

Medical Staff News

Newsletter for the Medical Staff of Greenwich Hospital | March 2023

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From the desk of the CMO

Nurture trumps nature

Karen Santucci, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Dear Mighty Team,

I walked into exam room number 2 in the Yale New Haven Children's Emergency Department six years ago to evaluate a teenage boy who presented in status asthmaticus. Crossing the threshold, I could immediately see that this young man was in severe respiratory distress as his dad sat motionless on the chair next to him in the crowded room. Both JB and his father had the look of intense fear in their eyes. It was hard to maintain eye contact particularly with the degree of respiratory distress JB presented in. I did a quick assessment and found that he was really tight! I ran to the airway cart to get the paraphernalia to set up his nebulizer treatments. Fortunately, after three back-to-back albuterol-atrovent, a good dose of IV steroids, two hours of continuous albuterol and a fluid bolus, he was "well enough" to go up to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit for yet another admission for status asthmaticus.

While we were preparing to transport him up to the seventh floor, JB was more comfortable and texting on his phone and his dad asked me a question. "Doc, can you be my son's mentor?" I was a bit taken aback but at that very moment, a nurse said, "Dr. Santucci we need you in the Trauma Room." What else could I do but say "of course Mr. B!" I had no idea what I had just agreed to, but that day changed not only my life, but I would like to believe it changed JB's too.

The next day I ran up to the unit to check on him and heard laughter and a strumming guitar... he was doing so much better and was playing a song that he composed, and he was SINGING the lyrics that he wrote, and he was pitch perfect with tremendous range! 'That is EVEN BETTER than speaking in full sentences,' I thought.

Who is this kid? Why had I not seen him before? He practically grew up at our hospital. He was admitted countless times and everyone seemed to know him but me. Our eyes met and he gave me a big smile and I of course reciprocated and that was when it all began. He said, "so when do we start Momma?!" Yes, that's how he spells it and that's how he says it! Little did I know that I would be a new Momma again?! (Both of my children were born when I was categorized as having "advanced maternal age" so the likelihood of having a third was slim to none... BUT there he was, my SON!). I think I might have just been "adopted" by him!

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Next thing I knew, I was going to parent-teacher conferences, meeting with school administrators, gaining insight into his world being the youngest of 11 children and losing his mom at a very young age. JB became the “man of the house” taking care of his dad who had some significant medical problems and his grandparents too! But who was taking care of JB? I began writing letters to explain his absences from school and knew why he could not be there. He was now only 17 and had way too much responsibility. He lived in a neighborhood where many of his family members and friends were killed. He wrote songs about the gun violence to try to bring attention to the crisis in New Haven and to deal with the intense hurt and emotion. The fire to succeed “to be somebody” that burned inside of JB burned bright and strong and we spoke every day. He gave me more sage advice than I think I could ever give him. How could someone so young be so resilient and wise after all the losses, stressors, fear, and struggles? JB’s asthma was still out of control and he needed weight loss surgery but was deemed “too great a surgical risk” so the procedure was delayed. JB worked really hard; he got his GED, we met after work and constructed a resume, he studied and became an EMT, he worked numerous parttime jobs: ED tech, parking attendant, event staff coordinator at Yale and he took the SATs and applied to college. I went with him to the campuses to meet with the admissions officers. That didn’t work out but we tried! There is always a Plan B; he just got into school to become an LPN!

Last April, I met him at Saint Raphael’s Hospital at 5 am in pre-op for his weight loss surgery. Sunday he sent me a text and a photo “Momma look at me!” My JB lost 208 pounds!! I told him I was so proud of him and happy for him! He responded, “coming from you Momma, that means an awful lot!”

JB has had a lot of “mentors.” I only shared *my* experience but there were mentors from the inpatient pediatric floor, folks who did music therapy with JB for the children who were admitted, there have even been role models at the firehouse where he’s stationed and more.

The reason I share this story:

Nurture trumps nature in determining severity of PTSD symptoms. The ability to form secure attachments neutralizes the genetic risk for PTSD symptoms (published in the journal *Biological Psychiatry* in 2020). This Yale led study has now identified a social factor that can mitigate genetic risks of PTSD: the ability to form loving and trusting relationships with others. In this study, Pietrzak, Gelertner, and colleagues looked at not only psychological

but genetic data collected from the National Health and Resilience in Veterans Study which was supported by the National Center for PTSD. They found that the ability to form secure attachments essentially neutralized the collective effects of genetic risk for PTSD symptoms. “The ability to form secure attachments is one of the strongest protective factors for PTSD and related disorders.” Nothing in life is 100% but as a pediatrician I often think of this work and the interventions underway at the Yale Child Study Center supporting children and families who have undergone devastating life stressors. I remember YEARS AGO learning of this work before it was published and thinking it really does matter... it does make a difference to be there and to support someone. Now we have scientific proof.

