

selves suffered, continue now even weeks later to mobilize and work 24/7 to be a resource for others in the community.

The Ohel trauma team felt privileged to be of service to this amazing and special community and continues to be a critical resource for the difficult months ahead as the residents work toward recovery. Ohel's trauma team intends to return to Houston in mid-October to support the community.

The assistance rendered included a community-wide lecture to address coping strategies for children during this difficult time and training a group of social-work interns and psychiatry residents at the Baylor College School of Medicine how to help the community after the disaster. Ohel will also provide a number of school-based trainings, including teacher training for UOS Goldberg Montessori School in Bellaire, Texas, and at the Beren Academy, a workshop for parents called "Calm after the Storm" at Bauer College of Business, University of Houston.

Ohel's ability to reach far and wide is indicative of 48 years' experience in serving the community. The New Ohel Jaffa Family Campus, which will be home to Ohel's trauma services as well as other services now under one roof, will only further enable it to immediately respond, manage, and effectively support those facing sudden crisis and trauma, from Brooklyn to Los Angeles. Free copies of all Ohel trauma resources are available at OhelFamily.org. ❖

Get Ready For The Third Annual TEAM Shabbos

On Shabbos *Parashas Vayechi*, **December 30**, hundreds of shuls in communities nationwide will join the third annual TEAM (Traditional End-of-life Awareness Movement) Shabbos, a project of the National Association of Chevra Kadisha (NASCK). Following last year's resounding success under the leadership

include the Torah's view of the inherent value and sanctity of life, the importance of being prepared to make proper medical decisions, choosing and helping others to choose traditional Jewish burial practices, and writing wills in accordance with *halachah*.

Because end-of-life topics are not easy to talk about,

of-life were surprised at the positive and accepting attitude that their communities responded with," Rabbi Zohn explained. "The 'it's about time' sentiment was an oft-repeated phrase this Shabbos."

"The *tzibbur* welcomed the opportunity to learn about the importance of end-of-life directives and *halachic* wills, as well as hear an overview of the *halachos* of end-of-life situations and issues related to a *beis ha'kev-*

land noted, "Given the level of knowledge of the people in my shul, I was very surprised how unfamiliar they were with the many important *hashkofos* and *halachos* that pertain to end-of-life. I'm so grateful to TEAM Shabbos and NASCK for giving me the push and the opportunity to speak about it."

"We will continue to keep the discussion open and to generate awareness surrounding the importance of the inherent sanctity of life and choosing traditional afterlife choices," says Rabbi Zohn. "We encourage communities to join NASCK's many ongoing programs dedicated to support, inform, educate, and inspire all those seeking information about traditional Jewish burial, including programs promoting *halachic* living wills and EMES (Emergency Medical Education and Sign-up) cards."

To have your community join, or for more information about the National Association of Chevra Kadisha (NASCK) and TEAM Shabbos, please visit www.nasck.org or call 718-847-6280. ❖

Due to a lack of awareness, many people make medical decisions contrary to Torah values.

of Rabbi Elchonon Zohn, this initiative will continue to help raise awareness throughout our community about the Torah's perspective on end-of-life matters.

Beginning the preceding week and throughout the Shabbos, shuls around the country will be participating in the Team Shabbos movement in various ways. Rabbis will dedicate their sermons, lectures, and shul programs to generate the discussion. Many shuls will be utilizing their weekly program and shul material (newsletters, e-blasts, etc.) to focus on relevant topics, while some will collaborate with NASCK to coordinate a special event in their community to boost awareness. Some of the topics that will be addressed

many of these very important obligations and far-reaching matters are infrequently addressed on a communal or individual level.

"Due to a lack of awareness about the inherent sanctity of every moment of life," says Rabbi Elchonon Zohn, "many people make end-of-life medical decisions that are contrary to Torah values. The goal of TEAM Shabbos is to open the discussion about 'Respecting Life: Here and Hereafter' in a unified national movement to facilitate the necessary awareness about these issues."

Last year's TEAM Shabbos movement was a national success with overwhelming positive feedback. "Many of the *rabbanim* who presented *derashos* or *shiurim* on end-

aros," explained Rabbi Dovid Heber, *rav* of K'hal Ahavas Yisroel Tzemach Tzedek in Baltimore. "Thanks to the efforts of NASCK, these sensitive topics were addressed '*l'm'aseh u'v'rov am*' in our shul, together with many other *kehillos* in our community and nationwide."

Many Torah-observant people do not fully understand the modern-day practical applications of end-of-life concepts such as *pikuach nefesh* and *mes mitzvah*. These important concepts require individuals to make proper medical decisions and assist less-observant friends, relatives, acquaintances, and coworkers in choosing traditional Jewish burial practices.

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