The New Dermatology Department at Soroka University Medical Center
Background
The new Dermatology Department at Soroka University Medical Center serves the population of the entire Negev, a region that covers 60% of Israel’s landmass and is home to over one million people. The department encompasses all aspects of dermatological care: inpatient, ambulatory, outpatient, and community care.
Soroka’s Dermatology Department has recently taken on the responsibility for providing dermatological services to the whole Negev region, hospital and community combined, in order to make available a comprehensive service and continuous health care for patients.
The services offered include hospitalization of severe cases such as infections, autoimmune diseases, psoriasis, and drug reactions, ambulatory follow-up, and outpatient consultation and care.
The scope of the service includes over 3,500 annual hospitalization days, over 6,500 clinic visits at the hospital, over 2,500 phototherapy visits, and more than 100,000 annual visits to community dermatology clinics. Dermatology visits account for 4% of all outpatient visits, representing the third most common subspecialty ambulatory visit. Various skin diseases account for 5% to 8% of all primary care visits and over 4% of emergency room visits.

Why is Dermatological Care So Important?
The skin is the largest organ of the body. It is commonly affected by inflammatory or neoplastic disorders (benign or malignant growths) that result in significant discomfort and substantial reduction in quality of life. For example, psoriasis, a common selective autoimmune disease of the skin that is chronic and incurable, but improves with treatment, affects 2% of the population and may require prolonged treatment and repeated hospitalizations. Another crucially important activity in dermatology is the detection and treatment of skin cancer. Melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers are increasing in incidence and prevalence and require early and professional detection and treatment.
The Current Situation at Soroka

The Dermatology Department at Soroka is the only such department in Israel's South. The existing dermatology facilities at Soroka were constructed in the 1960s, when the Negev population was tiny. They include a twelve-bed inpatient ward, a cramped clinic for patient visits, and a small phototherapy unit. These facilities are outdated and no longer sufficient for the needs of the growing Negev population. There is no ambulatory care facility.

The staff of the Dermatology Department includes three senior consultants, twelve residents, and a specialized nursing staff that is split between the inpatient and outpatient services, which provide services in two separate locations. The inpatient ward has three four-patient rooms for either men or women, so that sometimes a bed may be available in one of these rooms, but a patient cannot be admitted due to his or her gender.

The Need

The dermatological service is in dire need of comprehensive renewal and infrastructure development to facilitate the establishment of an ambulatory care center and the expansion of the hospital dermatology clinics, as well as to allow for the augmentation of the staff.

An ambulatory care center is one of our most pressing needs. Of the seven dermatology departments in Israel, only Soroka's lacks an ambulatory care facility. Ambulatory care is used in dermatology for a variety of conditions that require intensive and prolonged treatment, but not overnight hospitalization. Examples of treatments provided in the ambulatory framework are tar plus UVB for psoriasis; bath PUVA for psoriasis; intravenous treatment of various skin infections; and phototherapy for psoriasis, atopic dermatitis, vitiligo, CTCL, and other conditions.

Phototherapy is one of the most important treatment modalities in dermatology and is increasingly used worldwide. In this form of treatment, the skin is irradiated with light (electromagnetic waves) at various wavelengths within the ultraviolet spectrum. Modern phototherapy units can calibrate the treatment very accurately to conform to the individual needs of each patient by means of modern electronics, hardware, and algorithms.

A comprehensive and modern phototherapy service with ambulatory care facilities is critically important for many patients with debilitating skin diseases, and will play a crucial role in supporting the expanding hemato-oncology (bone marrow transplantation) service and the nephrology service at Soroka.

The Negev is home to an extensive chemical industry, so there is an urgent need for occupational dermatology services that simply do not exist in the region. It also has a rapidly expanding military (IDF) infrastructure with an ever-increasing need for dermatology services for the IDF soldiers who are serving here. These needs are as yet unmet, and the expansion of the Dermatology Department will provide solutions for meeting them.
Our Goals

Our primary goal is to upgrade Soroka’s Dermatology Service infrastructure to include a new ambulatory care facility, a renovated clinic facility, and a state-of-the-art inpatient ward.

In addition, we aim to enhance the dermatology staff by forming a unified nursing service at all the service sites.

Finally, we intend to establish specialized services such as an occupational dermatology clinic, a skin cancer clinic, a dermatology clinic for renal transplant recipients, and an IDF dermatology clinic.

