

## **About the Dead Sea Conferences**

The tradition of holding an annual conference on health policy issues at the Dead Sea was established by the Israel National Institute for Health Policy Research in June 2000. Since then, healthcare leaders from all sectors, leading researchers, and key healthcare reporters, convene once a year to discuss the key policy issues that are on the healthcare agenda.

Over the years, Dead Sea conference attendees have discussed a broad range of issues related to efficiency, modes of organization, and performance, including issues such as hospital incorporation, long-term planning of hospitalization services, and manpower planning. Participants also have addressed issues related to the social and societal aspects of Israel's healthcare system, such as copayments, supplementary insurance coverage, inequality, and other issues. Finally, quality aspects of the healthcare system, including community-based quality measures, quality-based remuneration, and other related issues have also been discussed at the conferences.

While the Dead Sea Forum is not a decision making body, the annual conferences offer a unique platform for presenting opinions in a professional manner, independent of organizational affiliation, and developing position papers that cover the advantages, shortcomings, and alternatives to various policies related to the issues under discussion. While the recommendations of the Dead Sea conferences are not binding on policymakers, the summary documents have been used by decision makers as representing well-thought out summaries of professional reasoning on a host of issues that have emerged in the healthcare arena over the years.