in some situations up to seven hours. Hospitals were full to capacity and an average wait of one - three hours, with the patient in the ambulance, for a bed in the emergency department, became the standard. Nurses, doctors and physicians were physically and emotionally drained; in addition to not having a second's break to catch their breath, they had to make tough ethical calls. "This patient qualifies for our last remaining ventilator and this patient doesn't." Walking into an emergency department, instead of being greeted with open arms and a team waiting to jump in and treat a patient, there was a feeling of "not you again."

We took patients to hospital knowing that although they were still walking, (maybe a bit short of breath) it could be the last time they saw their family. As responders, we started insisting (irrespective of the patient's critical state) that the family say their goodbyes, trying our best to hold back tears and hoping that the patient looked strong enough to pull through.

Monitoring the masses of patients on the Wellness Programme, watching some young and generally healthy patients deteriorate and begging and pleading with them to allow us to take them to hospital. Their response was similar to an elderly patient's dying wish, "I don't want to be away from my family, I'd rather die in the comfort of my own home."

Dispatchers were fielding tens of phone calls per shift, the majority of the calls from worried families. "The hospital's phone just rings, is my loved one okay, are they alive, will they be okay?" Panicked community members begging for oxygen just in case they need it, and concerned spouses anxiously enquiring about their loved one's low oxygen levels. These are just a few examples of the over 3640 calls the Hatzolah emergency line received during the third wave.

Wellness Programme volunteers walking the Covid journey with their patients, hearing their stories, their challenges and their successes. Comforting them, telling them they will get through it together. Some got through, others didn't.

The enormous frustration we feel when we hear of members of the community defying quarantine and isolation guidelines, because they simply don't care and don't believe in the severity of this disease.

Where is the positivity, how does one find positivity during such unrelenting and gruelling times?

During the toughest days and weeks, I found that our community doctors, physicians and hospital staff came together as a team. We supported each other, sent messages of encouragement and assisted each other by moving mountains to find hospital beds for our patients.

I witnessed the Hatzolah team give everything they possibly could to this unique and wonderful community.

URIEL ROSEN



Responders came together and worked extra shifts, or a few extra hours, to give those that were rostered to work a moment to eat a meal with their family. Responders volunteered to go on emergency calls at 2am knowing very well it could be a three hour call and their precious sleep would be a thing of the past.

Close observation of Wellness Programme patients led to timeous intervention and admission to hospital before it became an emergency situation. Tens of patients were able to be monitored and recover at home, some on oxygen, instead of being admitted to hospital. Hatzolah Assist drivers transported non-critical patients to casualty, thereby preserving our resources and alleviating the need for an ambulance.

The community came forward and opened their hands with generous donations to Hatzolah so we could continue doing all the good work we do, with meals for those who were sick, with finances for those who needed it. The community rallied and supported the Hatzolah team by dropping off food, coffees, and other goods and so much more.

"Unity" is what this pandemic has shown me. Unity is the positivity that I have searched for during 2021 and unity is what drives me to continue trying to make a difference.

As the famous words from our Jewish history go, "fear nothing but G-d alone. Love every single Jew, without exception, with the full depth of your heart and with the fire of your soul, no matter who he is or how he behaves."

# Message From The Logistics Manager

## Logistics in the Pandemic

Before we had heard of Covid, plans were in place and we had a comfortable feeling that the year ahead would run smoothly. Projects were planned and new developments were in the works.

Well, that all changed. Suddenly Covid was on our shore and the first cases were being reported locally. What was this unknown entity going to bring?

Items of stock not normally deemed that essential became the most sought after commodities. Everyone, from the private sector, the government and individuals, was trying to procure PPE (personal protective equipment.)

Hatzolah had to join the race. A race full of the unknown. How many N95 masks would we need? Are the face masks giving enough protection? When do we have enough stock? How much stock do we need? Most importantly, are our responders safe?

A team was quickly assembled, ideas put forward and proposals made. We had entered the contest. We were changing the entire focus of our stock procurement overnight. Adequate PPE had to be sourced, phone calls made, internet searches done and networking undertaken. By making contact with the market leaders, we were able to secure top of the range PPE, relieved that our paramedics would be safe while responding to emergencies in these uncertain times. We even received donations of PPE from the community.

With new information being released about Covid every day, we had to make sure we were always at the forefront of this and adapt when necessary.

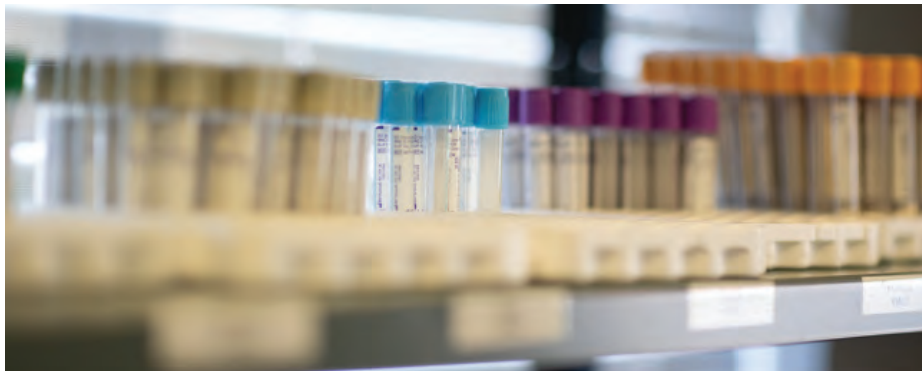
Out of Covid came the Hatzolah Wellness Programme, a massive undertaking to monitor Covid positive members of the community. Unfortunately some patients were affected worse than others and required supplementary home oxygen. Hatzolah procured sufficient oxygen concentrators and inverters; for those patients on oxygen 24 hours a day, loadshedding plays a role in every aspect of emergency services.

