

The Center for Women's Health Studies and Promotion at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev



המרכז לחקר וקידום
בריאות האשה

The BGU Center for Women's Health
Studies and Promotion



THE BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV
CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH STUDIES AND PROMOTION
ANNUAL REPORT 2019

אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב 
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

1. **Name of the Center:** THE BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV
2. CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH STUDIES AND PROMOTION
3. **Center Director:** Prof. Julie Cwikel, PhD, the Spitzer Department of Social Work

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Ms. Orly Liberman, Recanati School of Nursing

Prof. Orly Sarid, Department of Social Work

Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, Department of Epidemiology

Dr. Ofer Emanuel Edelstein, Department of Social Work

The Center Thanks its Supporters: Celebrating 20 years of Promoting Women's Health!

We are proud that we have garnered some steadfast and generous donors over the years. This is part of what keeps a Center like ours forging ahead to meet new challenges. Our supports allow us to innovate and engage in health promotion for women in the Negev and their families. This year marks the 20th year of activities in the Center and we cannot thank our anonymous donors enough for believing in our vision and supporting our work. We do believe we have made a significant mark in our work together. It is our policy not to mention donors by name to preserve their privacy. However, if you are coming to Israel this year we would be proud to show you our work and meet you personally.



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Center Research and Community Activities

We invite you to read our 2019 annual report, which describes the research and community activities of the Center, now marking its 20th year. We take stock of how we have broadened our approaches to women's health, incorporating medical, biological and social sciences. We are proud of our multidisciplinary research projects, together with leading researchers at Soroka University Hospital and our colleagues in both the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Computer Sciences.

This year we updated our [Mom to Mom facebook page](#) . We uploaded new brochures on temperament among infants, parenting during security stress, self-care and going back to work after maternity leave, in addition to those already on the [website](#) (breastfeeding, nutrition, pain, crying and sleep).

This year, we are very excited about the beginning of a new Project with the support of the Cheryl Saban Self-Worth Foundation to support the development of treatment resources and subsidies to support the psychotherapy for women who have been exposed to sexual violence and complex trauma (see page 20). Prof. Cwikel visited Foundation representatives in Los Angeles together with Philip Gomperts of AABGU in January of 2019. Toward this end, we have established a star-studded group of therapists who have experience in this area to start to accept women for treatment.



Meet some new staff members

This year, **Prof. Ephrat Huss** joined the center as the co-director. Ephrat, who is also the director of the arts intervention practicum in the Department of Social Work, brings her unique approach to studying women's health issues, from the lens of arts-based interventions.

We sadly parted ways with our Center Administrator for the last four years, **Ms. Kineret Grably**, who moved to another position in the university. She was replaced by **Ms. Mazal Tahar**, who comes from a background in community education and social activism. Mazal has her BA in Education and is now studying for her MA in management and tourism here at BGU.



Prof. Ephrat Huss and Ms. Mazal Tahar

New Research:

Pilot Study to Identity Postpartum Depression by Combining Machine Learning, Mood Automaton App and Actigraph Tracking

We were awarded a grant on multidisciplinary research from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, awarded to **Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Prof. Shlomi Dolev of Computer Sciences**. We are using actigraphs to track the mood and activity levels of new mothers in order to differentiate between mothers with and without symptoms of Post-partum depression. Ms. Ilana Schmidt is the research coordinator.

So far we have approached some 70 new mothers, but have been able to recruit only 30 who have participated and filled in the time one survey. Of those, 25 have completed the actigraph data collection procedures and filled in the time two survey.

We are now waiting to complete the data collection in order to analyze the data to find patterns based on machine learning of the data set.

A multidisciplinary study on the use of art as a method of stress assessment using different methods of drawing

The Technology-ART study has been completed and the preliminary analyses have been completed. Forty-eight women, fluent in Hebrew were recruited to participate in an experiment tailored to examine the psychological and physiological differences in stress reduction through art-making and were randomly assigned to draw with oil pastels on paper or on a 12-Inch iPad Pro with the Art-Rage program. Before drawing participants' stress levels were induced by the "sing a song" stress test, previously validated by our team to be used in a group setting. During art-making participants were told they had 45 minutes in which they could create freely and as much they wanted. Heart rate variability was measured throughout the experiment and two salivary samples for cortisol were taken: one at the beginning of the experiment as a baseline and the second after 45 minutes of art-making.

The results of this experiment indicate that both drawing on a tablet and with oil pastels are effective in reducing state stress without a statistically significant difference between drawings on an iPad compared to drawing with oil pastels. Furthermore, there were no statistically significant differences in the physiological response to art-making as manifested in parasympathetic and sympathetic indices of heart rate variability and salivary cortisol.

There were significant correlations between pleasure and flow during art-making and psychophysiological indices, especially for drawing with oil pastels. The use of erasing and undo in the digital medium had a significant negative correlation to the pleasure of the creative process, flow and stress reduction. Formal elements of art therapy scales were compared between the two mediums indicating possible distinctions in color prominence, energy, space and the amount of emotional content. We can conclude that art-making with digital media may be equally effective in stress reduction as art-making with traditional art materials. This may have important clinical implications for working with populations where sterilizing the art materials between sessions is critical, such as immunocompromised patients, cancer patients or when working with adolescents who may prefer digital media as a platform for art-making.

The collaborating researchers are: **Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen** (University of Haifa), **Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Prof. Orly Sarid** (The Center for Women's Health Studies and Promotion, BGU), and **Dr. Giora Galili** (Open University). This is supported by a grant from a private donor.

Chernobyl effects on women, men and children, 33 years later

The worst environmental disaster of the twentieth century occurred over 30 years ago, when in the early morning hours of April 26th, 1986, the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl exploded, blowing off the 1000-ton concrete roof and dispersing radioactive particles all over Europe. This

constituted the "largest short-term release from a single source of radioactive materials to the atmosphere ever recorded". In 1991, **Prof. Michael Quastel** and colleagues conducted whole-body counts for radioactive cesium isotopes (^{137}Cs) and physical exams on a sample of 723 adults and 300 children (aged 0 to 16 at the time of the accident), who had immigrated to Israel from areas in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) affected by the Chernobyl accident.

