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Meeting End-of-Life Needs for Jewish Residents

With our 65 + population expected to triple in the next decade, the need for additional end-of-life services will only increase. That's why The Associated has introduced The Dignity Fund to ensure that all older Jewish Baltimoreans will be able to receive the best care possible at the end of their lives.

The Dignity Fund will ensure that Jewish Community Services (JCS) can keep up with this growing demand and continue to provide a broad array of services for those nearing the end of their lives, whether they are living in their homes or in other settings. Among its many programs, JCS offers counseling, support for caregivers and financial subsidies to help low-income seniors afford in-home care.

In addition, JCS collaborates with area hospices, including Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care and Gilchrist Hospice Care, to provide training to their staff on Jewish customs and traditions relating to the end of life. This training includes some of the nuances regarding the unique needs of Holocaust survivors.

"We know that during times of illness and as people near the end of their lives, many seek comfort from their faith," explains Barbara Gradet, executive director of JCS. "We want to make sure that the services that individuals and their family members need remain available so that they feel supported by their Jewish community."

At the same time, to more effectively address the needs of the Jewish population, Gilchrist Center Towson is planning to expand its hospice offerings in the Jewish community. Through renovations and additions, Gilchrist expects to add a sanctuary, kosher cooking area and additional patient rooms. Gilchrist is currently fundraising for this effort under the leadership of Steven Fader, the president and CEO of MileOne Automotive and chairman of Caves Valley Partners.