A huge shout out and thank you goes to Albert and Sisqo, for delivering these very bulky and heavy inverters at any time of day or night. In many instances in emergency situations, such as a power failure lasting longer than the batteries of the inverter, Albert and his team rushed out to replace a patient's inverter.

It's been an interesting year; Covid threw us a curve ball or two, but we adapted, we faced it head on, accepted the challenge and would like to say we are winning the battle. Throughout it all we have continued to offer the community the same world class ambulance service as before and we even threw in a few extras... the Wellness Programme and a Vaccination Centre.

Thank you to all our supporters who have allowed us to create new ways to serve the community during these times.

**RYAN KRAWCHUCK**





# Hatzolah During The Pandemic

Wellness Monitoring Programme brief summary at 9 August 2021

Patients are delivered a pulse-oximeter and thermometer. They are called daily, sometimes more often. Their vitals are captured in custom-built software which tracks and trends how the patient is doing. Based on the results, the course of treatment is determined - keep monitoring, suspected deterioration or move to hospital.

We have monitored and cared for **6506 Covid positive patients** to date.

This has required a team of **113 staff** made up of full-time employees & volunteers.

Who have made over **145139 calls to patients.**

We have **18 full-time nurses** working for us to look after the more unwell patients.

Should a patient deteriorate, we consult with the patient's GP and arrange a nurse visit with one of the 18 nurses. Nurses are able to run ECGs, take blood tests and do a more thorough medical examination of the patient.

We have done over **26741 nurse visits** to date.

If the patient deteriorates further and needs to be hospitalised, our ambulance teams move the patient to hospital.

We have moved 641 patients off the programme and into hospital (98%).

We have **23 Uber like-drivers** working for us full-time, to move the nurses around and to move Covid-positive patients who don't need an ambulance. The vehicle cabin is separated between the driver and nurse/patient. Drivers come back to base straight after dropping a patient for the vehicle to be deconned and fogged. The drivers are on call 24/7.

We have decon crews working at the base **24/7**. The aim is to reduce the time an ambulance and its crew are out of service. The ambulance crew comes to the base after a Covid call, leaves the contaminated ambulance with the decon team and takes a clean ambulance. This ensures the ambulance team is back in service quickly to respond to the next emergency.

**Crisis Response Unit** - CRU is a team made up of trained mental wellness professionals.

During normal times they come out to more traumatic scenes to assist family members and bystanders who have witnessed trauma. The CRU team have set up an emotional support line for those feeling anxious, overwhelmed, worried, confused or scared. They also call patients on the Wellness Programme who are going through a particularly emotional time.

Our dispatchers have received **14134 phone calls** since the start of Covid.

Our ambulances have responded to **3251 medical emergencies**, many of these being to Covid-positive patients.

Home Wellness - 060 985 7030  
Emotional Wellness line - 010 140 3270  
Emergency Line - 083 222 1818  
[www.hatzolahwellness.co.za](http://www.hatzolahwellness.co.za) [www.hatzolah.co.za](http://www.hatzolah.co.za)



WELLNESS  
MONITORING  
PROGRAMME

## We're here to track your health during COVID-19!

**Hatzolah – Caring for the Community**

This programme is for any community member who has tested positive for COVID-19, is displaying symptoms of the virus and waiting for their test results, or is experiencing the symptoms associated with the virus but can't be tested due to extenuating circumstances.



### TWO WAYS TO JOIN OUR PROGRAMME:

- 1 WhatsApp or SMS your name and cell number to **060-985-7030** and we will fill out the documentation for you.
- 2 Visit our website **[www.hatzolahwellness.co.za](http://www.hatzolahwellness.co.za)** and fill in the registration form.

All phone calls and personal information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.



## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I'VE SIGNED UP?

One of our COVID-19 wellness volunteers will contact you within 24 - 48 hours. They will deliver:



**A pulse oximetry** device that will check your pulse rate and oxygen levels



**A thermometer** (if you don't have one)

One of our medics will explain to you how to use them both, and you will sign an indemnity form. Your wellness volunteer will contact you once every two days, once a day, or twice a day based on your risk level. **Phone calls will be made between 08h00-10h00 in the morning and 16h00-18h00 in the afternoon throughout your isolation to track your wellbeing by asking you some questions.**

**Please note!** The communication channels for this programme should not be used to confirm that you are positive or to ask for advice. Only use it once your GP has diagnosed you. This is also not an emergency line. If you are experiencing any life-threatening symptoms such as difficulty breathing, please call your GP or our emergency line immediately.