In the early 1990s, after conducting interviews with key informants, focus groups, and establishing contacts with immigrant NGOs, we managed to trace 111 of the original cohort, and together with snowball sampling, we constructed a sample of 404 from the contaminated regions and a comparison group of 304, closely matched on age and sex (N=708). Now 33 years after this "natural experiment", we are now examining the chronic health effects in general and in particular the reproductive effects among women and men who have been exposed to low-levels of ionizing radiation from the Chernobyl. Using hospitalization data from Soroka University Hospital, we are comparing their reproductive health outcomes with a series of comparison groups: non-exposed immigrants from other areas of FSU, immigrants from other countries (e.g. North and South America, Western Europe, North African/Asia, Ethiopia), and native-born Israelis. A paper has been submitted for publication entitled "Hospitalizations among Chernobyl-exposed immigrants to Israel 1992-2017: a follow-up study" and an abstract entitled **Reproductive outcome among immigrant women exposed to the Chernobyl accident** accepted on the reproductive findings at the prestigious 40th annual Pregnancy Meeting in Grapevine, Texas (February 7, 2020).

THE CHERNOBYL DISASTER: REPRODUCTIVE OUTCOME AMONG IMMIGRANT WOMEN EXPOSED TO THE CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT

Julia Chiriac, PhD, Russian Sergiyenko, PhD, Shoshana Eyal MD PhD*

Obstetrics and Gynecology, Soroka University Medical Center, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel. The Center for Women's Health Studies and Promotion, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel.

Introduction

- After the explosion of the nuclear reactor in Chernobyl in 1986, multiple adverse health effects in exposed citizens have been documented.
- Many of the exposed citizens immigrated to other countries following the accident, and as many as 200,000 came to Israel. Now more than 30 years later, exposed children have grown and become parents themselves.
- An important question is whether these women are at higher risks of adverse reproductive health outcomes.

Study Design

- This retrospective, cohort study is based on data sets collected in 1991-1994 at a tertiary medical center including obstetric, gynecology, and neonatal departments.
- Based on available International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEA) maps of the time, exposed immigrants were identified as high or low exposure based on the ^{137}Cs and cesium-137 concentration levels registered in the town they lived in just prior to immigration to Israel.
- The group of Chernobyl-exposed female immigrants (n=170, 23.8% total) included 90% women from the contaminated (high) exposure area and 10% from the non-contaminated (low) exposure area.
- The comparison group, a sample of immigrant women from the Former Soviet Union (FSU), who were not Chernobyl-exposed, included women from other countries (the FSU) and Israeli-born women, at a total of 133 (19.3%), (66.3% of the group is from other FSU towns).
- Multiple logistic regression models were constructed to control for confounders.

Results

	Exposed Birth (towns)		Non-exposed Birth (towns)		Total (n=509)	P value
	High exposure (n=71)	Low exposure (n=97)	FSU Immigrants (n=127)	Non-FSU Immigrants (n=186)		
Nulliparity	27.4%	22.7%	17.5%	13.5%	13.5%	<0.001
Fertility treatment	3.2%	3.3%	2.4%	2.9%	2.5%	0.449
HGR	5.5%	5.3%	4.0%	3.9%	3.9%	0.936
Abortion	34.8%	45.4%	39.7%	34.9%	33.7%	<0.001
Prenatal delivery	11.0%	12.5%	12.4%	12.8%	12.5%	0.695
Caesarean delivery	30.1%	23.7%	28.0%	21.3%	24.3%	0.292
Perinatal mortality	1.4%	2.1%	2.0%	2.3%	1.9%	0.957

Conclusion

- The overall fertility of Chernobyl-exposed women seems to be reduced as judged by the smaller number of children, and their greater requirements for fertility treatments.
- Also, Chernobyl-exposed women are more likely to have abortions during their pregnancy. A national public concern regarding the long-term implications of the Chernobyl disaster.

*Chernobyl-exposed women were more likely to be nulliparous and suffer from anemia during their pregnancy, as compared with non-exposed women. This link was higher among immigrants from high exposure areas (Tobin).
*In a secondary analysis, concerning all Chernobyl-exposed vs. all non-exposed women, Chernobyl-exposed women had fewer children (2.10 vs. 3.11, p<0.001), were more likely to undergo fertility treatments (3.6% vs. 4.4%, adjusted OR = 1.16, CI 1.06-1.27, p=0.002), and were also more likely to have abortions during their pregnancy (49.4% vs. 36.8%, adjusted OR = 1.77, 95% CI 1.62-1.93, p<0.001).

In addition, we collected data from the second generation (children of exposed persons) through 17 personal interviews and an internet survey. This year we analyzed the Soroka University Medical Center data set with the collaboration of **Prof. Eyal Sheiner** and biostatistician, **Ruslan Sergienko**. Collaborating on this research initiative are also: **Prof. Michael Quastel** (retired), **Dr. Gil Gutvirtz**, (the Faculty of Health Sciences), **Dr. June Hare** and **Dr. Danna Slusky**. This research is supported by a private donor.

Silenced voices: Women treated by irradiation for ringworm in the 1950s – historical, health and psycho-social perspectives

To date, 7,728 women have been awarded compensation from the Israeli Government for partial or complete baldness resulting from irradiation for ringworm in childhood that occurred in Israel during the 1950s. Despite the large number of women suffering from baldness, the historical and psycho-social perspectives have yet to be researched. To fill this void, **Prof. Segal-Engelchin** and **Prof. Shifra Shvarts**, from the Faculty of Health Sciences, are conducting a pioneering study together with doctoral student, **Liat Hoffer**. This study is designed to present a multidimensional picture of the impact of hair loss due to irradiation for ringworm in childhood on women, using a mixed method, qualitative and quantitative research design. This study received a grant from the Israel Science Foundation.

So far, 322 files have been sampled and analyzed (217 women and 105 men). Key findings include: women were irradiated at younger ages than men, and men were more likely to be married, and women single, divorced or widowed. Women were more likely to be granted mental distress compensation than men for social avoidance, anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression. More women than men wore wigs. Some of the findings were presented at the Health Policy conference in Israel this year.

