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THE HADASSAH CENTER.

Delivering RCH innovation across the globe

Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital is a world-class medical centre and university teaching hospital, renowned for leading international medicine across a host of research and training programs. In collaboration with The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), Hadassah Hospital will soon cement its progressive medical approach with the opening of The Hadassah Center - a multidisciplinary centre dedicated to advancing paediatric care and public policy in Israel.

This exciting initiative is led by the RCH's world-leading Centre for Community Child Health, which, under the directorship of Professor Frank Oberklaid, brings together research into child behaviour and development, prevention and early intervention to deliver substantial community-focused services. The core philosophy that underpins the Centre for Community Child Health's work - and one which will also guide The Hadassah Center - is that a child's early years play a critical role in determining their trajectory through to adulthood.

Professor Oberklaid has been a regular visitor to Israel, communicating his vision of progressive, holistic and developmentally focused paediatric care. It was during one of his lecture tours that he met with the chairman of the department of paediatrics at Hadassah Hospital, who recognised that a similar Israeli model could be developed, embracing the community-based behavioural and developmental services that are absent in much of the country's current paediatric approach. In the

same year Oberklaid delivered the annual oration for Hadassah Australia - the Melbourne-based organisation dedicated to raising funds for, and managing medical research collaborations with, Hadassah Hospital. Hadassah Australia also supports the concept of a centre for multidisciplinary paediatrics in Israel. Marrying the two interest groups created the momentum for The Hadassah Center project.

One of the first steps in bringing The Hadassah Center to fruition was the creation and funding of a Community Paediatrics Fellowship. The first fellowship was awarded to Dr Hava Gedassi from Hadassah Hospital, who is spending a total of two-and-a-half years in Australia under Professor Oberklaid's mentorship, practicing as a clinician in the Centre for Community Child Health and absorbing the RCH's innovative model of paediatric care.

This invaluable exposure to RCH expertise will equip Dr Gadassi with the skills to develop and tailor the multidisciplinary academic Israeli centre to the needs of the local environment, with ongoing guidance after she returns to Hadassah Hospital. "I'm excited about using the Centre's model of care to really make a difference. By training our paediatricians and people working with children in Israel, we can distribute our knowledge to the whole community".

By broadening paediatric practice, research and training to include the behavioural, social and developmental issues that affect children's health and wellbeing, the hope is that The Hadassah

'We have a responsibility to advocate not just for the health of children in hospital, but for all children'. Professor Frank Oberklaid



Hava Gadassi and patient Santiago.

Center can inform smarter public policy, better care for all children and greater wellbeing for the adults they will become. 'The Centre for Community Child Health is an international leader in this area and as our expertise is exported there's an opportunity for both paediatric services and health care policy to be completely transformed,' says Oberklaid. 'We have a responsibility to advocate not just for the health of children in hospital, but for all children'.

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