The upgraded Dermatology Service will ensure the highest standard of skin care services to Negev patients, IDF soldiers, and all HMO members.

Establishment of a New Ambulatory Care Facility

The new ambulatory care service will provide care for patients who suffer from a variety of skin conditions. It will include full ambulatory care facilities for dermatology: six beds and six ambulatory care couches (a total of 12 ambulatory care posts), a central nursing station, patient dressing rooms, staff rooms, five modern phototherapy stations, including NBUVB, BBUVB, UVA, and UVA1, bathtubs for bath PUVA, and other facilities, such as a Drionic (a device that stops excessive sweating).

In addition, there will be two doctors’ examination rooms, a head nurse’s room, and a technicians’ and nurses’ room. A computer network will be set up with a computer at each examination, treatment, and follow-up station. We expect to treat some 1600 patients annually.

Dermatology Clinics

The physical infrastructure of the clinics will be renovated to include a modern nursing station and procedure room, a room for minor skin surgery, and four adjacent physicians’ rooms. Ideally, the staff will rotate between clinics, ambulatory care, and inpatients within the Dermatology Service, in order to increase professionalism and prevent attrition.

Renovated Inpatient Department

The inpatient department will be located adjacent to the ambulatory care facilities and clinics as part of a comprehensive dermatology service. The addition of a fourth patient room will enable increased flexibility in hospitalizations and a new staff room will be needed for a third attending physician.
Dermatopathology Services

Dermatopathology focuses on the study of skin diseases at a microscopic and molecular level. Dermatopathology services are an essential and indeed central element of any dermatology service. For dermatopathology consultations, discussions, and teaching, we require a renovated conference room with a state-of-the-art microscope and camera as well as a large screen.

A Comprehensive Aesthetic Dermatology Center

The residents of the Negev have no aesthetic dermatology services and therefore have no choice but to use private services in the center of the country.

We propose the establishment of a self-sustaining comprehensive aesthetic dermatology center that will provide services for residents of the Israel’s South. In the morning, the center will provide auxiliary services to other hospital departments. In the afternoon, the center will operate as a separate business unit, generating income for Soroka University Medical Center. A center based on such a model operates successfully at the Ichilov Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center, a public institution, with appropriate separation between private and public services.

Naming Opportunities and Donor Recognition

Your generous donation can go far in changing the lives of residents of the Negev who suffer from dermatological conditions by allowing Soroka to provide the most advanced care available in a modern and pleasant facility equipped with state-of-the-art technology.

- Construction of a new, modern ambulatory care facility to provide full ambulatory care: six beds and six ambulatory care couches (a total of 12 ambulatory care stations), a central nursing station, patient dressing rooms, staff rooms, five modern phototherapy stations, and other facilities.

  The new ambulatory care facility may be named for US$ 500,000.
A plaque recognizing your donation and acknowledging your generosity will be placed in a prominent location in the new facility.

- A new staff room for an attending physician is available for naming at US$ 40,000.
- The following specialized service clinics are available for naming at US$ 50,000 each:
  - occupational dermatology
  - skin cancer
  - dermatology for renal transplant recipients
  - cutaneous immunology
  - psoriasis
  - atopic dermatitis
  - bullous skin disorders
  - Mohs surgery unit
- A new patient room in the renewed and expanded inpatient department is available for naming at US$ 50,000.
- Five modern phototherapy stations are available for naming at US$ 50,000 each.
- A conference room for dermatopathology consultations is available for naming at US$ 150,000.

A plaque recognizing your donation and acknowledging your generosity will be placed in a prominent location adjacent to the relevant facility.

- **Equipment**
  - The following items of equipment are required:
    - 2 PUVA devices for hands and feet (180L) – US$ 6,000
    - 3 PUVA devices for hands and feet (200L) – US$ 6,000
    - NB UVB for hands and feet – US$ 6,000
    - Laser and IPL units in the aesthetic dermatology clinic - US$ 10,000-40,000
    - Computerized dermoscopy unit – US$ 50,000
    - Three Waldmann NB UVB devices (for standing therapy) Waldmann UV-THERAPY SYSTEM UV 5002, 7200 – US$ 60,000 per unit
    - NB UVB device (for prone or supine therapy) – US$ 60,000
    - PUVA device – US$ 60,000
    - Confocal microscopy unit – US$ 100,000

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