

Israeli Advocates Win Compensation

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The major polio epidemics in Israel were in the early 1950s. At that time, three to seven years after Israel was established, many immigrants came to our country.

Sanitary conditions were poor, especially in the main cities of Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv; and the number of the polio cases was relatively high (69 per 100,000 in 1951).

Knowledge of polio and the respective treatments were not well known to the physicians, and care was not adequate. For example, survivors had surgeries on their knees, which consequently were counterproductive. In the late '50s, some children received the wrong vaccination.

Today, with many polio survivors reporting problems with post-polio effects, the Polio Association in Israel asked the government for compensation and for future treatments not covered by the National Health Scheme.

After two years of negotiations with the Knesset Health Committee, a new law of polio was passed in March 2007 by a majority (83 members).

First of all, the law explains the procedures the Health Committee uses to decide permanent disability (PD).

The almost 2,500 polio survivors in Israel will receive a one-time payment based on their percentage of PD.

Up to 75% of PD:
NIS* 50,000 (USD** 12,000)

75%-94% of PD:
NIS 100,000 (USD 24,000)

More than 94% of PD:
NIS 120,000 (USD 28,800)

Some survivors will also be eligible for lifetime monthly payments.

The polio survivors with more than 20% of PD will receive lifetime monthly payments of 50% of the Average Monthly Salary (Today: NIS 7,700). For example, a person with 100% of PD will receive NIS 3,850 (USD 915) per month; individuals with 50% of PD will receive NIS 1925 (USD 458) per month.

Individuals with 20% of PD will receive, instead of lifetime monthly payments, a one-time payment equal to 70 times the monthly payment of those with 100% of PD (NIS 3,850) multiplied by the PD percentage. For example, someone with 15% of PD will receive a one-time payment of NIS 40,425 (USD 9,608). This will be in addition to the one-time payment mentioned above.

The Government will continue to cover the medical treatments and devices needed for the polio survivors, which are not covered under the National Health Scheme. ▲

*NIS – New Israeli Shekel
**USD – United States Dollars

To learn more about the successful advocacy efforts of the Polio Association in Israel, chaired by Mr. Yehuda Doron, contact Jacob Surany, PO Box 8186, Ramat Gan 52181, Israel, +972 35755660. The entire law in Hebrew is available at www.post-polio.org/ipn/pph23-2heblaw.html.