

UJA-Federation of New York Supports Patient Navigation Service and Department of Pain Medicine and Palliative Care at Beth Israel

Beth Israel Medical Center has received a \$150,000 grant from UJA-Federation of New York to support the Heritage Initiative's Community Patient Navigation Service and the Department of Pain Medicine and Palliative Care.

Beth Israel's Heritage Initiative program was created in 2006 to increase the overall cultural sensitivity to the Jewish community at all Beth Israel inpatient and outpatient sites, provide services that will better assist Bikur Cholim and Hatzolah ambulance volunteers, and increase Beth Israel's presence in these communities to ensure that everyone is aware of the culturally sensitive Jewish services and accommodations that Beth Israel provides. As part of this Initiative, the Patient Navigation Service provides health care case management for high-risk elderly community residents with a special focus on Jewish elderly, including those in Orthodox communities in lower Manhattan and immigrants from Russia in Brooklyn. The Patient Navigators' services include: arranging transportation to and from the hospital; explaining and expediting paperwork; comforting the patient and relatives; arranging follow-up care appointments with specialists who accept the patient's insurance; accessing financial aid for eligible patients; arranging for purchase of medications and assistive devices; and arranging for palliative and hospice care if indicated.

UJA's 2008-09 grant is also supporting efforts by the Department of Pain Medicine and Palliative Care (DPMPC) to bring specialist-level palliative care to elderly, homebound, seriously ill individuals through its Symptom Control and Palliative Care Clinic. Palliative Care is a discipline that focuses on improving the quality of life for patients—and their families—who suffer from any type of chronic or progressive incurable disease, such as cancer, AIDS, heart, lung, kidney and liver diseases, and neurodegenerative diseases, such as A.L.S. (Lou Gehrig's Disease) and Alzheimer's. Palliative Care focuses on improving the quality of care so that seriously ill patients are treated for pain and other distressing symptoms, such as breathing difficulty, insomnia, and depression, helping to improve their quality of life.

UJA's grant has enabled the DPMPC to provide high-quality palliative care training for a Physician Assistant and a Nurse Practitioner, to expand the reach of this critically needed specialty. The DPMPC is one of the leading centers in the country advancing the field of Hospice and Palliative Medicine through educational programs. The mission of the DPMPC is to provide the highest quality, comprehensive care in pain management and palliative care to patients suffering from chronic or acute pain or with unrelieved physical and emotional symptoms resulting from serious chronic and life-threatening illness, and to advance these two disciplines nationally through research and innovative educational and patient care programs.

UJA-Federation of New York is a co-sponsor of programs that seek to engage Jews and enrich Jewish life throughout the year. This is the second year of support from UJA-Federation for each of these programs. UJA has supported a wide range of programs at Beth Israel for many years. Beth Israel Medical Center is grateful for UJA-Federation's continued partnership.