Examining Treatment Preferences for Women Post-Partum, With and Without Post-Partum Depression

This research focused on the treatment preferences of women after childbirth, including options for web-based treatment, treatment by telephone and through groups. **Prof. Orly Sarid, Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Dr. Meital Simhi**, have finished analyzing the data set on 1,000 post-partum women collected from the Rehovot region from the district Tipat Halav (Mother and Child Health Clinics) on their treatment preferences in the face of post-partum depression or anxiety. The data show that women are clear that they want treatment options available in the community, without having to resort to mental health services, due to the stigma attached to receiving psychiatric care. About 10% of the women in the study showed signs of PPD and this affected the type of treatment they preferred. This research was supported by a grant funded by the Gertner Institute for Epidemiology and Health Policy Research. A paper was published in the Israel Journal of Health Policy Research entitled "*Preferences for mental health treatment for post-partum depression among new mothers*".

CB-ART (cognitive behavioral and art-based interventions), collaborative research with Monash University in perinatal mental health

This clinical intervention which combines between cognitive behavioral and art based therapy methods, has been the source of a number of publications with **Dr. Ephrat Huss, Prof. Orly Sarid, Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen & Prof. Julie Cwikel**. Last year we completed a project funded by the Pratt Foundation through a special BGU-Monash University grant initiative. Our colleagues from the Monash University, **Prof. Jane Fisher** and **Dr. Heather Rowe** of the Jeanne Haile Research Center replicated our CBART protocol in Melbourne to reduce perinatal depression and anxiety. Last year we completed a test of their workbook-based protocol, called WAWA (Why Are We Anxious?) with 34 new mothers, working to ease common anxieties that present during pregnancy and in the post-partum period. Our analyses show that it is very effective in reducing symptoms of anxiety, stress and depression in the post-partum period and very acceptable to the mothers who participated. While we intended to

conduct this intervention over the internet, this was not chosen as a treatment option, with the women preferring a group or telephone intervention mode. A paper has been submitted for publication from these findings and is under review.

The Myriam de Senarclens Prize -CB-ART: The Reduction of Psychological Stress and its Physiological Correlates among Women Undergoing In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

CB-ART is a 2-4 session treatment protocol that has been utilized with women coping with stress, depression, and pain and is effective in reducing these indicators. The research group, **Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen, Prof. Orly Sarid, Prof. Julie Cwikel & Dr. Iris Har-Vardi**, received funds from the **Myriam de Senarclens Foundation** to conduct a randomized controlled trial of a CB-ART intervention with 100 women with elevated perceived stress, before undergoing IVF treatment; in order to examine its effect on perceived stress, plasma CFD, telomere length and pregnancy rates. So far, 55 women have joined the research protocol out of the 127 who were approached to participate. The women are at different stages regarding the intervention or the data collection in the comparison group. Ms. Rachel Abramovitz is coordinating the conduct of the research.

Graduate Students Creating New Research in Women's Health

Two graduates this year:

Shimrit Engelsman: Shimrit was awarded her doctorate on: “The birth experiences of Haredi Israeli women”. She was supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel and Ephrat Huss**. She has prepared a chapter summarizing her work this year which is to be published in the book that is being prepared in the Center.

Avigdor Kaner: developed an innovative internet-based group intervention for new fathers, based on his initial findings on the experiences of new fathers during the first year postpartum. His study evaluated the effectiveness of this unique intervention for new father. Avigdor was

supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin** and **Prof. Julie Cwikel**. He finished his thesis and now is a proud PhD.

Dr. Meital Simhi graduated in 2018: Meital has explored the preferences and barriers to treatment for post-partum depression among Israeli women in a sample of 1000 women from Rehovot. This research is part of a grant that was given by the Israeli National Institute for Health Policy Research. A first paper has just been published. She was jointly supervised by **Prof. Orly Sarid** and **Julie Cwikel**. She is presently doing a post-doctoral year at Boston University in Boston, MA.

Post-doctoral fellow

This summer we were joined by psychologist, **Dr. Alison Stern Perez**, whose expertise is the linguistic structure of **trauma narratives**. We analyzed traumatic birth stories, supplied by **Dr. Tahli Frenkel** of the Interdisciplinary Center in Hertzlia and on this basis, we wrote four grants for additional funding. For example, in the proposal to the Israel Science Foundation, we were joined by social intelligence technology expert, **Dr. Tal Sobol Shikler** to propose a technique to analyze narratives, using both the structure of the spoken message such as the use of pronouns and the non-verbal aspects of the message such as the speed and timbre of the speech patterns. We hope to develop a unified analysis protocol from combining these two methods.

PHD Students

Talia Aizen: "Establishing a relationship with a widower with young children: Women's perspectives". Supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin**. Talia is continuing to analyze her data.

Alex Davidov: "Neurofeedback training as a tool that contributes to function and regulation of the emotions under stress among Israeli soldiers in IDF" supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Prof. Talma Hendler**, Tel Aviv University, Sackler Medical School. Alex has prepared his proposal and will defend his proposal.

Nava Dihi-Tabu: Jointly supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin** and **Prof. Jonathan Anson:** "Endogamy and Homogamy: Jewish Marriage Market in Early 21st century". Nava submitted her thesis.

Liat Hofer: (Jointly supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin** with **Prof. Shifra Shvarts**): "Health and Psychosocial characteristics of Women and Men Coping with hair loss from childhood as a result of a disease." Liat is busy writing up her findings.

Noa Kfir-Levin: The rehabilitation community as experienced by both rehabilitants and therapists: The "Hiram" case. Supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin**. Noa submitted her thesis this year.

Nuha Sliman: The effect of family structure on children's morbidity in the first year of life in Arab society. Jointly supervised by **Prof. Jonathan Anson** and **Prof. Julie Cwikel**. Nuha is in the final stages of analysis and writing up her thesis.

Nirit Volk: She just about to submit her thesis on "The helping connection: how mothers of daughters who were sexually abused experience the relationship to their daughter's therapist". She is supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel**. This year she is a teaching assistant in the practicum course on Treatment of Women, taught by **Prof. Cwikel**.

