

Medical Staff News

Newsletter for the Medical Staff of Greenwich Hospital | September 2024

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From the desk of the CMO

Mitigating risk is everyone's business – some important reminders

Karen Santucci, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Dear Mighty Team,

Hoping you are all well!

Many members of the medical staff have been involved in various types of committee work, much of it with the goal of promoting patient safety and mitigating risk. I would like to share some of the insight gained from some of this important work in this month's message.

Thank you for all that you do, each and every day, to keep our patients safe. We hope you find these reminders useful to help ensure your own safety as well.

Risk Mitigation (what we have learned from the Mortality Committee, PPEC, departmental Quality committees, the Significant Event Review Committee, Safety Steering and Peer Review)

1. Very few things are better than a good history and physical exam.
2. Purposeful and mindful handoffs (face-to-face) maximize the safe transfer of care.
3. Documenting conversations with consultants is very important: name, time and recommendation after you frame your question in an SBAR fashion.
4. Try to always document your medical decision making (MDM), always create a differential.
5. Use of the Care Signature Clinical Pathways really does help (evidence-based medicine and useful resources, updated frequently).
6. If there is a change in patient status, we need to document what it was, the intervention and the patient's response to the intervention.
7. Never worry alone: elevate a concern.
8. Do not participate in chart wars (they don't help anyone, no inflammatory statements).
9. Avoid note bloat/cutting and pasting. It is much better to have a short substantive note.
10. Proofreading your note before signing it is very advisable.
11. If a patient is leaving AMA: arrange for follow-up (soon), try your best to arrange for medication/prescriptions and maximize on safe discharge planning. If you are worried, elevate your concern following your chain of command: chief, chair, CMO, etc.

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12. Always document a patient's condition and vital signs at the time of discharge and hand-off.
13. Follow up on requested labs and imaging (CBCs review the differential especially for bands)
14. Vital signs: very important and especially note any trends. In pediatrics (newborns), discuss not just fever but hypothermia as well (even more worrisome). Persistent tachycardia (think myocarditis, hemorrhage).
15. Utilization of interpreter services when necessary (available 24/7).
16. Ask what the patient, or parent (in pediatrics) is most worried about when obtaining a history.
17. Rather than asking "do you have any other questions?" try to ask, "what other questions do you have?"
18. Think out loud. You may not know the diagnosis but as you are processing signs and symptoms, sharing your thoughts can be helpful and give the patient permission to share when there is a change in status/pain.
19. Try not to treat family members. It is VERY hard to be objective.
20. Try to reduce self-imposed distractions so that you can really hear your patients, their families and our colleagues.

Sincerely,

Karen (along with many others who contributed to these reminders).

Happy APP Week!

Advanced Practice Providers celebrate their recognition week Sept. 23 thru Sept. 27. National Advanced Practice Provider (APP) Week honors the contributions of physician assistants/associates, nurse practitioners, certified registered nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives, and certified anesthesiologist assistants. National APP Week is a time to celebrate the hard work of these professionals and raise awareness of their unique roles in healthcare. Happy APP week to all Greenwich Hospital Advanced Practice Providers – thank you for all that you do!

YNHHS preparing for mandatory flu vaccinations

Beginning in early October, YNHHS will provide vaccinations to employees throughout the health system. As a condition of continued employment, physicians and employees must receive a flu vaccination annually or provide an approved medical or religious exemption.

Onsite flu vaccinations will begin at locations throughout the health system beginning the week of Oct. 7. The deadline to comply with the flu vaccination program is **Dec. 1, 2024.**

The 2024-2025 Moderna mRNA COVID vaccine is also available for employees and physicians at onsite vaccination clinics. This latest vaccine, while not mandatory, is highly recommended to help protect against currently circulating variants of COVID-19 and is available at select YNHHS onsite vaccination fairs.

Employed physicians may schedule an appointment for an onsite flu vaccination by going to Infor. Under Employee Information, select Employee Health/Get Your Flu Vaccine or for a COVID vaccine, select Employee Health/Get a COVID Vaccine.

Non-employed Licensed Independent Practitioners may schedule an appointment for a flu vaccine at <https://fluvaccination.ynhh.org> or a COVID vaccination through <https://vaccinepartner.ynhh.org>.