**Hatzolah Medical Rescue | Treatment Excellence | Unsurpassed Response Times**

☎ (Office): 0860 100 101 📧 [info@hatzolah.co.za](mailto:info@hatzolah.co.za) 📍 Hatzolah Medical Rescue JHB 📱 @HatzolahSA 📺 @hatzolahsa



# Hatzolah During The Pandemic Wellness Programme

The Hatzolah Wellness team drives the 24 hour operations of the Covid Wellness Programme. This is just a glimpse into what the Wellness team experienced during the gruelling and relentless third wave of Covid.

Week after week the team worked long hours into the night to ensure the logistics behind the programme were all in place. At the peak of the third wave, the Wellness Programme took on 700 new patients in one week and was looking after over 1200 active patients at one time. Given that the large hospitals in our area of operation were handling around 200 patients at one time at their peak, it can be noted that this number is the patient equivalent of six large hospitals.

Our custom-built Wellness Toolkit is a fully integrated patient management software system. To sign up to the programme, each patient begins by filling out an online form, which generates a patient profile. An oximeter and thermometer is then delivered to the patient after which they are assigned a Wellness caller and a case manager.

To ensure that every new patient received their equipment on the same day, or early the next day, no matter where in the country they live, we had over 10 equipment deliverers on the road all day, every day. Once the delivery is logged onto the system, the Wellness caller takes over the case.

Every patient received one or two (or sometimes more) phone calls a day to check their vitals. Our Toolkit has a unique algorithm that determines the patient's risk level, ensuring each patient is being called according to their risk status. This required over 100 volunteers calling patients and uploading their vitals onto the custom-built system. Our Wellness volunteers have made over 140 000 phone calls to date!

Each patient was assigned one of 20 case managers to oversee their care. The Wellness callers are in constant contact with the case manager to determine the best way forward for each patient.

Every patient requiring home oxygen, paediatric patients, pregnant patients or patients about whom the team is concerned in any way, are visited daily by a Hatzolah nurse, to do a full assessment. The patient's GP is often conferenced into a call with the nurse and the Wellness management team to make the best clinical decision for the patient.

With over 300 nurse rounds to patients every day, we had more than 18 nurses, each requiring their own driver to transport them safely around Johannesburg and surrounds. Our unique Toolkit also manages our nurses' rounds to determine the most efficient route for each nurse to take.

Every GP is provided with a login to the system to view in real time how their patients are doing or to add clinical notes to the system for the Wellness caller and case manager to view. This closes the loop between the patient, Wellness team and doctor to ensure the patient is provided with the best care possible. Furthermore, if the doctor wants blood tests conducted on the patient, our nurses draw the bloods requested and we have them delivered to the lab for testing.

If it is decided by the doctor that the best treatment for the patient is home oxygen, an oxygen concentrator is delivered to the patient by our team. If the patient needs to be on oxygen 24 hours a day and does not have an inverter or generator in case of power outages, Hatzolah is able to loan the patient an inverter. At the peak of the third wave we were monitoring over 170 patients on home oxygen.

In order to move the nurses around, transport patients that don't need an ambulance to and from hospital, and assist with oxygen and inverter deliveries, we offer a service called Hatzolah Assist. Drivers' vehicles were modified with a plastic partition between the front and the back, so the patient or nurse in contaminated PPE, is separated from the driver. After a trip the vehicle returns to Hatzolah for decontamination. At the peak of the third wave we had 20 such vehicles on the road.

This gives some insight into the many pieces that form this enormous puzzle. It has truly been an incredible effort from an exceptionally committed team!

DANI ABRAMSON

# Hatzolah During The Pandemic Wellness Programme - Management



ASHIRA SACKSTEIN



AKIVA SUTTNER



DANI ABRAMSON



CALEV FREEMAN



KARA GORDON



RYAN KRAWCHUK



SHAYNA ASH



WARREN KATZ



URIEL ROSEN

## VOLUNTEER CALLERS

Alexa Bender  
Amber Sandler  
Ami Selikson  
Ari Susman  
Avril Joseph  
Ayala Sackstein  
Batya Smadja  
Beth Levy  
Carin Abramson  
Caron Levy  
Dalit Greenhill  
Dani Horwitz  
Danit Gordon  
Darren Kahn  
Darren Kozinsky  
David Kahn  
David Ronthal  
Dena Cohen  
Dov Ber Unterslak  
Eitan Ash

Elisheva Forman  
Emma Burger  
Ethan Kahlberg  
Gabi Chipkin  
Gabi Uria  
Galia Ronthal  
Gavin Newfield  
Gidon Ronthal  
Gila Ash  
Gila Dove  
Gila Shapiro  
Hannah Midzuk  
Heidi Bome  
Jade Singer  
Jenny Braun  
Jessa Marx  
Joey Blau  
Jonathan Jacobs  
Justin Gillman  
Karla Jankelowitz

