Empowering seminar for Rebbetzins

► Judy Silkoff

A CONFERENCE was held last Sunday to provide learning and *chizuk* to the Federation's team of dedicated *rebbetzins*. The conference was held at the JLE in Golders Green and was extremely well attended.

The morning was focused around a series of practical workshops offering modern solutions to womens' issues at various stages of the lifecycle, a highly relevant topic for the *rebbetzins*, who are all very involved with teaching *kallos* and advising women in their communities.

Rabbi Dovid Roberts, the Federation's Director of Education and community *rov* of Kehillas Netzach Yisroel in Edgware, introduced the speakers and spoke about the necessity of engaging in ongoing training.

The keynote speaker was Rabbi Yitzchok Melber, the director of Tahareinu, who flew in from Israel especially for the event. The Tahareinu hotline – a project of Torat Hamishpacha – is a vital resource created to provide women with direct access to both medical proficiency and practical advice. Rabbi Melber presented medical developments and knowledge, as well as trends in family *shailos*, providing much-needed options and resources for *rebbetzins* to suggest to others.

Rabbi Melber said 'I truly appreciate working with the Federation in educating their *rabbonim* and *rebbetzins*. Since our session with the *rabbonim* a few months ago we have had much positive feedback from *rabbonim* who reported they felt they could offer their communities a better service and were able to work together with Tahareinu to solve more difficult cases. I hope that this session with the *rebbetzins* will provide many more families with access to the help they need, enabling them to deal with challenges which arise and bringing more *taharoh* and *simcha* to many homes.'

Rabbi Melber

Rebbetzin Dina Hool, a Tahareinu advisor and wife of Dayan Yehonoson Dovid Hool of the Federation Beis Din, added her expertise to the morning in an informative and engaging glimpse into the types of questions she answers on a regular basis. The discussions were lively and fast-paced, with a unanimous request for further sessions in the future.

The morning provided an opportunity for the *rebbetzins* to come together, to share best practice and to develop a professional support network. Both good friends and new friends enjoyed the refreshment breaks as a chance to talk about their work, and in particular, to greet recent arrivals to the Federation family.

Participants commented that the morning was 'informative', 'vital', 'empowering' and a 'real treat'.

Towards the end of the morning, Rebbetzin Aviva Landau, Federation Projects and Communications Coordinator, announced a series of new initiatives and programmes for *rebbetzins*, which were met with enthusiasm and anticipation.

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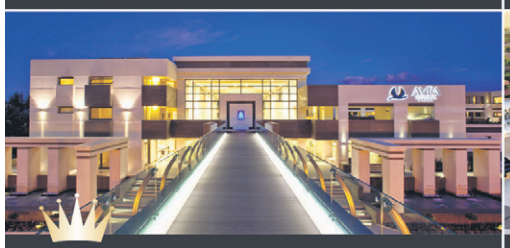
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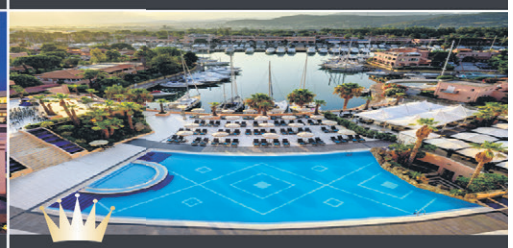
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