

Profile of Lilach

Lilach is a non-profit organization dedicated to the idea of an individual's right to autonomy over their life and death.

Since 1987 we have propagated a Living Will, whereby people can define their desire to refrain from receiving life-prolonging treatments, when they are no longer able to express this wish.

Lilach volunteers played a role in the formulation of a new law in the Knesset committees.

The Law for the Terminally Ill Patient was passed and partially implemented in 2005. The Law applies only to terminally ill patients with a life expectancy of no longer than six months, who suffer unbearable pain. Individuals can choose the treatments they wish to receive, and have the right to palliative care.

Stopping continuous treatment is currently forbidden by law, and therefore a timer has been developed to limit the activity of the mechanical respirator, changing it from continuous to cycled program.

In 2011 we initiated a proposal to amend portions of the Law. We asked that the "incurable patient" be added to the "terminally ill patient", referring to individuals suffering from a severe illness that will cause their death, but whose life expectancy cannot be determined. Both incurable patients as well as the terminally ill will have the right to palliative treatment.

We also take active part in a project conducted by the Medical Simulation Center for educating physicians to comply with the Law for the Terminally Ill Patient and for caring for patients at the end of life, in hospitals as well as in the community.

We have approached several medical centers and offered them the use of a website which stores the scanned Living Wills of Lilach members.

Lilach has over 18,000 registered members, about 8,000 of whom are currently active and paying members. All our work is performed by volunteers, with only one salaried office manager. Even the computer software for managing the member database was compiled and implemented by a volunteer, who also serves as our Webmaster.