Kim Feldman  
Kira Jacobs  
Kira Levy  
Lana Meltzer  
Lauren Smith  
Lesley Sacks  
Lindsay Rosen  
Micha Kaplan  
Michal Chipkin  
Michal Gershuni  
Nadine Brill  
Natanya Palay  
Philipa Levitan  
Pinchas Shiel  
Racheli Segal  
Raphi Druion  
Richard Greenhill  
Robyn Shapiro  
Robyn Kahlberg  
Romy Greenberg

Ronit Janet  
Ronit Kalmek  
Saul Jassinowsky  
Saul Joseph  
Sharon Newfield  
Sheri Hanson  
Shevi Jassinowsky  
Shevi Sackstein  
Stacey Uria  
Stacy Amber  
Tali Blumenfeld  
Tali Chemel  
Tali Katz  
Talia Ogus  
Talli Goldberg  
Tanya Joselowsky  
Tanya Rubin  
Tracey Ribeiro





## CASE MANAGERS

Eli Lewenstein, Avi Joseph, Bernard Segal, Craig Stollard, Daniel Forman, Doron Susman, Hillel Reuben, Jason Bome, Meir Rosendorff, Moshe Amoils, Yudi Singer

## DELIVERIES

Adam Abro, Akiva Suttner, Ari Sevitz, Avi Smith, Braden Rosin, Calev Freeman, Daniel Forman, Dean Rubin, Doryn Myers, Jacob Sacks, Jason Bome, Josh Goodman, Josh Green, Joshua Labe, Moshe Amoils, Raphael Symon, Yakov Drutman, Yehuda Goldberg, Yoni Rosenthal

## COLLECTIONS

Dani Schwartz, Paysach Joseph, Josh Schwartz, Daniel Engelberg, Joey de Aguiar, Boruch Rabin, Saul Caminsky

## NURSES

Rebecca Meisie, Bigie Ndaimani, Esmeralda Rusike, Nomfundo Mvuna, Mashaphu Mmatjepe Sharon, Jerlyn Benyera, Rirhandzu Mushwana, Nothando Kubeka, Mudau Mulisa Beauty, Dudu Msimanga, Queen Ekere, Carol Khumalo, Cynthia Sithembile Dhladhla, Theodorah Setaka, Descia Mashiyakgomo, Mfanimpela Mndebele, Muziwethu Mpofu, Vuyo Mbele, Maggie Temo, Princess Mohlahlana, Melissa Kim Gow, Amanda Matebese, Thilivhali Sibiya, Nosisa Nyoni, Ennie Tumelo Baloyi, Nonjabulo Mbuthu, Ndlovu Bornwell, Siphwe Magdeline Kobi Mmola, Penelope Nkosi, Mbalenhie Ntombela, Thembisile Hycinthia Msimango, Mpume Mncube, Asanda Mbongwana, Zizile Shoinge, Rosemary Khoza, Cyreal Mkhonto, Shakandinnyi Mahlangu, Amanda dlamini, Kenneth Nesane, Diane Rosine Entcheu, Felicite Ayemele