New PHD Students

Lior Deray: Lior has now transitioned into a PhD student in social work, supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel**. Her topic: adjustment of soldiers in combat support roles: effect of background variables, coping strategies, gender and unit atmosphere on drop-out. She completed the cross-sectional stage of this research and is not working on the prospective stage of data collection. This research is taking place in the IDF mental health unit with the collaboration of **Dr. Avishay Antonovsky**.

Merav Daniel: Merav is an educational psychologist who is now working on her thesis proposal on the topic of the testing of a cognitive-behavioral protocol to promote the return to work of women recovering from breast cancer. For this research she has already completed a preliminary survey of young breast cancer survivors to elucidate what are the factors involved in promoting or preventing women's return to work, which currently stands at around 50% of women who have completed their treatment and were working before the diagnosis. She is being jointly supervised by **Dr. Ofer Edelstein** and **Dr. Svetlana Prokashev**.

MA Student:

Noa Berezin : The psychological adjustment of female soldiers to combat roles. Supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin**. She is completing her thesis.

MD Student

Ayala Froynd: Ayala was jointly supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin, Shifra Shvarts, Aya Biderman and Dr. Nitza Hieman-Noyman**. "Representation of women in senior positions in the health system and in the medical academy in Israel: Perspectives of male and female doctors. Ayala successfully submitted her thesis and has presented her findings at a professional conference.

Community Activities ***Mom to Mom***

Mom to Mom is now completing its 14th year, providing support for new mothers and their infants in Beer-Sheva and the Negev. "Mom to Mom" is a project designed to help mothers cope with the first year of parenting through home visits of volunteer mothers. The aim is to provide support and guidance to mothers of the Negev who feel that they lack adequate support to make the transition smoothly.

We continue to run our Wednesday morning mothers' workshop on "positive parenting", which enables mothers to meet once a week with their infants to hear a lecture, to network with each other and to receive attention to individual issues in mothering.

Since the beginning of the project, we have trained 255 volunteer mothers, with 15 new volunteers this year. At any given point of time, we have approximately 30 active volunteer-mother pairs. Up until the end of 2019, we have helped 712 new mothers, with 120 new mothers just this year, who participated in the mothers group or worked with a volunteer mom. Of the new mothers, 63 were referred from **Soroka University Medical Center**, while the others came from a variety of sources (self-referred, professionally referred or family-referred).

More than 95% of participants would recommend the program to a friend and 45% of volunteers have returned to mentor another new mother, some as many as five or six mothers over the years.

This year, we held a special event for the Mom to Mom volunteers when they met with a personal stylist **Iris Maman** on May 16th and learned about how to coordinate their colors and their wardrobe to their own specific style. Many remarked that it boosted their self-esteem.



Hosting the Annual National Gathering of Mom to Mom

Coordinators

This year on November 28th, we hosted the annual gathering of Mom to Mom Coordinators and presented the main topics of positive parenting: the theory and concepts, how to understand and manage with the different temperament of children and how it coordinates or compliments the temperament of the parents, and aspects of self-care for mothers. We practiced mindfulness as a way to work with mothers, together with their babies. It was a great upholding a Mom to Mom tradition.



Mom to Mom coordinators from all over the country together with veteran volunteers.

Marking the Fourth International Maternal Mental Health Day

Moms on Wheels #2 May 16th

The Center joined colleagues overseas and in Israel to mark the fourth international maternal mental health day. On May 16th, the Center held a day of activities for mothers and babies, jointly sponsored with the Municipality of Beer-Sheva, on the theme of self-care. The event, now in its second year, had 4 different discussion groups. The group on understanding your birth experience, was led by veteran midwife **Dr. Iris Raz**, **Liza Biton**, a nutritionist led a group on nutrition and body image, **Hadas Tal Ragolsky**, a psychotherapist who also works with us in Isha Be-Shela, discussed how women can support each other and **Tzvia Sitbon**, a

sleeping specialist discussed learning how to understand the language of babies. The half-day event was capped off by a comedy performance given by **Michal Shem-Tov**, a stand-up comedienne. The event was very successful and was attended by more than 80 new mothers together with their babies.



Discussion groups for moms and babies at the university with Tzvia Sitbon

A Symposium on Detecting and Treating Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders

In a separate symposium, on the 23rd of June, that also marked the Fourth International Promotion of Mothers' Mental Health, we hosted Ms. Alina Ovadia who shared her personal story of how she was diagnosed and treated for post-partum depression.

In a gathering of some thirty mental health professionals and veteran Mom to Mom volunteers, we heard about the trials and tribulations of a young mother, coping with perinatal mood disorders. In the panel discussion that followed, psychiatrist **Dr. Tzipy Frankel** shared her insights together with the staff of our Mom to Mom program: **Prof. Julie Cwikel, Ms. Limor Niego and Ms. Ilana Schmidt.**



Left to right: Kineret Grably, Alina Ovardia (who presented), Prof. Julie Cwikel, Ilana Schmidt, Limor Niego, Dr. Iris Raz, and Dr. Tzippy Frankel

Mindfulness and Movement Therapy – a unique workshop by Ms. Yael Schweitzer

Ms. **Yael Schweitzer** taught a three-day short course on the integration of mindfulness and movement therapy for mental health professionals and the end of June and early July 2019. Through a combination of lectures and movement exercises, Yael, who is an Israeli psychotherapist who lives in Portland, Oregon, taught her unique approach. The practice is based on the Dance and Movement Theory as taught by **Barbara Mettler** together with the approach of **John Kabat Zinn** to Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction. At times, exercises were as individuals, in couples and in small groups and sometimes in the whole group of 22 participants. The feedback on the course was excellent and it brought many new faces into contact with the Center.



Ms. Yael Schweitzer and the participants in the workshop

Isha Be-Shela – Counselling Service for Women and Men in the Negev

The Center's counselling service, which is the first counselling service in the Negev designed specifically to meet the needs of women and now men, has now been operating for 11 years. During these years, this service has become a well-known and highly regarded psychotherapy service in the Negev. This is reflected in both the growing number of clients who seek our counselling services and in the growing number of referrals from the professional community. Since the beginning of the project, we have seen close to 700 women and men in psychotherapy treatment, with around 50 persons in treatment at any given time, with the average age of 30. A majority of them are BGU students. At this current time, we have a waiting list and more people looking for treatment than we have room with the current group of 14 psychotherapists, including two men. **Ms. Sarit Pinhasi** gives supervision in small groups and if needed, individual supervision. **Ms. Noah Sitton** is the clinical coordinator who conducts the intakes and connects between those looking for therapy and the available psychotherapist. Each psychotherapist has their own expertise ranging from complex trauma, eating disorders, health-related issues in psychotherapy including substance abuse, the use of CBT, family therapy, and art and movement in psychotherapy, among other topics.



