

The Blue Card Partners With Rutgers University To Change the Future of Healthcare

By JLNJ Staff | September 29, 2022

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(Courtesy of Rutgers) The Blue Card, the only organization in America dedicated solely to supporting Holocaust survivors, recently created a new program in conjunction with the Rutgers School of Dental Medicine (RSDM). This course specializes in training students in person-centered, trauma-informed (PCTI) care.

The benefits of this online certificate course extend far beyond that of Holocaust survivors, as research states that up to 90% of adults in the U.S. have experienced a traumatic event during their lifetimes. Being enrolled in the training allows medical students to be better prepared for delivering care to Holocaust survivors and other patients who have experienced trauma.

“We are incredibly thankful to JFNA [Jewish Federations of North America] for turning this innovative program into a reality, and we cannot wait to see it continue to expand well beyond Rutgers,” Masha Pearl, executive director of The Blue Card, said. “This program is a vital educational tool in furthering PCTI and improving the health and well-being of Holocaust survivors. Moreover, this program will serve as a national precedent for students so that it is not too late to learn from Holocaust survivors’ experiences.”

The participation of The Blue Card’s Holocaust survivors in this program is essential, as they serve as a foundation from which medical students can build their knowledge of PCTI care. By taking the time to learn about the survivors and their trauma, the students learn how to recognize and properly care for a traumatized patient.

In 2015, former President Barack Obama’s administration awarded \$12 million in assistance for Holocaust survivors. The Jewish Federations of North America received the allocation, being disbursed over five years. Part of the funding from this program directly impacts this program to this day.

“As a Jew, being able to give back to your people, who are the reason you are who you are today—that’s the most important thing you could possibly do,” Rafi Anapolle, a predoctoral

candidate in the class of 2023, said. “I think most of us who do the program—at least the Jewish students—do it because that’s what we need to do.”

The Blue Card worked with director Cedar Wang at The Institute for Simulation at Holy Name Hospital in Teaneck, creating simulated situations and training videographers and coders. Cedar was instrumental in making this all happen. Senior management at the hospital was particularly invested in helping the Holocaust population, as they are located in a geographic area that serves many from the Orthodox Jewish community.