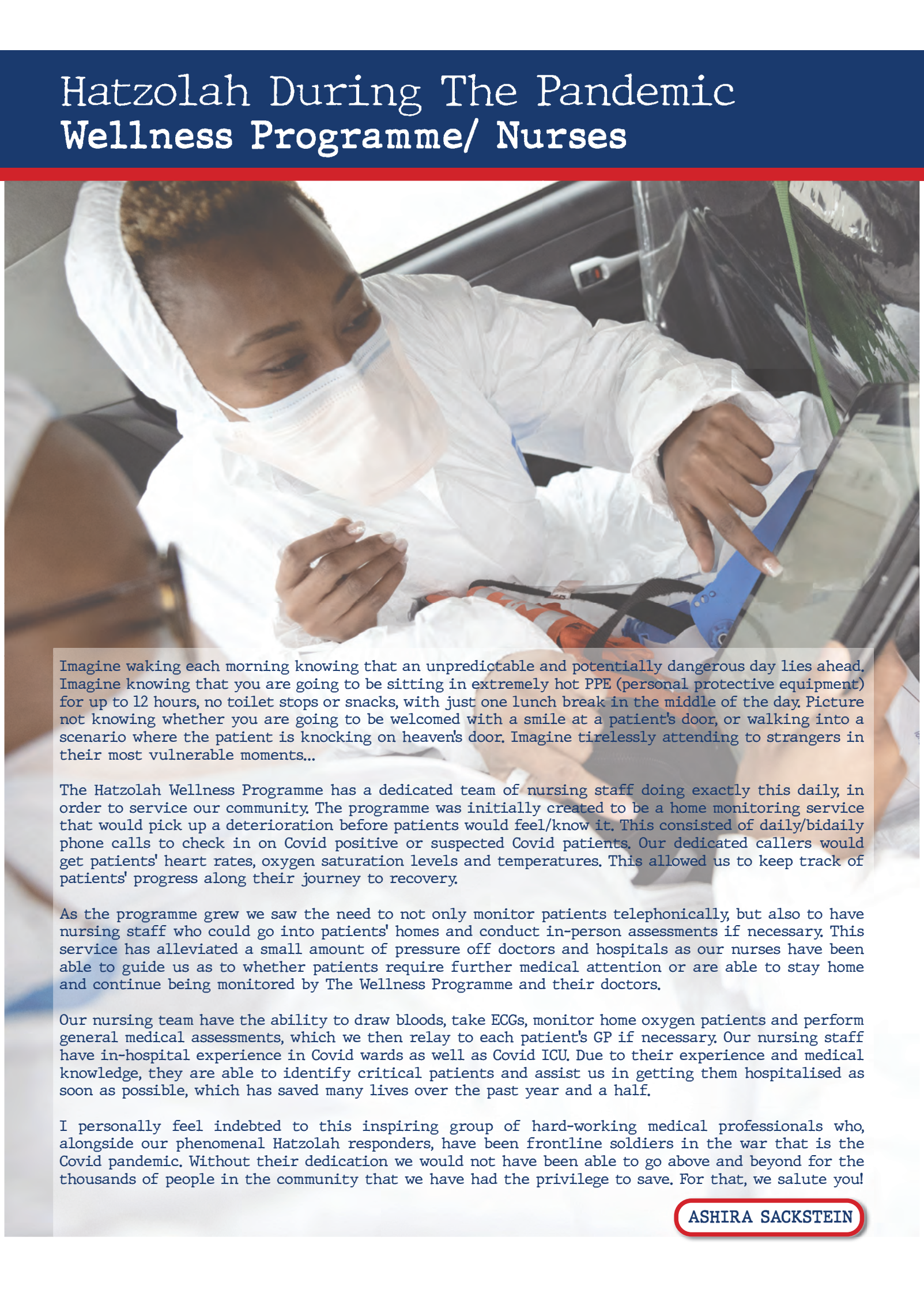
## ASSIST DRIVERS

Alpheus Masuku, Zenzo Nkomo, Ayanda Mpofu, Albert Ngwenya, Khulekani Khumalo(KK), Andson Nleya, Xoli Hadebe, Amos Monze, Michael Mahlangu, Prince Ndlovu, Beven Moyo, Kays Ndou, Nkosana Mpofu, Amon Mpofu, Fredrick Mageza, Descent Mlalazi, Mthandazo Sibanda(Mtha), Audience Sibanda, Norbert Nkomo, Philani Dube, Thabang Mpofu, Nkosiyapha Myeni (Nkosi), Sandile Mkhize

## CAPE TOWN VOLUNTEER CALLERS

Charlotte Thurgood, Dani Jankelowitz, Daryl Kaimowitz, Karin Maister, Kathy Ebstein, Lynn Gorin, Lynne Saven, Ronnie Gottlieb, Mia Feldman, Raquel Zuckerman

# Hatzolah During The Pandemic Wellness Programme/ Nurses

A photograph of a nurse wearing a white full-body protective suit, a hood, and a face shield. The nurse is leaning over a patient in a hospital bed, who is also wearing a face shield. The nurse's hands are visible, one pointing at a tablet device. The background shows a hospital room with medical equipment and a window with a view of greenery.

Imagine waking each morning knowing that an unpredictable and potentially dangerous day lies ahead. Imagine knowing that you are going to be sitting in extremely hot PPE (personal protective equipment) for up to 12 hours, no toilet stops or snacks, with just one lunch break in the middle of the day. Picture not knowing whether you are going to be welcomed with a smile at a patient's door, or walking into a scenario where the patient is knocking on heaven's door. Imagine tirelessly attending to strangers in their most vulnerable moments...

The Hatzolah Wellness Programme has a dedicated team of nursing staff doing exactly this daily, in order to service our community. The programme was initially created to be a home monitoring service that would pick up a deterioration before patients would feel/know it. This consisted of daily/bidaily phone calls to check in on Covid positive or suspected Covid patients. Our dedicated callers would get patients' heart rates, oxygen saturation levels and temperatures. This allowed us to keep track of patients' progress along their journey to recovery.

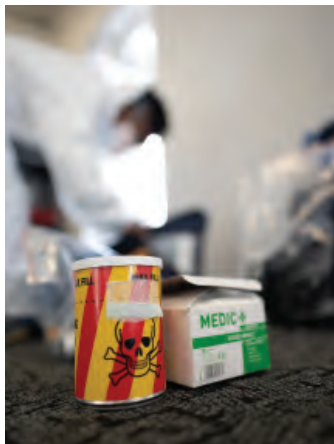
As the programme grew we saw the need to not only monitor patients telephonically, but also to have nursing staff who could go into patients' homes and conduct in-person assessments if necessary. This service has alleviated a small amount of pressure off doctors and hospitals as our nurses have been able to guide us as to whether patients require further medical attention or are able to stay home and continue being monitored by The Wellness Programme and their doctors.

Our nursing team have the ability to draw bloods, take ECGs, monitor home oxygen patients and perform general medical assessments, which we then relay to each patient's GP if necessary. Our nursing staff have in-hospital experience in Covid wards as well as Covid ICU. Due to their experience and medical knowledge, they are able to identify critical patients and assist us in getting them hospitalised as soon as possible, which has saved many lives over the past year and a half.