Combining Academic Challenges in PhD studies and motherhood: workshops

Ms. Limor Niego and **Ms. Vered Deichman** led a groups of PhD students in a one-day workshop in Hebrew on coping with the strains of building a career and being a mother. A second workshop was held at Midreshet Sde Boker in English which was led by Limor and **Ms. Noah Sitton**. Among the topics discussed were: dilemmas in motherhood alongside an academic career, balancing the difficulties with enjoyment of parenting, the pressures in the world of study and work, how to help family members and friends to understand career needs and how to speak about family needs in the employment sphere. An emphasis was placed on using the skills developed in motherhood to succeed in academia and the workplace.

Saban Project – Improving the accessibility to treatment for women who are victims of sexual abuse

The **Cheryl Saban Self-Worth Foundation** has generously offered to support the development of treatment resources and subsidies to support the psychotherapy for women who have been exposed to sexual violence and complex trauma. The project has three major goals: to increase the access of women with complex trauma to treatment resources by improving the skills of the psychotherapists in the South, by subsidizing the treatment for those women who are in long-term treatment and need help meeting the costs of the treatment and creating a pool of trauma-informed psychotherapists who can deal with these complex cases. This coming year we are planning a second series of trainings in EMDR which is a therapy that is especially suited for persons with a history of sexual trauma. We have brought together a group of expert psychotherapists to work on this project. We have started by subsidizing the treatment of a number of women with complex trauma.

This fall, on the 20th of September we hosted a workshop by **Ms. Avital Mermelstein** on the issue of how to manage with dissociation among clients who are suffering from complex trauma for Saban and Isha Be-Shela therapists. She also gave individual supervision to specific psychotherapists who were finding disassociation challenging in therapy with their clients.

Upcoming events and publications

A Book "New Methods in Feminist Treatment"

The book is being written by therapists of "Isha Be-shela" and PhD students and edited by **Dr. Merav Rabinovitz** and **Prof. Julie Cwikel**, and will explore the development of feminist treatment in Israel and worldwide and applied issues in feminist treatment. The book will contain these chapters:

First section: the development of feminist therapy- historical aspects

- a. On the development of the feminist therapy around the world.
- b. On the development of the feminist therapy in Israel.

Second section: research on women and parenting

- a. The experience of the mothers of sexually abused women.
- b. Between close and far from motherhood- research among women prisoners.
- c. Pregnancy and birth in the world of Halacha- feminist treatment, Orthodox women and the things between them.

Third chapter: Clinical Practice

- a. The use of art as an empowerment tool in social work with women in Israel.
- b. Mindfulness based movement therapy- attention and compassion in movement, improvisation and interpersonal relation.
- c. CB ART treatment with a woman who experienced a traumatic birth.
- d. A story followed by painting: implication technique as a mean of conversation about sex roles in the frame of group work with children who experienced domestic violence.
- e. Activist work with adolescents from the experiences in the mentoring program.
- f. Working with a cognitively challenged woman after sexual abuse.
- g. A model for working with treatment transference.

Training: Feminist and liberatory perspectives on psychotherapy supervision: Empowerment, not shame

In February 2020, we will open a special course, which will introduce students to feminist and liberatory models of psychotherapy practice as they apply to supervision of counselors and therapists at advanced stages of professional development. This course was originally planned for 2019 but had to be postponed for personal reasons.

The lecturer, **Prof. Laura S. Brown** is one of the world's foremost experts on feminist psychotherapy, as well as a forensic psychologist, psychotherapy consultant, supervisor and teacher from Seattle. This will be her fourth visit to the Center and we are very grateful for her continuing support and contribution to the mental health skills of our staff and others from around the Negev. The course will discuss common challenges and pitfalls inherent in attempting to create an egalitarian, liberatory relationship in an evaluative setting, and will explore how to develop styles of supervising that reflect those values.



Picture of Prof. Laura Brown from the earlier conference

Publications and Academic Activities of Center Researchers and Scholars (Listed in Alphabetical Order by Last Name)

With great pride, we share with you the publications and academic activities of the Center's researchers and scholars during 2019.

Prof. Aya Biderman

Publications:

Treister-Goltzman, Y., Peleg, R., & **Biderman**, A. (2019). A Comparative Study of Iron Deficiency Anemia in Bedouin and Jewish Women of Childbearing Age in Southern Israel. *Population health management*.

Carmel, S., Bachner, Y., & **Biderman**, A. (2019). Caregiving, cognitive functioning, and behavioral and social determinants of health risks of caregiving among primary physicians and caregivers themselves. *Innovation in Aging*, 3(Supplement_1), S216-S217.

Raphael, A., **Biderman**, A., & Friger, M. (2019). Seasonal variation in glycosylated hemoglobin in type 2 diabetes patients on semi-arid climate between the years 2005-2015. *Environmental Epidemiology*, 3, 325.

Kannai, R., & **Biderman**, A. (2019). Methods of burnout prevention and their implementation in the course for family medicine residents in Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. *Harefuah*, 158(10), 664.

Prof. Julie Cwikel

Publications:

Cwikel, J., and Friedmann, E. (2019). E-therapy and social work practice: a best-practice model and diffusion of innovation. *Journal of International Social Work* 1-16.

DOI: 10.1177/0020872819847747

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Sarid, O., **Cwikel**, J., Levitas, E., & Har-Vardi, I. (2019). Are there

preferred coping and communication strategies while undergoing IVF, and do cognitive behavioral interventions help? *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*, 14 (1), 20-32.

Simhi, M. Yoselis, A. Sarid, O. & **Cwikel, J.** (2019) Hidden Figures: Are Ultra-Orthodox Jewish women really so different when it comes to health care? *Journal of Religion and Health*, published on line.