In addition to the onsite locations, employees may choose to get vaccinated by their primary care physician, at a YNHHS outpatient pharmacy or at a participating retail pharmacy in either the CVS Caremark vaccination network or a CVS Minute Clinic.

Employed physicians enrolled in a YNHHS Medical Plan will have their copay waived if they get vaccinated at one of these participating retail pharmacies after Sept. 1, 2024.

Additional details about vaccination options, including how to submit documentation of vaccination by a primary care provider or participating pharmacy are available on Infor. For additional questions, email vaccineinfo@ynhh.org.

ALS clinic offers cutting-edge care close to home

Approximately 30,000 people in the U.S. have amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), commonly called Lou Gehrig's disease, a neurodegenerative disorder.

Greenwich Hospital neurologist Kunal Desai, MD, assistant professor of Neurology, Yale School of Medicine (YSM) and his multidisciplinary team see 10 to 12 ALS patients a month on average, developing multidisciplinary care models specially designed to meet ALS patients' needs. The clinic offers many of the same resources as larger ALS centers, except clinical trials.

Clinic patients receive one of two U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved medications: Rilutek and Radicava. The former is believed to reduce damage to motor neurons by decreasing glutamate levels; the latter reduces oxidative stress, which can damage motor neurons.

According to the ALS Association, a diagnosis takes nine to 12 months on average after symptoms appear. Symptoms may include twitching and cramping of muscles, especially in the hands and feet, loss of motor control in the hands and arms, lasting severe tiredness, slurred speech and difficulty chewing or swallowing. The Greenwich clinic focuses on faster diagnoses and local patient care.

Medication storage technology upgrade to roll out system-wide

Every day, more than 40,000 medications are dispensed to patients throughout Yale New Haven Health. Automated dispensing cabinets (ADCs) and anesthesia workstations (AWS) play an integral role.

The ADC securely stores medications and optimizes patient-centered care by allowing appropriate access to medications in locations outside the pharmacy. An AWS securely stores the medications and supplies needed for a full day of cases in one convenient place and automatically tracks inventory used.

YNHHS Pharmacy Services will upgrade all medication management automation and technology solutions, replacing more than 1,600 pieces of equipment across 700 clinical units and two states. These technological advancements will support patient safety, care team efficiency and integrate multiple databases into one unified system.

Advantages of the new Pyxis and anesthesia machines include:

- Increased reliability, with less downtime
- Enhanced safety and medication security that will reduce the risk of the wrong medication being selected, and upgraded anesthesia medication labeling systems
- Inventory optimization
- Systemwide technology integration and standardization
- Lower risk of cybersecurity threats

New Pyxis ADCs and anesthesia workstations will be deployed across all YNHHS clinical and surgical areas over the next 12 to 18 months.

Top Hospitals Nominations Now Open



For over 30 years, Castle Connolly has named Top Doctors as a source for trusted, quality care. The annual list is based on nominations from doctors and represents the top 7 percent of physicians in the U.S.

Castle Connolly is now extending this recognition to celebrate Top Hospitals, highlighting the institutions that set the standard in medical excellence, patient care, and groundbreaking research. All licensed MDs, DPMs, and DOs are invited to submit their nominations for Top Hospitals and contribute to highlighting hospitals that set the standard for exceptional care.

To nominate Top Hospitals:

1. Visit the Doctor Portal at <https://providers.castleconnolly.com> and log in with your email address and password (first time visitors can register using their NPI number)
2. Nominate Top Hospitals for overall excellence and exceptional care in your specialty
3. Submit your selections

Safety Matters

Overcoming Barriers to Safety Event Reporting

September's safety behavior of the month is event reporting. Staff are encouraged to report any unexpected clinical outcome related to patient care, as outlined in the YNHHS Adverse, Sentinel, and Safety Event Management and Medical Device Reporting policy.

In workplaces with high levels of psychological safety, staff see mistakes as opportunities to learn from and trust that organizational leaders want to know when a process is not working. But even in organizations with strong safety cultures, barriers to reporting can still exist including fear of retribution, concerns about litigation, time constraints, unsupportive colleagues, and a belief that no change will result from speaking up. Possessing this knowledge allows organizations to proactively practice strategies to breakdown potential barriers to reporting.