I personally feel indebted to this inspiring group of hard-working medical professionals who, alongside our phenomenal Hatzolah responders, have been frontline soldiers in the war that is the Covid pandemic. Without their dedication we would not have been able to go above and beyond for the thousands of people in the community that we have had the privilege to save. For that, we salute you!

**ASHIRA SACKSTEIN**







# Hatzolah During The Pandemic

## Hatzolah Assist

The Hatzolah Assist project has been valuable and successful from its inception during the first wave of the pandemic. Since then, the team of drivers has consistently grown and become busier. Drivers are used for non-emergency patient transfers, and to transport nurses to visit the sicker patients on the Hatzolah Wellness Programme.

With one driver at the outset, we ended the first wave with four Assist drivers, having done 1313 calls.

The second wave saw us bringing four additional drivers on board to accommodate the increased demand, eventually exceeding 6942 calls.

The third wave, at the time of writing, has required that the team increased to a massive twenty drivers and we have done over 15446 calls.

We are so fortunate that this project was set up from the start of the pandemic. It has enabled us to preserve our resources and free up our ambulances for emergencies, and at the same time have the ability to help so many people.

We are very grateful to the Assist drivers who avail themselves 24/7. In addition, keeping this project going and running efficiently at this level, has really been made possible by the team that I have working with me. Thank you to all involved.

HILLY REUBEN









# Hatzolah During The Pandemic

## Hatzolah Decontamination

I can't believe more than a year has passed since the decontamination team became an integral part of our operations. Another year and Covid is still the reality; we face it daily.

This is how it works :

"Hi guys, the time is 09:34, we have a high risk call in the Glenhazel area, we have a XX aged male, who is Covid-positive, having trouble breathing, please respond." The team get dressed in high risk PPE(personal protective equipment) - white space suits, and responds to the emergency. The patient is treated and taken to a hospital. During the peaks of the pandemic this could take anywhere from one to six hours, depending on the availability of hospital beds. After the call, the team gets back into a highly contaminated ambulance and heads back to the Hatzolah base. "Hi Dispatch, this is A12, we are complete at XXXXXXXX Hospital & heading back to base for a decon, we are unavailable to service calls."

The decon team of Sisqo & Tye kick into action. They don high risk gear - the same gear responders wear to treat patients - and as soon as the ambulance is parked in the sluice room, they get started. The ambulance is stripped, all equipment used on the emergency call is removed and sheets and dustbins are discarded. Chlorine wipes are then used to wipe down every surface in the ambulance: walls, floor, ceilings, steering wheel, handles, doors etc.

After the ambulance has been cleaned, the stretcher and all bags and equipment used on the call are deep cleaned and restocked ready for the next call.

Finally, once the ambulance is fully stocked and clean, it is then fogged with vaporised hydrogen peroxide, ensuring that we have the highest level of disinfection and sterilisation possible, to protect our medics and our patients.

While this is happening, the ambulance crew have a chance to shower and change, maybe grab a bite to eat and drink, and prepare to respond to the next emergency. The system allows the responders some down time to catch their breath between calls. The decontamination of an ambulance takes approximately an hour, and without the decon team, the medics would be required to carry out this decontamination process, and thereafter shower & decontaminate themselves, before being able to continue. This would not have allowed us to service the volume of calls Hatzolah received.

At night and on weekends, the Hatzolah Shabbos drivers pick up the slack & handle all the after-hours decons, so that the crews can be available to handle more calls.

These unsung heroes, silently and efficiently working behind the scenes, in the same high-risk environment as the medics, have enabled the team to keep going to call after call, ensuring that Hatzolah can do what we do best: respond to emergencies in a safe and sterile environment for both medics & patients.

BERNARD SEGAL



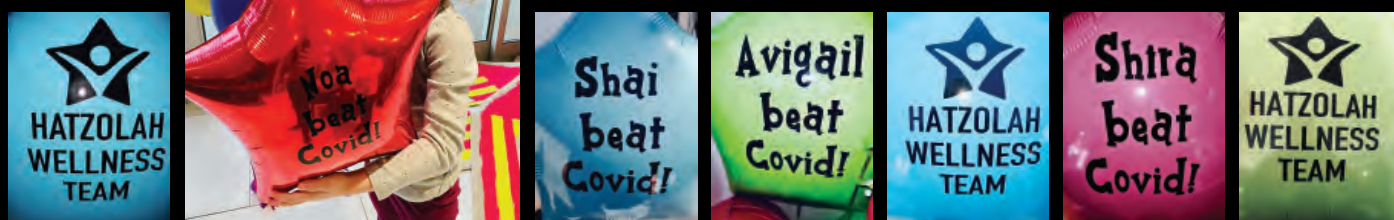
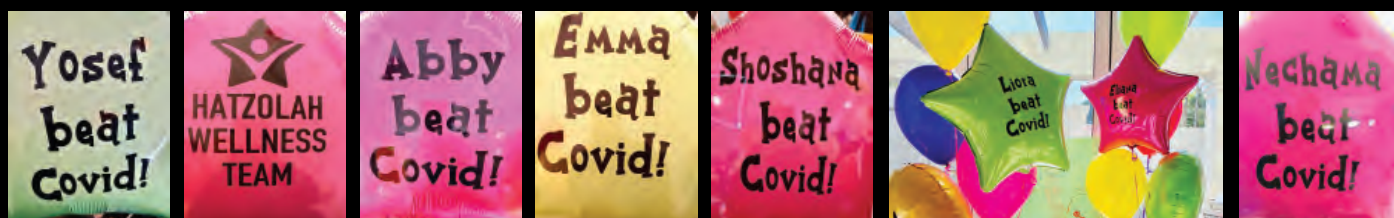








Thank You to THE POP who have donated and delivered over 1000 bunches of balloons to date - to children on our Hatzolah Wellness Programme.









