

Christian Groups Save Jewish Cancer Center

A cancer treatment center based in Jerusalem remains open for six more months due to the generosity of various Christian groups.



[] Several Christian organizations based in Israel recently helped keep the doors open at a cancer treatment center founded in Jerusalem 10 months ago in honor of the late Yuri Shtern, a former Knesset member and Russian Jew known for building close ties between the state of Israel and the international Christian community. Shtern died of debilitating cancer last year.

“It was very moving for me to know that the Christian organizations which were in very close contact with my father are at our side and are helping us perpetuate his memory,” said Marik Shtern, son of Yuri Shtern and Director-General of the Yuri Shtern Foundation.

He said that the Yuri Shtern Holistic Center for Patients Dealing With Cancer, which has treated more than 500 patients since opening, had to almost close its doors due to a lack of funds. Three of the Christian donors to the center so far have been the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ), Bridges for Peace and Christian Friends of Israel.

“We’re pleased to honor our friend, the late Yuri Shtern, by helping to

keep the center open in his name,” said ICEJ executive director Malcolm Hedding. “We believe his memory is well worth keeping alive because he was a good friend to us and to the Christian community.”

Besides creating bonds with Christians worldwide since the 1980s, Yuri Shtern was known for forming the Knesset’s Christian Allies Caucus in 2004—a parliamentary lobby that indirectly connects Christians worldwide to Israeli policy.

Before his death, Shtern told Front Page Jerusalem radio: “We have no better friends than our Christian friends in America. Our relationship with Christians makes Israel more secure.”

The operational future of the cancer center could again become uncertain later this year, when funds donated by the three Christian groups expire. “Six months from now we pray that there will continue to be provision of funds through [Jewish and Christian] groups as well as others who may want to provide for it,” said Shannon Bennett, a U.S. spokesperson for the ICEJ.