I think of JB all the time and we speak almost every day. Just this morning he sent me a text while he was on scene with his squad at a housefire in New Haven. He was finishing up the overnight and then was going home to sleep a bit and study for a recertifying exam. He knows I am close by and I know how much it matters. My son has taught me so much!

Hoping you are having a good month,

Karen

New Radiology Communication Center helps physicians get results

Yale New Haven Health recently launched a Radiology Communication Center (RCC) to ensure physicians receive and respond to exam results within specified timeframes. The Center will operate 24/7, including holidays, to communicate critical results and incidental findings for inpatients and outpatients.

Here’s how it works: After a radiologic exam is completed, it is reviewed and finalized by a radiologist. Any exam with a critical finding will be routed to an RCC communication specialist, who will notify the physician who ordered the exam (or the covering physician). Critical findings require RCC specialists to send a notification and receive confirmation from the ordering physician within one hour. Non-critical findings have different notification and confirmation timelines, depending on the level of the finding.

For more information about the RCC, email radcommunicationteam@ynhh.org.

Happy Doctors' Day – stop by for breakfast. Or lunch. Or both!

March 30 is National Doctors' Day

Please join us as Greenwich Hospital recognizes our doctors for the dedication, commitment and service they devote to our patients every day.

Physicians are invited to stop by for:

Continental Breakfast

6:30 - 11:30 am

and

Lunch-to-Go

11:30 am - 3:30 pm

Physician Lounge, Watson Pavilion, Room G-1200

Yale
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3758 (02/23)

Second SkyHealth helicopter expands critical care transport capabilities

Yale New Haven Health officially launched its second SkyHealth critical care transport helicopter recently. The second helicopter and crew will join the first SkyHealth helicopter, which launched in 2014 as a partnership between YNHHS and Northwell Health in New York.

YNHHS is leasing the second SkyHealth from Med-Trans, a national air medical provider company. The clinical crew of critical care flight nurses and critical care flight paramedics are Yale New Haven Hospital employees, who also staff critical care ground transports.

From its base at Sikorsky Memorial Airport, the second SkyHealth can fly to referring hospitals throughout the Northeast and bring patients to the most appropriate YNHHS hospital for specialized care.



Known as a critical-care unit in the sky, anything that can be done in an intensive care unit can be done in the helicopter. Referring physicians can request SkyHealth by calling the Y Access Transfer Center at 1- 888-964-4233 (888-YNHHS-BED).

Anthanasios Petrotos, MD, appointed General Surgery head



Effective Feb. 1, Athanasios Petrotos, MD, was appointed section head of General Surgery, which includes Acute Care Surgery, Trauma & Critical Care, Colorectal Surgery and Bariatric Surgery. Dr. Petrotos has been on the Greenwich Hospital Medical Staff in the Department of Surgery since 2005

and currently serves as the director of the hospital's Acute Care Surgery Program.

An upgrade for Emmi Patient Education

This month, Yale New Haven Health System will transition to an updated integrated workflow with Emmi patient education printouts and videos. Emmi Patient Education Resources/Clinical References integration provides patient specific recommendations and allows for searching, previewing, and assigning multi-media materials.

Clinicians will notice some workflow updates in Epic to support this initiative. Benefits of this transition allow for patients to receive evidence-based content via printed materials and the patient portal. The patient can access via their preferred device and have patient education in the palm of their hands.

Training Materials:

- Emmi Patient Education eLearnings
- Emmi Ambulatory Tip Sheet
- Emmi ClinDoc Inpatient Tip Sheet
- Emmi Emergency Dept Tip Sheet

Vote in *U.S. News & World Report* survey

All board-certified physicians within each of the applicable specialties evaluated by *U.S. News & World Report* (i.e., Cancer, Cardiology/CT Surgery, Diabetes/Endocrinology, ENT, Gastroenterology/GI Surgery, Geriatrics, Gynecology, Nephrology, Neurology/Neurosurgery, Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Psychiatry, Pulmonary, Rehabilitation, Rheumatology and Urology) should have received a request from Doximity to vote in the *U.S. News* reputation ranking.

Registered users may also receive a prompt when logging into the site. As the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings are heavily weighted towards an institution's reputation, the survey provides the opportunity for members of the medical staff to make their collective voice heard about the exceptional care provided across Yale New Haven Health.

If you have not already done so, members of the medical staff across Yale New Haven Health are urged to cast your votes.

News from the GH Medical Staff DEI Council

Healthcare: Right or Privilege?

Submitted by Kunal Desai, MD, Medical Staff DEI Council

About 20 years ago, I was working in India as a counselor for epilepsy patients. As part of my work, I would talk to newly diagnosed epilepsy patients and their families with the goal of educating them about seizures, first aid and medication compliance. I learned quickly that many of them could not even afford the equivalent of \$1/month to purchase potentially lifesaving medications. The realization that access to basic health care was not a given for these people inspired me to film a documentary on the disparities in Indian health care at that time. It continues to motivate me to fight for equal access to health care even today.