# Hugo's Heroes

Where to start?

With so much uncertainty around the times that we have been going through, I approached my directors and requested to run a Hugo's Heroes course at a time that Covid numbers were a bit calmer.

They in turn requested a proposal with a way forward and protocols that I would have to put in place. After some discussion it was approved and I got the go ahead, but the majority of the lecturing needed to be done online. As far as I could see, this was seemingly impossible. But I knew I had to make it work.

My Hugo's Heroes team set up rules, regulations and began course prep, which consisted of so much work, but the excitement was palpable.

I met my students and was pleasantly surprised. What a great group of students had been selected to become Hugo's Heroes; the team was impressed with the 17 boys and 22 girls chosen.

We began with two in-person lectures, starting with the basics and filling this limited time as productively as possible. Going forward the majority of the sessions were on Zoom, with only two more in-person lessons and then the exam process.

It was a very special course and with results and competency levels that far surpassed any of our expectations.

The amazing and dedicated instructors, despite the circumstances, loved teaching the course, and the students really enjoyed being taught, with outstanding outcomes. We plan to run continuous training for them throughout the year.

When the situation hopefully calms down soon, we will have a very well-deserved graduation for our newest Hugo's Heroes. - **HILLY REUBEN**

Knowing that someone was able to save a life, because they had the skills that they needed, is inexplicable. What a privilege it is to train, and learn from, these enthusiastic teens!! They all share my passion for caring and my love for the medical field - it is truly inspiring to see how much they already know and how much they want to learn! Although this year's course was different, the students still showed the same passion and excitement - it was heartbreaking to not be able to see that in person - PG soon we will be able to do in person sessions again! We can't wait to see what each of them achieve in the future!

- **NATANYA PALAY**



WARREN KATZ



HILLY REUBEN



NATANYA PALAY

Once again it was an honor to be involved with this year's Hugo's Heroes and be able to share knowledge and life saving skills to such enthusiastic learners. Their will and desire to learn is unbelievable, never complaining about the late night zoom sessions, knowing they have a full day of school the next day with work to push through. It was not easy to learn skills over a zoom session but your determination and love of learning made it enjoyable. May you never have to perform these skills you have been taught, but I know you will apply all your knowledge and skills if needed. - **WARREN KATZ**