Rinsky-Halivni, L. & **Cwikel, J.** (2019). Integration and return to work of workers with disabilities: a new paradigm. *Top 10 Commentaries in Occupational Health*. E-book by Avid Science.

Melchior, M. Blom, M. and **Cwikel, J.** (2019) "Mothers and daughters". Overview article and presentation of the Adult Daughter-Mother Relationship Questionnaire (ADMRQ). *Psychologie Magazine*, May, 2019, p. 17-25 (Dutch)

Cwikel, J. (2019). Transforming contagion: Risky contacts among bodies, disciplines, and nations. *Feminism & Psychology*. Book Review. July 27.

Simhi, M. Sarid, O. **Cwikel, J.** (2019). Preferences for mental health treatment for post-partum depression among new mothers" *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research*. 8, 84
doi: 10.1186/s13584-019-0354-0

Research Grants

2017-2019, The use of art as a method of stress reduction for women in community and clinical populations. Private Donor. Co-investigators: Prof. Ephrat Huss & Prof. Orly Sarid (Social Work, BGU), Prof. Shlomi Dolev (Computer Science, BGU), Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen (University of Haifa), Dr. Giora Galili (Open University) & Dr. Billie Sandak (Computer Science, Weizmann Institute).

2016-2019 - A thirty-three year follow-up of the effects of exposure to the Chernobyl accident: Reproductive and chronic illness effects in first and second generation. Co-investigators: Prof.

Eyal Sheiner, Prof. Michael Quastel, Dr. Danna Slusky, Prof. Michael Friger, Dr. Gil Gutvirtz, Mr. Ruslan Sergienko, & Dr. June Hare.

2016-2019 Myriam de Senarclens Prize for Research in Psychosomatic Gynecology and Obstetrics. CB-ART: The reduction of psychological stress and its physiological correlates in women undergoing in vitro fertilization (IVF). Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen (P.I.), co-investigators: Prof. Orly Sarid & Dr. Iris Har-Vardi.

2018-2020: The use of actigraph monitoring to identify early women at risk of Post-Partum Depression. Social Science Faculty grant for multidisciplinary research. Co-investigators: Prof. Shlomi Dolev (Computers), Dr. Liat Titotsky (Psychology) and Dr. Aviad Hadar (Brain Research)

2019-present. An internet intervention using CBT psychotherapy for women with breast cancer who wish to return to work. Yad leHolei Haoncologi. Together with: Dr. Ofer Edelstein and Dr. Svetlana Prokashev. PhD work of Merav Daniel.

Grants Submitted:

2019 - Grant with Prof. Shlomi Dolev, Russia-Israel research collaboration on the use of machine learning to analyze dyadic interactions. Not granted.

2019 - Joy Ventures. Assessment of Patterns in Trauma Narratives among Women: A Proof of Concept Study to Determine Effectiveness of an Innovative Clinical Tool together with Dr. Alison Stern Perez, full proposal submitted October 2019.

2019 – ISF - Assessment of psycholinguistic markers of clinical mental states using a multimodal analytic system, together with Dr. Alison Stern Perez and Dr. Tal Sobol Shikler.

2019- BSF – Children of Chernobyl: reproductive and epigenetic effects in the second and third generation as measured by survey data and DNA-methylation. Together with Prof. Wilfried Karmaus of the University of Memphis, USA and together with Prof. Eugenia Stepanova of the Kiev Medical Institute.

Lectures

Using Social Epidemiology to address Perinatal Mental Health Challenges among diverse populations. Florida International University Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work, Miami, January 12th, 2019. **Prof. Hortensia Amaro** hosted.



Cwikel, J. Prokasheva, S. Cognitive Functioning among Women with Breast Cancer compared with Women Suffering from Chronic Pain: Results from retrospective, cross-sectional and prospective research. Predicting effective Adaptation to Breast Cancer to Help Women to BOUNCE Back, Cross-cultural perspectives on resilience in Breast Cancer. Hebrew University. Sept. 19th, 2019.

Cwikel, J. Using social epidemiology to address perinatal mental health challenges among new mothers from diverse populations. Boston University School of Social Work - Center for

Innovation in Social Work & Health and BU School of Public Health – Global Health Program.
November 12, 2019. **Prof. Ruth Paris** hosted. The lecture was written up in their newsletter
<https://ciswh.org/social-epidemiology-perinatal-mental-health-new-mothers/>

Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen

Publications:

Kissos, L., Lev-Wiesel R. & **Czamanski-Cohen J.** (2019) Sexual Abuse Detection Through Drawing Workshop: E-Learning Contribution, *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, DOI: 10.1080/15325024.2018.1549191

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Sela, N., Weihs, K., Wiley, J., Caspi, O. (2019). The role of emotional processing in Art Therapy (REPAT) for Breast Cancer patients. *Journal of Psychosocial Oncology*, 1: 1-13.

Schultz, M., **Czamanski-Cohen, J.**, Bentur, N., Mohsen-Byadsi, S., Artsieli, Y., & Bar-Sela, G. (2019). Multidisciplinary staff perspectives on the integration of spiritual care in a new setting: Israel. *Palliative and Supportive Care*, 1-6.

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Sarid, O., Cwikel, J., Levitas, E., & Har-Vardi, I. (2019). Are there preferred coping and communication strategies while undergoing IVF, and do cognitive behavioral interventions help? *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*, 14(1), 20-32.

Accepted for Publication

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Galili, G., Allen, J.B. (in press). Measuring changes in HRV while creating art with 3 different materials. *JoVE*, 1-4.

Grants

2018-2021 RO1 (1R01NR017186-01A1) The REPAT study. Role of emotional processing as a mechanism of Art Therapy in palliative cancer patients: a mechanistic study. With Dr. Karen Weihs. NIH.

Dr. Ofer Emanuel Edelstein

Publications:

Band-Winterstein T, **Edelstein** OE, & Bachner YG. 2019. Correlates of depression in caregivers of ultra-Orthodox frail elders. *Am J Orthopsychiatry*, 89, 654-664.

Edelstein, OE, Shorer, T, Shorer Z, Bachner YG . 2019. Correlates of Quality of Life in Mothers of Children diagnosed with Epilepsy. *Epilepsy Behav*, 93, 80-86.

