



At the caregivers symposium — (Standing L-R): Rabbi Avi Fishof, director, Bikur Cholim Chessed Organization; Rabbi Yisroel Herskovits, executive officer of BCCO. (Sitting L-R): Rabbi Eliezer Gewirtzman, Rabbi Y.Y. Rubinstein, Dr. Martin Grossman, Rabbi Dr. David Fox.



Rabbi Avi Fishof, director of Bikur Cholim Chessed Organization.



Rabbi Yehuda Yonah Rubenstein, speaking at the caregiver's symposium.



The Hivnover Rebbe (L) and the Liska Rebbe (C), marking the yahrtzeit of their father, the previous Liska Rebbe.



Reb Leizer Ostreicher, a venerated Belzer Chassid, and Auschwitz survivor, shopping for *mishloach manos* at Yossi's Sweet House.



Reb Gershy Moskowitz picking out fish *lichvod Purim*.

COVERAGE BY

YITZCHOK SHTEIERMAN

Bikur Cholim And MJHS Hold Caregivers Conference

On Wednesday, February 25, Bikur Cholim of Chessed Organization, in conjunction with MJHS (Metropolitan Jewish Hospice Services) held a caregiver's conference. As the aging population increases, so does the "sandwich generation," who navigate the tricky maze of caring for their elders and their children simultaneously. This younger population is now confronted with the *mitzvah* of *kibbud av va'eim* in many very formidable ways.

A primary focus of the evening was making caregivers aware of the various resources available. One such resource are the palliative care MD specialists, who can manage pain and other symptoms — in accordance with *halachah*. This is a relatively new specialty that many are not aware of. Presenters spoke of the need to consult Rabbanim who are knowledgeable in this complex area.

"Bikur Cholim has for decades served the needs of the elderly and of the Holocaust survivors in our community, and in addition assists young and old with large sums of money toward a wide variety of services ranging from funding therapy, youth

groups for troubled children and so much more. This conference is the latest example of the way we are bringing resources, knowledge, and awareness, to the caregivers in our community — so that they are not crushed under the stressful burden that comes with caring for loved ones in this situation," said Rabbi Avi Fishof, the organization's director.

Chayim Aruchim's Rabbi Eliezer Gewirtzman explained that the *mitzvah* of *kibbud av va'eim* takes on an entirely new dimension. It's no longer about a drink of water — it becomes a full time, often stressful endeavor.

When it comes to treating terminally ill patients, the secular world is moving quickly toward a "quality of life" approach to care. As one doctor said, "The patient will never watch football again ..." and this, of course, is utterly antithetical to the Torah's view on the matter. The Torah holds that a person while on this world has the potential to do *mitzvos*, and if withheld from that by illness, still receives *s'char* for the good intention.

"Hospitals are under increased pressure to discharge patients, but they are required by law to give a family all available options. No family member can be forced to sign a DNI or DNR. Most importantly, we must look to the Torah for the correct approach to end-of-life care," said Rabbi Gewirtzman.

Rabbi Yehuda Yonah Rubenstein is a world-renowned speaker who has authored *The Little Book for Big*

Worries, which deals with end-of-life care. He noted that one difficult aspect of care for loved ones is guilt. When it comes to caring for those we love the most, we are burdened with the guilt of not doing enough. "We stand by as those who we love most suffer so much ... and we must take to heart that once we have done whatever we could to care for them, we must be serene in our most difficult choices. We must also keep in mind that our care must be 'optimum, not maximum,' paced and measured, or else we become exhausted very soon."

Finally, Rabbi Rubenstein noted humorously that a point of contention since his moving to the area has been when people have told him that they go to "the mountains" in the summer — by which they mean the Catskills. He, being from Scotland, takes strong objection to calling the Catskills "mountains."

"These 'mountains' can be climbed in your everyday shoes. If you do attempt climbing the 'real' mountains, I suggest professional hiking boots, and when one dares to ascend Mount Everest, an entire team is needed to support those who will eventually make it to the top. What our people has been so good at for the last 3,000 years has been that when we need help, there are those in the community who are here to lend resources and expertise. We are never alone," said Rabbi Rubenstein.

Rabbi Dr. Dovid Fox, a noted psychologist, drew from the teachings

of the *Gemara* and *Chazal* highlighting the various aspects of caring for the elderly — while at the same time caring for ourselves — on a practical, emotional and psychological level.

Yahrtzeit of Previous Liska Rebbe, zt"l, Marked

On Sunday of *Parashas Tetzaveh*, a gathering was held to mark the *yahrtzeit* of the previous Liska Rebbe, Harav Yosef Friedlander, zt"l, who led a shul in Boro Park for many decades. The gathering was presided over by, ybl"c, his sons, the current Liska Rebbe and the Hivnover Rebbe, who also has a *beis medrash* in Boro Park.

The Hivnover Rebbe noted that while we ask the departed *tzaddikim* to be *meilitz yosher* for us from their place On High, it is our responsibility to continue their work on this world — employing their teachings, and perpetuating their legacy. He went on to explain that as we enter the month of Adar, in which we are commanded to be happy, true *simchah* is much more than drinking another *l'chaim*. Rather, true *simchah* is achieved through transcendence over the mundane, and through prevailing over the fashions and trends of the time.

The Liska Rebbe related that his father, zt"l, never forgot the *churban* he had survived, and would always invoke the memory of the world he came from. And everything that he did — even in "the new world" —