



SHARSHERET

Your Jewish Community Facing Breast Cancer

2019 IMPACT REPORT

Cancer robbed me
of the feeling that I
could control what
was happening.

**SHARSHERET
EMPOWERED
ME**

to take control
of the road ahead.



SUPPORT • EDUCATION • INFORMATION

**SHARSHERET
CHANGES LIVES**

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GLENN L. PHOTOGRAPHY

MESSAGE FROM

OUR PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

This year will mark Sharsheret's 18th anniversary - the year of chai/life - a significant milestone for an organization that began with the breast cancer journey of one exceptional woman, Rochelle Shoretz A"H. Today, Sharsheret, Hebrew for "chain," is the direct lifeline for thousands of women and families facing the uncertainty of a breast or ovarian cancer diagnosis, or going through treatment, and for those living with advanced cancer, or as survivors.

In this Impact Report, you will learn about Sharsheret's accomplishments through the numbers shared and the programs highlighted. But more importantly, you will feel the incredible power of Sharsheret's growing community through Sara, Hazel, Linda, Laura, Vanessa and Erica and their life-changing experiences.

This year, we ask you to deepen your connection to Sharsheret. Bring life-saving educational programs and resources to your community - share with your health care professionals, at your workplace, synagogue, school or in your home, race with Team Sharsheret, and at any point in the cancer journey, when your friends and family turn to you for love and support, encourage them to also reach out to Sharsheret.

In these turbulent times, we understand too well the importance of leaning on each other for support and coming together as a community - that is Sharsheret. Thank you dedicated lay leaders, devoted volunteers, and generous supporters. You are the lifeline that enables us all to look toward a brighter future.


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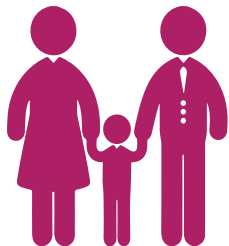
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SHARSHERET BY THE NUMBERS



93,149

**WOMEN, FAMILIES AND
COMMUNITY MEMBERS SERVED***

*The LINK Program® is funded with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



534

**GENETICS
CONVERSATIONS
FACILITATED**



179,211

**UNIQUE WEBSITE
VISITORS**



409

**CAREGIVERS
SERVED**

through The Florence & Laurence Spungen Family Foundation Family Focus® Program



12,621

**SHARSHERET TEAL/PINK
SHABBAT® PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS**



34,079

**STUDENTS REACHED
ON CAMPUS**

Dedicated by Sherry and Neil Cohen



23,180

**SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS**



565

**SESSIONS WITH WOMEN
LIVING WITH METASTATIC
(STAGE IV) CANCER**

through The Margot Rosenberg Pulitzer & Sheri Rosenberg Kanter Embrace™ Program

1,414
**PARTICIPANTS IN ONLINE
WEBINARS AND TRAININGS:**

- ✓ HEALTHY LIVING
- ✓ NEW RESEARCH
- ✓ CANCER GENETICS



Our webinars are made possible with generous support from The Siegmund and Edith Blumenthal Memorial Fund

MY SHARSHERET JOURNEY

by: Dr. Sara Zakheim

No woman is ever ready to hear the words...“the biopsy indicates that you have breast cancer.”

And in my case, I was especially not ready. I am the typical harried woman who is trying to balance motherhood and a career, all the while trying to jam 26 hours of activities into my 14 waking hours. The day I was diagnosed was a run of the mill Thursday in December, minus the small detour to have a breast ultrasound that had been scheduled 6 months prior. I had wedged the appointment in between a full schedule of errands as I was planning to be out in an hour. Unfortunately, the ultrasound ended up being anything but routine.

The radiologist announced her presence with a wan smile and a professional game face. Her words were clear, direct and left no room for interpretation. Cancer had somehow invaded my breast. I don't remember much immediately after that except that those simple words were still hard to comprehend and that I couldn't believe that they were directed at me. When I think back to that day, I realize that I didn't hesitate before reaching out to the available resources. **Surprisingly, my first calls were not to my family and friends; I just wasn't ready to engage in conversations that would yield questions to which I didn't have the answers. Instead, while sitting on the floor of my bedroom closet, I decided to call Sharsheret.**

Why Sharsheret? For starters, I knew that there would be a trained social worker on the other side of the phone who was waiting for my call, would be calm in the face of chaos, could support me in dealing with the shock of my diagnosis, would help me spring into action and who was experienced enough to help me navigate and plan for the complicated decisions that lay ahead. And most importantly, I knew I would find someone to help me get my footing and that they would be with me every step of the way.

As a result of that initial call and a follow up call, I went to bed that first night with a “to do” list for the next morning...pick a hospital, find a surgeon, schedule tests, begin formulating a plan for how to tell family and loved ones. Best of all, **Sharsheret empowered me to gain control of the road ahead.** Sharsheret's support continued



Sara Zakheim, dentist, mother of four and breast cancer survivor, was diagnosed 2 years ago at age 41.

to be invaluable. In the following weeks, as I met with potential surgeons and learned about different treatment options, it was the Sharsheret social worker who was my sounding board and provided guidance and advice which helped me process and dissect all the information that I was receiving. The social workers equipped me with the questions that I needed answered and helped me extract key information from my doctors that helped me prepare for the surgery, treatment and its aftermath.