Under review:

Edelstein, OE, Vered I, Sarid O Correlates of participation in physical activity among older women in Israel: Does ethno-cultural background matter? *Health Promot Int*.

Research Grants:

2017-2019 The Israel National Institute for Health Policy Research-The association between knowledge, attitudes and osteoporosis-related preventive behaviors of women from different ethno-cultural groups in Israel. Jointly with Prof. Orly Sarid.

Dr. Ephrat Huss

Publications:

Huss, E., & Sela-Amit, M. (2019). Art in social work: Do we really need it? *Research on Social Work Practice*, 29(6), 721-726.

Goshen, I., **Huss**, E., & Koch, S. C. (2019). Creating an Embodied Phenomenological Typology for Describing the Qualitative Experience of Traumatic Space from Continued Bombings. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 1-13.

Braun-Lewensohn, O., Abu-Kaf, S., Al-Said, K., & **Huss**, E. (2019). Analysis of the Differential Relationship between the Perception of One's Life and Coping Resources among Three Generations of Bedouin Women. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(5), 804.

Al-Said, K., Braun-Lewensohn, O., & **Huss**, E. (2019). Shifts in Traditional Methods of Coping among Elderly Bedouin Men. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(1), 4.

Magos, M., & **Huss**, E. (2019). Drawing on visions of the future of young women in poverty: Art as a feminist research method. In *Arts Therapies and Gender Issues; International Perspectives on Research*, 2 (pp. 14-21). Routledge.

Huss, E., & Bond, K. (2019). Women Span Personal to Political in an Israeli Belly Dance Setting. In *Dance and the Quality of Life* (pp. 425-439). Springer, Cham.

Lander, L., **Huss**, E., & Harel-Shalev, A. (2019). Coping with Transitions: The Case of Combat Reserve Forces. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 1-10.

Huss, E., & Hafford-Letchfield, T. (2019). Using art to illuminate social workers' stress. *Journal of Social Work*, 19(6), 751-768.

Segal-Engelchin, D., **Huss**, E., & Massry, N. (2019). Arts-Based Methodology for Knowledge Co-Production in Social Work. *The British Journal of Social Work*.

Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer

2019 Current Department Head, Clinical Nursing, Hadassah Medical School.

2019 Supervisor of 4 nursing students in the graduate research.

Articles submitted:

Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Shveiky, D, Lavy, Y., MD, Woloski Wruble, A., Anita Noble, A., Adi Vaknin, A. Clinical trial of the Paula Method (Circular Muscle Exercise) for Urinary Incontinence Symptoms of Women with Multiple Sclerosis. Submitted to *International Journal of MS Care* , December, 2019

Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M. Hopsink, T., Shimony-Kanat, S., Idilbi, N., Noble, A. Kienski Woloski Wruble, A. Development and evaluation of a new Pelvic Floor muscle exercise questionnaire (PFMT-Q). Submitted to *Journal of Nursing Research* , December, 2019

Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M. Hopsink, T., Shimony-Kanat, S., Idilbi, N., Kienski Woloski Wruble., Noble, A. Knowledge, source of knowledge and practices of PFMT in women working in a medical center: A comparison between women with and without urinary incontinence. Submitted to *Journal of Nursing Research* , December, 2019

Dr. Merav Rabinovich

Publications:

Rabinovich, M. (2019). Relationships between Categories: The context of the symptom in Practice. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 1-9.

Conferences:

Rabinovich, M. (2019). Integration in treatment: synthesis of concepts as a platform for integration in treatment – the case of SPR-IL of transference and over-generalization. The Israel Society for Research in Psychotherapy. Tel Aviv, April 12

Rabinovich, M. (2019). Conceptual Synthesis as a Platform for Psychotherapy Integration: The Case of Transference and Overgeneralization. ICPS 21st International Conference on Psychological Sciences. Paris, August 27-28

Prof. Orly Sarid

Publications:

Tzur-Peled S, **Sarid O**, Kushnir T. (2019). Nurses' knowledge and attitudes toward lesbians seeking perinatal care in Israel. *Journal of Homosexuality*.

Tzur-Peled S, **Sarid O**, Kushnir T. (2019). Nurses' perceptions of their relationships and communication with lesbian women seeking perinatal care. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 1-8.

Sarid O, Guez Y, Berger R. (2019). Reduced HbA1c levels in type 2 diabetes patients: an interaction between a pedagogical format for students and psycho-educational intervention for patients. *Diabetes & Metabolic Syndrome: Clinical Research & Reviews*, 13, 2280-4.

Simhi M, Yoselis A, **Sarid O**, Cwikel J. (2019). Hidden figures: are ultra-orthodox Jewish women really so different when it comes to healthcare? *Journal of Religious & Health*, 1-23.73.

Lahav S, & **Sarid O**, Kantor H. (2019). Dog training assisted intervention for at risk youth. *Anthrozoos*, 32(4), 533-540

Simhi M, **Sarid O**, Cwikel J (in Press). Preferences for mental health treatment for post-partum depression among new mothers. *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research*.

Conferences:

2019 Goren G, **Sarid O**, Slonim-Nevo V, Friger, M, Schwartz D, Odes, S. Cognitive behavioral interventions and Mindfulness-based stress reduction interventions to reduce stress and improve quality of life in patients with Crohn disease: Preliminary findings. 10th annual ESPAnet conference. February 14th, Rupin college, Israel.

2019 Gadot L, & **Sarid O**. Demographic variables and disability factors impacting work preferences of young adults with disabilities. NNDR Research Conference, May 8-10, Copenhagen, Denmark.

2019 Goren G, & **Sarid O**. Positive effect of Sense of Coherence (SOC) on reduction of postpartum depression symptoms (PPD), among women after childbirth -a prospective study, Nursing & Midwifery Conference, May 23-24, Stockholm, Sweden.

2019 Schwartz D., Goren G., Sergienko R., Greenberg D., Ab-kaf H., Friger M., **Sarid O.**, Slonim-Nevo V., Odes S., Israeli IBD Research Nucleus (IIRN). Mindfulness-based cognitive intervention improves work productivity and activity impairment among Crohn's disease patients. A randomized controlled trial. UEG Week Annual Congress, October 19-23, Barcelona, Spain.

