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Litzman. 'Leave it up to me' Photo: Gil Yohanan

Litzman challenges Rabbinat's control over hospital rabbis nomination

Deputy health minister sets out to promote religious reform in hospitals; says will pursue it even if it means overriding Chief Rabbinat's authority

Kobi Nahshoni

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Is the Deputy Health Minister launching another reform? Knesset Member Yakov Litzman ([United Torah Judaism](#)) intends on appointing a number of rabbis and kashrut supervisors for hospitals across [Israel](#) due to problems with Jewish law and kosher impairments he asserts exist in the facilities.

Litzman is set on choosing on his own the various functionaries, an authority usually held by the Chief Rabbinat, and has recently been engaged in a dispute with Chief Rabbis Yona Metzger and Shlomo Amar on that account.

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The deputy health minister informed Rabbi Nissim Karelitz, a leading figure in the ultra-Orthodox community, of the matter in a conversation documented by the ['haredim'](#) website.

Ynet learned that Litzman met last week with the chief rabbis and presented them with the issue. He requested the rabbinat to approve additional posts for rabbis and kashruth supervisors

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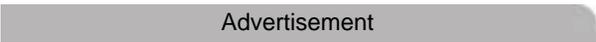
and demanded he appoint the candidates himself. Amar and Metzger have yet to approve the request.

Thursday night Litzman paid a visit to several leading rabbis and informed them of his plans. During the visit to Rabbi Karelitz's house one visitor said, "There's a problem of non-Kosher food at hospitals as well as problems regarding Shabbat and clerics (who are exposed to impurity of the dead – K.N.)

'I'll appoint them'

The deputy minister replied, "I'm going to bring that up, the rabbinates called and asked me. Rabbi Amar and Rabbi Metzger wanted to appoint their own rabbis. I said – No! Rabbis I appoint – not them. I'll provide them with rabbis and supervisors. No problem."

On the issue of kashrut he said hospitals will have food approved by the rabbinates, but not mehadrin food.



Litzman also referred to the issue of organ donation, one of the most controversial topics in the medicine-Jewish law dynamic and

said, "Kidneys are simple and do not cause problems, heart (donation) I won't allow since there is a problem as long as the heart is beating."



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