

## COVID-19 Update

As a result of a very successful vaccination campaign, Israel removed all restrictions and had very few COVID-19 cases between April and June. In July, the number of cases started to increase, resulting from the Delta variant. Some restrictions were brought back, including the mandate to wear masks indoors. In the first week of August, as many as 4000 daily new cases were detected. Therefore, there are discussions regarding imposing further travel restrictions and even a fourth lockdown. Israel was the first country to introduce a booster dose for those over the age of 60 years, and this has now been extended to those over the age of 12 years. The latest figures indicate that the COVID-19 situation is increasingly under control, and it is unlikely that further restrictions will be imposed.

At the time of writing this report, the Palestinian Authorities (PA) reported around 1000 cases/day with a few fatalities. There have been no restrictions and deficient compliance with social distancing in PA-controlled areas. It is a trend that once Israel reaches its COVID-19 peak, this is automatically reflected in the PA-controlled areas a few weeks later!

All staff at the Group have received their vaccinations, including a booster for those working at the Jerusalem Hospital.

## Group Clinical Activities

In 2020, there were three episodes of lockdown, and as a result, clinical activities were down by 26%, and hospital income (both patient-related and voluntary) was also severely affected.

The Hospital took efficient measures to control spending, which allowed us to reach year-end with good financial results.

In 2021 and until August, almost 70 thousand patient visits were conducted at the Group. This is nearly 30% more than the same period of 2020 and 1% less than 2019.

In total, 3559 major surgeries were performed in the Group, which is almost 22% more than the same period of 2020 and 14% more than the same period of 2019. Pediatric surgery was up by 9% from the same period of 2019. Despite the recent war and the subsequent challenges, outpatients' numbers in Gaza dropped by only 1% compared to last year and dropped by almost 7% from 2019.

In general, the Hospital Group has been able to clear the backlog of cases resulting from the severe movement restrictions imposed in 2020. It is anticipated that by the end of 2021, the Group's clinical activities will reach similar levels to 2019 (pre-pandemic era).

Dr. Ahmad Ma'ali, CEO

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