After moving across the world, completing years of education and having worked in Greenwich for the past several years, I find myself asking a similar question. Is healthcare a right or a privilege?

Superficially, it all seems ideal, given the numerous physicians, specialists, state-of-the-art equipment and a beautiful hospital all in one place. Although, digging a little deeper reveals that we are struggling to provide equal access to healthcare for our patients, often to those who need it the most. There are several factors contributing to the inequities in access to healthcare from socioeconomic disparities to the pandemic, to staffing issues. Many of these issues cannot be tackled at the hospital or town level.

What I believe we can do, is address the barriers that we have created and strive to do better. Two specific examples come to mind, one to do with differential treatment of certain patients and the other with access to healthcare resources.

I have been disheartened to see disparities firsthand, but I am a firm believer that there is a solution to all problems.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

The solutions work best when we involve leadership and when we as leaders do so by example. We must strive to advocate for all patients.

In a world where the financial stability of a hospital is not something to be taken for granted, we have to find a way for health care to co-exist honoring the principles of equity and inclusivity.

YNHHS employees, doctors, donate thousands of pounds of food during virtual drive

Thank you to the hundreds of Yale New Haven Health medical staff members and employees who donated over 8,650 pounds of food to hunger-relief organizations during the health system's third #GiveHealthy online food drive. The food donated across the health system translates into nearly 7,215 meals for people in need throughout Connecticut and in Westerly, RI.

Greenwich Hospital donors gave 2,431 pounds of food – 2,026 meals – to Neighbor to Neighbor in Greenwich and Meals on Main Street in Port Chester, NY. The drive, which ran from November 2022 to January 2023, was conducted through #GiveHealthy, which provides an online platform for hunger-relief organizations to list items they need.

Smilow Shares with Primary Care: Palliative Care – April 4

Tune in for the next Smilow Shares with Primary Care: Palliative Care webinar on Tuesday, April 4 at 5 pm. The event features R. Morgan Bain, MD; Kristin Edwards, MD; Elizabeth Prsic, MD; and Aleksandra Rosinski, MD.

Smilow Shares with Primary Care is a monthly educational series for physicians, patients and the Greenwich community presented via Zoom. Presentations are subject-focused and hosted by experts from Smilow Care Centers around the state as well as from Greenwich Hospital. CME credits are available.

No registration necessary. Tune on via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3QZgkzv>. With questions, contact Heather Studwell at 475-240-8328 or heatherleigh.studwell@greenwichhospital.org.

Next Building Against Burnout – April 13

Tune in to the Building against Burnout webinars highlighting timesaving topics in Epic on Thursday, April 13, 12:15 pm.

The sessions are led by trained, certified physicians and APPs. There will be an opportunity for questions after the session. The webinar will be recorded and hosted on the Medical Staff Portal (ynhhconnect.org) for those who cannot attend. CME is available. With questions, contact [Allen Hsiao@ynhh.org](mailto:Allen.Hsiao@ynhh.org).

Join via Zoom. <https://ynhh.zoom.us/j/96020079256?pwd=NUdaaXN4b1p6WWlkYTJQUkrRnpXZz09>

Webinar ID: 960 2007 9256 Passcode: 649503

Save the date: April 20 – Trust Your Gut Digestive Health sessions

YNHHS and Yale Medicine host a free, monthly virtual Digestive Health CME series called Trust Your Gut. The yearlong series, held the third Thursday of each month at 5 pm, is designed to provide world-class digestive health educational programming, professional development and networking opportunities for physicians and advanced practice providers.

Join Myron Brand, MD and Darrick Li, MD, April 20 for a virtual discussion on Challenging Cases – Digestive Health. The following month, Drs. Joseph Lim and Maricar Malinis will discuss COVID: The GI Tract and Liver on May 18. Click here to register or visit the Yale CME portal at yale.cloud-cme.com.

Yale School of Medicine designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits per session, for 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 Joe Mendes, executive director, Clinical Program Development, Digestive Health at joseph.mendes@ynhh.org.

Newsletter Submissions

Deadline for submission of content for the April 2022 issue of *Medical Staff News* is Friday, March 24, 2023. Please submit items for consideration to Karen Santucci, MD, at karen.santucci@greenwichhospital.org or Myra Stanley, YNHHS at 203-688-1531 or myra.stanley@ynhh.org.

MEDICAL STAFF CHANGES (February 2023)

Appointees



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Resignations/Non-Renewal of Privileges

Moha Ahuja, DO (Medicine)
Tisa Ayuso, DO (Psychiatry)
Mary Fraga, MD (Pediatrics)
Heather Lipkind, MD (Obstetrics & Gynecology)
Naila Makhani, MD (Pediatrics)
Michael Medvecky, MD (Orthopaedics)
Joan Mortarotti, APRN (Palliative Medicine)
Juliet Mushi, MD (Obstetrics & Gynecology)
Tara Robertson, APRN (Cardiology)
Michael Silver, MD (Cardiology)
Bryan Young, MD (Cardiology)