It was on one of those phone calls with Sharsheret that I expressed my concerns about hair loss and was first advised to ask my doctors about the options available for cold capping and hair preservation. My social worker understood the huge emotional toll that hair loss can have on cancer patients and encouraged me to explore the opportunity to avoid it.

My Sharsheret social worker had heard from her extensive network that the cold cap had recently been FDA approved and was being launched in a few New York hospitals. After making some calls it became clear that I would have the good fortune of being a pilot candidate for a cold cap, and shortly thereafter, I was briefed by the oncology team about how I would be utilizing the cap, how it worked and the chances for success. Being able to start my first round of chemo without the stress of hair loss was a huge relief. Cancer robbed me of the feeling that I could control what was happening to my body, but at least when it came to my hair and self esteem, pursuing hair loss prevention mitigated the long-term scars I have as a cancer survivor.

I am so grateful to Sharsheret and their team of social workers for empowering me to live my best life along my cancer journey. The guidance and courage they provided me allowed me to be a better mom for my children, wife to my husband, and gave me the strength to bounce back to my regular routine after chemo.

SUPPORT CHANGES LIVES



HAZEL DONNELLY
Philadelphia, PA

ONE-ON-ONE BREAST AND OVARIAN CANCER SUPPORT

"I did not know where to turn for support. My family was extremely supportive as were my medical doctors. However, **given my Ashkenazi Jewish DNA and as an African American woman, I had a very unique set of circumstances**, and I wanted to find someone who had 'walked in my shoes.' Luckily, I saw a brochure while in the hospital which explained Sharsheret. I looked at it with tears in my eyes and immediately knew that I needed to reach out to them for support. To this day, one year later, my Sharsheret social worker **continues to communicate with me about my progress**. Each time I see her email, I am reminded that although my experience is quite unique, **I am not alone**. Rather, I have an **extended family, Sharsheret**, which has given me strength, courage and hope. I will, forever, be grateful for their support."



LINDA BOGAN
River Edge, NJ

METASTATIC (STAGE IV) CANCER PROGRAM

"After learning that my breast cancer had returned and this time with a vengeance, my life turned upside down. Then, through a stroke of luck, a friend suggested I contact Sharsheret through their partnership with Holy Name Medical Center. The call I had with a Sharsheret social worker **changed my life**. She understood the complicated emotions I was feeling along with the physical challenges I was now experiencing. She allowed me to **grieve for the life I previously had and to understand the challenges of what is now my new normal**."



ERICA CRUCITTI
Weston, CT

TAILORED PEER SUPPORT

"When I found out I was BRCA positive, I felt like a patient in waiting destined for a prophylactic mastectomy or cancer. I desperately needed to **speak to someone who had young kids** and could talk me through how to deal with my two-year-old following my mastectomy. Sharsheret's Peer Support Network instantly brought me into this world where **I felt less alone and provided support that I couldn't get anywhere else**."

GENETICS CONVERSATIONS AND RESOURCES

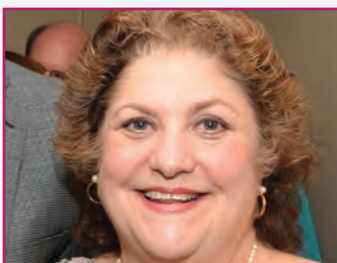
"Sharsheret has a team of **skilled and sensitive social workers and a genetic counselor** who speak to thousands of women like me, helping us feel empowered to make informed decisions about our bodies, our health and our future. As somebody who **inherited the BRCA genetic mutation from their father and found out from an at-home genetic testing kit**, I am grateful to Sharsheret for raising awareness about our genetic risk, and **providing genetic counseling and support for women** in whatever way they choose to handle this information."



LAURA OSMAN
Encino, CA

OVARIAN CANCER PROGRAM

"I had no family history of ovarian cancer, and I felt blindsided by my diagnosis. **My Jewish values have taught me that it's ok to reach out for support beyond your family**. I have taught my students, young and old, for years that communities should support their members. Sharsheret is designed to support Jewish cancer patients and **they know exactly what to do** through their team of social workers, and genetic counselor. Whatever your need is for your personal journey, I believe Sharsheret can help be your *Moreh Derech* (guide) on your journey."



VANESSA EHLICH
Deerfield, IL

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We are deeply grateful to the Rochelle's Dream and Jewel Circle families who annually make significant contributions enabling thousands locally and across the country to benefit from one-on-one support and community-wide education and training programs.

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For more information about Rochelle's Dream, the annual Jewel circle or naming a Sharsheret program, please contact **Director of Development Galit Reichlin at greichlin@sharsheret.org**

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