# Hugo's Heroes Class Of 2020 Graduation





# Hugo's Heroes Class of 2021



ADINA GOLDBERG



ADINA GOLDSTEIN



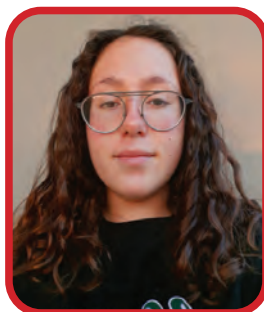
ADINA HOCKMAN



ADINA KAHN



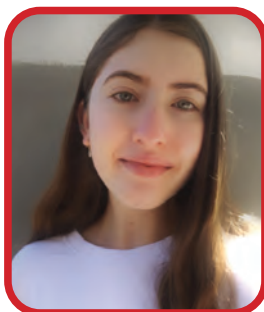
AMIRA GREENSTEIN



AVIGAL ROGOFF



AYELET TAMAR  
MILSTEIN



BATSHEVA ASH



BATYA STERN



CHANA RIVKA TABACK



DEENA LEVITT



DINA SHER



EVA TROPE



MEIRA BRACHA  
STOLLARD



MEIRA CROUSE



NA'AMA MALKA  
GRALNIK



NECHAMA  
GOLUMBICK



NOA GERSHUNI



ORAH BOME



RACHEL KAHN



# Hugo's Heroes Class of 2021



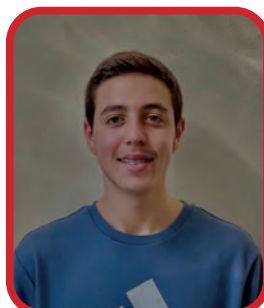
SARA PESHA RESS



TAMARI MILLER



AHARON LEIB  
REUBEN



AHARON MOSHE  
SMITH



BRENNAN RICHTER



CHANAN BENJAMIN



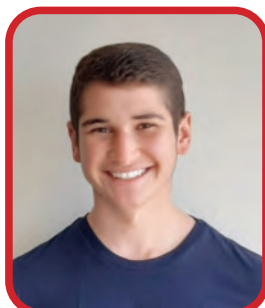
ELIYAHU MORDECHAI  
SEGEV



ELIYAHU SIMCHA  
SETZER



GADIEL YAAKOV  
JANET



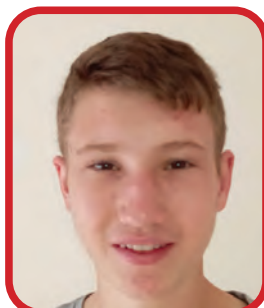
GILI SLASKY



MENACHEM MENDEL  
ABESHOUSE



NAFTALI YAAKOV  
SIEFF



NETANEL TZVI  
HIRSCHOWITZ



RAFI MIDZUK



RAPHAEL YITZCHAK  
MAZABOW

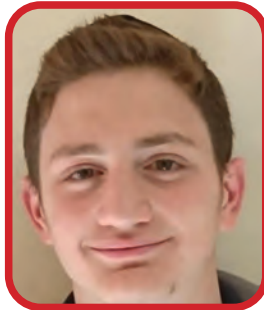


SHAI BOME



YAIR AVRAHAM  
BAROUCHI

# Hugo's Heroes Class of 2021



YECHIEL NEIMANN



ZECHARIA KAHN



For my family, it continues to be such an immense honour to be involved with this program. It has been astounding to see how, even during this different year, the program is continuing to grow. The courses that our Heroes are exposed to are innovative and are teaching our children to save lives, and to stand up and take responsibility through leadership and humility.

From a personal perspective, it is a privilege and has become a passion of mine to discuss safety with all of Hugo's Heroes. The program opens up the eyes of our students to the reality of what it means to not only respond to an emergency, but to prevent one as well. It is their role to now take this information back into their schools and to impact change.

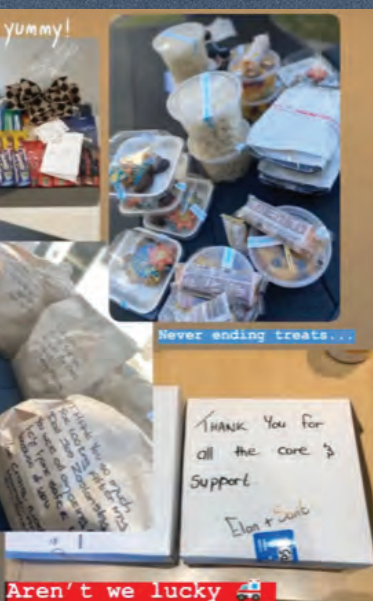
These are all values that Hugo stood for and we are so proud to work with Hatzolah to continue to impact positive change in such a meaningful way. - **DOV PALUCH**







Thank You!







# COVID-19 VACCINATION DRIVE





# OFFICIALLY OPENED 28 JULY 2021







## **HATZOLAH MEDICAL EQUIPMENT GEMACH**

**For the short term loan of medical equipment.**

Hatzolah maintains a gemach for the free lending of medical equipment. Our inventory includes wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches, bathroom equipment, and more. If you need to borrow any of these items, please call the number below.

**HATZOLAH MEDICAL GEMACH NUMBER**  
**0860 004 666**

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF ROBERT KROPMAN**

 Hatzolah Medical Rescue JHB  @HatzolahSA  @hatzolahsa  
29 Durham Street, Raedene. Tel (Office): 0860 100 101 Email: [info@hatzolah.co.za](mailto:info@hatzolah.co.za)

**Hatzolah Medical Rescue | Treatment Excellence | Unsurpassed Response Times**



# Swipe for a Cause

You too can make a difference support causes close to your heart with a MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet card.



The MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet fundraising programme is one of South Africa's biggest community support initiatives.

You can assist in raising funds for schools, charities, animal welfare and environmental organisations every time you swipe your MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet card at retail partners\*. They then donate a percentage of what you've spent to the school or charity of your choice.

The programme allows cardholders to make a difference to worthy causes without it costing them a cent.

More than 800 000 South Africans carry these cards. Thanks to them R1 million is donated every week to help more than 10 000 schools and charities.



## HOW IT WORKS

**1** **Apply online for a free card**  
To become a supporter apply for a free MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet card. It's easy go to [www.myschool.co.za](http://www.myschool.co.za) or call 0860 100 445.

**2** **Choose a school or charity**

You can choose to support a school, charities, animal welfare or environmental organisations. Support up to 3 different charities and can be changed at any time.

**3** **Start swiping!**  
Shop at any one of 1 500 participating retailers\* or partner stores and swipe your card when you pay. A small percentage of your transaction is allocated to your charity. The partner stores\* pay the donation on behalf of the cardholder.

**4** **Enjoy the warm feeling of knowing you're helping to raise funds for a cause close to your heart without it costing you a cent. Remember, every swipe counts!**



\*use your card at our partner outlets

WOOLWORTHS

TOYS R US

ENGEN

ALTECH NETSTAR

MySchool Travel

Bidvest Waltons

Quick SHOP

power24.co.za

He ain't heavy,  
*He's my brother.*



NOW WE NEED YOU TO CARRY US.

Go online to donate or send an Ecard

[www.hatzolah.co.za](http://www.hatzolah.co.za)