Take away — Practice the following strategies when discussing safety events with frontline staff:

- Provide closed loop communication.
- Be transparent when discussing errors.
- Share lessons learned from event investigations.
- Maintain a positive attitude towards reporting.
- Provide on-going education on criteria for reporting and use of the reporting system.

World Patient Safety Day

The World Health Organization (WHO) has stated that there is now a global burden of patient harm in healthcare and efforts to reduce it have not created substantial changes over the past 15 years. The WHO established World Patient Safety Day in 2019 as a global public health day observed annually on Sept. 17 to promote patient safety by increasing public awareness and engagement, enhancing global understanding, and working towards global solidarity and action.

This year's theme for World Patient Safety Day was "Improving diagnosis for patient safety" with the slogan "Get it right, make it safe" to highlight the critical importance of correct and timely diagnosis in ensuring patient safety and improving health outcomes.

Take away — Promote the following CHAMP behaviors to "Get it right, make it safe":

- Use Attention to Detail and take STAR moments when individualizing care for each patient

- Mentor for 200% Accountability
- Communicate Clearly with other departments to coordinate care and improve accurate and timely diagnoses.

Library Services resources for staff – Publication Finder

The library at Greenwich Hospital provides access to outstanding health information resources and services that support education, research and patient care.

Publication Finder allows staff to search each library's unique collection of online journals, e-books and media. Searches may be conducted by keyword or alphabetically. Search results display information about the scope of full-text access for a specific title and link to online content. Publication Finder includes a link resolver integrated into CINAHL, OVID and PubMed that provides access to full-text articles, book chapters and interlibrary loan.

Library staff can assist in locating the specific resource to meet your needs. Contact: Donna Belcinski, MLS, MS at 203-863-3293.

Digestive Health Virtual CME Series 2024: Trust Your Gut – Oct. 17

Yale Medicine and Yale New Haven Health host a free, virtual Digestive Health CME series, called Trust Your Gut, on the third Thursday of each month at 5 pm. The series provides digestive health educational programming, professional development and networking opportunities for physicians and advanced practice providers.

On Oct. 17, presenters Vikas Gupta, MD, and Flora Zarcu-Power, MD, will present an update on Fatty Liver Disease. Yale School of Medicine designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ per session, a total of 12.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ for the series.

To register, visit the Yale CME portal at yale.cloud-cme.com. For questions, contact Joseph Mendes, executive director, clinical program development, Digestive Health at Joseph.Mendes@ynhh.org.

Save the Date: Nov. 22 for Yale Obesity Symposium – CME Event

The Yale Obesity Symposium is a one-day CME event designed to improve the skill set of general practitioners in treating the disease of obesity, discuss new developments and how to apply them based on input from leading experts in the field.

The symposium is Friday, Nov. 22, 7:45 am - 4 pm, at The Anlyan Center, 300 Cedar St., New Haven. Course directors include: Bubu Banini, MD, PhD; Jorge O. Moreno, MD; John Morton, MD, MPH, MHA; Brian Wojeck, MD, MPH.

Credits: *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* (6.00 hours), Non-Physician Attendance (6.00 hours). To register, visit cme@yale.edu or yale.cloud-cme.com

Newsletter Submissions

Deadline to submit content for the October 2024 issue of *Medical Staff News* is Friday, Sept. 27, 2024. Please submit items for consideration to Karen Santucci, MD, at karen.santucci@greenwichhospital.org or Myra Stanley at myra.stanley@ynhh.org.

MEDICAL STAFF CHANGES (July 2024)

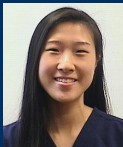
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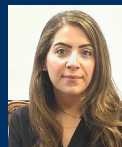
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Resignations/Non-Renewal of Privileges

Samantha Epstein, MD (Medicine Neurology) – Effective 7/31/2024

Maryam Gondal, MD (Medicine Nephrology) – Effective 6/30/2024

Joshua Hrabosky, PhD (Psychiatry Psychology) – Effective 7/26/2024

James Hummel, MD (Medicine Cardiology) – Effective 10/31/2024

George Will Jowsey, MD (Medicine) – Effective 6/27/2024

Michelle Morris, MD (Medicine) – Effective 6/15/2024

Joshua Sterling, MD (Surgery Urology) – Effective 7/1/2024