



Friends of the Russian Bilingual Services Program Newsletter

THE PROGRAM FAMILIES CHOOSE AGAIN AND AGAIN

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Русская
Программа
HSL

We recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of the *Russian Bilingual Program*, and it's a milestone that we are all proud of. This program grew from the dedication of our staff, volunteers, families, and supporters—people who helped build not just a service, but a true community.

Over the years, our program has become known for exceptional, heartfelt care for our loved ones. Even though we are a hospital, many of our patients call HSL home. That feeling didn't happen by chance—it was created by staff who show up every day with compassion, creativity, and genuine love for the seniors they serve.

From just two patients in 2000, we have now cared for more than 1,200 Russian-speaking seniors across long-term & short-term care, senior housing, and home care. But the numbers tell only part of the story. ***What truly defines our program is the trust families place in us. Parents, grandparents, in-laws, siblings—generation after generation, they return because they know their loved ones will be cared for with dignity, cultural understanding, and emotional warmth.***

Our bilingual approach is at the heart of that trust. Sharing a language and cultural background makes everything easier—daily conversations, complex decisions, and the quiet moments that matter most. So much of elder care lives “between the lines,” in tone, gestures, and shared values, and our team understands that deeply.

Many families come to us carrying memories of stigma around nursing homes or mental health. Part of our work is helping them see how different things are today—how safety, respect, and quality of life guide everything we do. In a close community, word of mouth means everything, and it's the strongest proof that the *Russian Bilingual Program* has become the place families trust most for their loved ones.

Alexandra Dashevskaya, Director, Russian Bilingual Services Program



OUR FEATURED STAFF



Larisa Pavluchina

As far back as I can remember, I wanted to work in a bilingual environment. After graduating from the State University in Ashgabat in 1981, I began my career as an English teacher.

From 1994 to 2010, I built a long and meaningful career at the U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat. We later tried relocating to Canada, but when it didn't feel like the right fit, we returned home. Back in Ashgabat, I joined the UNDP office as a translator and interpreter

In 2017 we came to the USA to help our daughter with her first child.

I learned about an interpreter opening at HSL from a family friend in 2018, and I've been part of the team ever since. I'm grateful to belong to this community. Working with patients is especially meaningful to me—I value hearing their stories, understanding their challenges, and becoming someone they can trust. I'm proud to be their voice in moments that can be critical and life changing. This work is deeply fulfilling, and being able to support and advocate for people every day is something I truly love. I like keeping myself busy with a variety of hobbies, cooking, crafting, and painting are my favorites. They give me a creative outlet and help me unwind after a long week. I also enjoy bringing those artistic skills into my work by contributing to different projects when I can.

I came to the U.S. from Kyiv in 1991 planning on a medical career, but life had other plans. What started as a practical job learning medical terminology turned into a 30-year journey as a medical interpreter in Boston's top hospitals. I didn't just translate—I learned what compassionate care really looks like. Those lessons became invaluable when I later cared for my own parents and relatives.

Alongside raising my family and working, I also discovered the craft of piano tuning. With the guidance of master technicians, I learned how to bring an instrument's "voice" back to life. In many ways, it felt similar to interpreting: both require patience, careful listening, and a sense of balance. My connection to Hebrew SeniorLife began in 2006 when I cared for my own family members, and it grew into something much bigger. I officially joined the team in 2017, during the years I was supporting my parents. Even though they—and much of my extended family—are now gone, I've chosen to stay. Being part of this community feels like honoring the path we walked together.

Today, I'm grateful to offer my experience and love to others, and I find real joy watching my own family grow while I care for the community that once cared for mine.



Emilia Keselman

My name is Olga, and caring for others has always been a quiet thread running through my life. I grew up in a family where medicine was not just a profession but a way of being: my mother is a radiologist, my sister is a cardiologist, and as a child I spent countless nights and long shifts by their side. I watched how a gentle word, a steady hand, or a moment of compassion could bring comfort to someone in pain. Those early memories shaped me deeply, and my love for healthcare grew naturally and tenderly.

At the same time, I followed in my father's footsteps and chose an engineering path. I graduated from Kharkiv Aerospace University and worked at the aerospace corporation in Kharkiv, learning precision, discipline, and responsibility. Yet even while I built a career in engineering, my childhood dream — to be part of medicine and to become a translator — lived quietly inside me. Years later, in a way both unexpected and strangely poetic, that dream became the foundation of my new profession.

After our family moved to the United States, my mother became seriously ill. Caring for her became my world, and I realized I had to change my career to be fully present for her. It was a difficult moment, but also a moment of clarity. I decided to bring together everything life had given me — my medical upbringing, my language skills, my desire to help — and I became a medical interpreter. It felt like stepping into a calling that had been waiting for me since childhood. Here in the United States, I found my purpose in supporting older adults and helping them feel safe, understood, and valued. Working at Hebrew Rehabilitation Center allows me to give warmth, dignity, and compassion every day. And for that, I am deeply grateful.



Olga Kuzmenko

Photo Exhibition
“We Care”
Compassionate Care – Exceptional Staff

Another beautiful exhibit curated by our **Life Enhancement Coordinator, Iana Veselova**, is now on display. These photos shine a light on the incredible nurses and nursing assistants who make each day safer, calmer, and more comfortable for our patients. Their care keeps our seniors healthy, their patience preserves dignity, and their presence brings real comfort.

This exhibit is a small way to honor the people who show up with heart every day. Each face represents someone who gives their energy, empathy, and compassion to make Hebrew Senior Life not just a place of care, but a place of genuine humanity.

We support people at vulnerable moments, and every patient needs something different. I try to notice every change and offer comfort. Seeing them safe, calm, and happy is incredibly rewarding!



Talking with patients gives me purpose. I feel how much they rely on me, almost like family. I love caring for them and making sure they feel clean, comfortable, and appreciated.



I’ve cared for my own loved ones too, many of whom have passed on, so being here feels familiar and meaningful. I know I’m in the right place — surrounded by people I understand, respect, and who appreciate the work I do.

I work best when things feel calm and meaningful. Truly listening to patients matters to me—they’ve become like family. Their trust touches me, and when they feel good, it fills me with joy



The move to HRC can be such an emotional time. Helping patients and families feel less stressed, even a little, feels deeply meaningful and reminds me why our work matters.

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HOW IS HSL DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PLACES?

You may not be aware that HSL Roslindale Campus is certified as Long-Term Chronic Care Hospital (LTCH). A long-term chronic care hospital provides patients with many additional health care services you won't find in a typical nursing home: everyday access to primary care and medical and other health care specialists right where patients live. This is an incredible advantage for patients who have multiple chronic conditions and require a lot of medical support.

In most U.S. nursing homes, physicians or nurse practitioners visit residents based on federal rules that require that residents be seen within the first month after admission and then at least every one to two months. A great majority of nursing homes do not have any physicians on the premises. For specialized care, residents may wait for months for available appointments and most often need to be transported to an outside clinic or hospital.

At HSL, our Department of Medicine brings together primary care, psychiatry, and a wide range of specialty services—cardiology, podiatry, ophthalmology, neurology, infectious disease, palliative care, and many more—so patients don't have to travel for the care they need. We also offer dedicated programs for memory disorders, osteoporosis, geropsychiatry, physical rehabilitation, fitness, and even geriatric dental medicine. With more than 80 medical professionals across 18 disciplines, patients get faster attention, smoother coordination, and care that truly fits complex or chronic conditions. It's the comfort of long-term care with the strength of a medical center behind it.

SUPPORT US FINANCIALLY - HELP IMPROVE OUR PATIENTS' LIVES

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