2019 Sergienko R, Odes S., Schwartz D., Friger M., Goren G., **Sarid O.**, Slonim-Nevo V., Greenberg D. Changes in health-related quality of life in Crohn's disease patients following mindfulness-based cognitive intervention: Preliminary results of a randomized controlled trial. ISPOR Europe, November 2-6, Copenhagen, Denmark.

2019 **Sarid O** & Berger R. The Interaction between pedagogical teaching format for students and psycho-educational intervention for patients. International Conference on Education Psychology and Society, November 11-12, Tokyo, Japan. Best Presentation Award.

Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin

Publications:

Segal-Engelchin, D., Jen, S., & Erera P. (2019). Parenting in hetero-gay families: Motivations, assumptions, gender and culture. In O. Taubman-Ari (Ed.), *Pathways and barriers to parenthood*. Springer. (Invited article)

Segal-Engelchin, D. & Huss, E. & Massry, N. (2019). Arts-based methodology for knowledge co-production in social work. *The British Journal of Social Work*.

Yeshua-Katz, D., Shvarts, S., & **Segal-Engelchin, D.** (2019). Hierarchy of hair loss stigma: Media portrayals of cancer, alopecia areata, and ringworm in Israeli newspapers. *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research*, 8: 68. doi: 10.1186/s13584-019-0338-0

Conferences:

Katsir, A., **Segal-Engelchin, D.**, Shvarts, S., Biderman, A., & Haiman- Noyman, N. (2019). The Representation of women in key positions within the health system and medical schools in Israel: *Male and female physicians' perspectives. The 5th Annual Scientific Conference of the Israel Society of Medical Education (ISME), February, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel.*

Yeshua-Katz, D., **Segal-Engelchin, D.**, & Shvarts, S. (2019). *Hierarchy of Female Hair Loss Stigma: Media Portrayals of Cancer, Ringworm and Alopecia Areata in Israeli Newspapers. The 7th International Jerusalem Conference on Health Policy, September, Jerusalem. (Poster)*

Segal-Engelchin, D., & Sarid, O. Efficacy of CB-Art interventions in reducing stress related to different types of disasters. Temple University, Public Health College, School of Social Work, Philadelphia, USA. (Invited lecture).

Research Grants:

2016-2019 Silenced voices: Women treated by irradiation for ringworm in the 1950s – historical, health and psycho-social perspectives. Israel Science Foundation. Co-

investigators: Segal-Engelchin, D. & Shvarts, S.

Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi

Publications:

Rabinovich, A., Holtzman, K., **Shoham-Vardi, I.**, Mazor, M., & Erez, O. (2019). Oligohydramnios is an independent risk factor for perinatal morbidity among women with pre-eclampsia who delivered preterm. *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, *32*(11), 1776-1782.

Wainstock, T., Walfisch, A., **Shoham-Vardi, I.**, Segal, I., Sergienko, R., Landau, D., & Sheiner, E. (2019). Term Elective Cesarean Delivery and Offspring Infectious Morbidity: A Population-Based Cohort Study. *The Pediatric Infectious Disease Journal*, *38*(2), 176-180.

Sacks, K. N., Friger, M., **Shoham-Vardi**, I., Sergienko, R., Spiegel, E., Landau, D., & Sheiner, E. (2019). Long-term neuropsychiatric morbidity in children exposed prenatally to preeclampsia. *Early Human Development*, *130*, 96-100.

Levaot, Y., Meiri, G., Dinstein, I., Menashe, I., & **Shoham-Vardi**, I. (2019). Autism prevalence and severity in Bedouin-Arab and Jewish communities in southern Israel. *Community Mental Health Journal*, *55*(1), 156-160.

Daoud, N., Berger-Polsky, A., Sergienko, R., O'Campo, P., Leff, R., & **Shoham-Vardi**, I. (2019). Screening and receiving information for intimate partner violence in healthcare settings: a cross-sectional study of Arab and Jewish women of childbearing age in Israel. *BMJ open*, *9*(2), e022996.

Saban, A., **Shoham-Vardi**, I., Yohay, D., & Weintraub, A. Y. (2019). Peritoneal adhesions are an independent risk factor for peri-and post-partum infectious morbidity. *European Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology*, *241*, 60-65.

Berger-Polsky, A., Daoud, N., Sergienko, R., Sheiner, E., **Shoham-Vardi**, I., & Bilenko, N. (2019). Polygamy and birth outcomes among Bedouin women of the Negev: The contribution of social determinants and pregnancy complications. *Health Care for Women International*, 1-20.

Shwartz, N., **Shoham-Vardi**, I., & Daoud, N. (2019). Postpartum depression among Arab and Jewish women in Israel: Ethnic inequalities and risk factors. *Midwifery*, *70*, 54-63.

Prof. Shifra Shvarts

Publications:

Yeshua-Katz D., **Shvarts S.**, Segal-Engelchin D., Hierarchy of Hair Loss Stigma: Media Portrayals of Cancer, Alopecia Areata, and Cancer in Israeli Newspapers, *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research* 2019 8: 72

Lectures:

Mashal G., **Shvarts S.**, Walfish O., The Gender Revolution- Feminization of Specialization in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Israel, **Israel National Society for Medial Education**, Beer Sheva, Feb. 2019.

Freund A., Hayman N., Segal-Engelchin D., **Shvarts S.**, Biderman A., "Women Physicians in the Medical Academy and Medical Management in Israel- Is there a Gender Differentiations in their Career Development?", **Israel National Society for Medial Education**, Beer Sheva, Feb. 2019.

Shvarts S., Conclusion, Nurses and Immigrants during the Years, **The 7th Conference Day of the Israel Society for the History of Nursing**, Tel Aviv, June 2019.

Yeshua-Katz D., Segal-Engelchin D., **Shvarts S.**, Hierarchy of Female Hair Loss Stigma: Media Portrayals of Cancer, Ringworm and Alopecia Areata in Israeli Newspapers, **The 7th international Jerusalem Conference on Health Policy**, September 2019, The Israel National Institute for Health Policy Research (NIHP).