From the desk of the CMO

Transformation and Recovery

Spike Lipschutz, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Summer is here, but it looks as if the COVID heat may finally be cooling down. Thank you again to all of our employees and medical staff for your extraordinary efforts and commitment during this pandemic. We have no idea what a second wave or third wave might really mean. We don’t speak about returning to “normal,” rather refer to the future as the “new normal.” We don’t know what that will be, but we are well on our way to recovery and transforming our hospital inpatient and outpatient areas and throughout the Health System. While adhering to CDC and infection prevention guidelines, all of our services are now open and available with the safety of our patients and staff as the highest priority.

Masking and social distancing are the phrases we hear and use to protect each other. Screening and testing are our new norms. Personal protective equipment (PPE) has become a precious resource here and nationally. Fortunately, our Supply Chain colleagues continue to do an amazing job procuring what we need to continue our return. Our operating rooms, both in the hospital and at Holly Hill, are ramping up as well, as patients who were forced to defer elective procedures are returning for care. Our Emergency Department is getting busier every day, thankfully with many more non-COVID patients seeking care. I’m sure you’ve read about the remarkable decrease in cardiovascular and neurovascular events reported across the country. It is no surprise that people have a certain degree of fear when they think about coming into hospitals.

We have implemented strong elements of safety to assure the communities we serve that we are ready for their return. Your patients will rely heavily on you to give them reassurance that it is safe to come here. I know you have been bombarded with daily communications that are now much less frequent. Please do read these updates that will continue to describe our plans and implementations for transformation and recovery. I want to assure you, our medical staff, that our hospital and all its services are ready for your patients.

On a celebratory note, our Internal Medicine Residency Program held a virtual graduation on June 12 via Zoom, one of the new normals for large gatherings. It was very special, as the graduates clearly had just experienced a (hopefully) once in a lifetime clinical challenge. Local television and the Greenwich Time newspaper covered the graduation ceremony. Read some of the comments from the graduates in a separate item in this newsletter.

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Greenwich Hospital was the last, or certainly one of the last hospitals in the United States surveyed by The Joint Commission prior to it temporarily halting survey operations. The survey took place March 10-13, coincident with New York and southern Connecticut’s virus explosion. The surveyors were very complimentary of our staff and hospital, and of how calmly we went through the evaluation at the same time we were clearly in the midst of ramping up clinically. We had no high level findings, further confirmation of clinical readiness and clinical excellence. On June 10, the commission sent our three-year accreditation approval. Congratulations to us!

Wishing you an enjoyable and healthy summer,
Spike

Karen A. Santucci, MD, named Greenwich Hospital chief medical officer

Karen A. Santucci, MD, has been named senior vice president and chief medical officer for Greenwich Hospital, effective September 1.

In her new role, Dr. Santucci will be working closely with the leadership team on the Clinical Growth Plan and the expansion of medical subspecialties. Additionally, she will provide strategic direction for all Greenwich Hospital clinical and medical staff programs and services.

Dr. Santucci has been a Pediatric Emergency Medicine physician at Yale New Haven Hospital for the past 21 years. She has served as the section chief of Pediatric Emergency Medicine at Yale since 2006 and the pediatric vice chair of Clinical Affairs at Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital (YNHCH) since 2017.

Also since 2017, she has served in a dual role working at both YNHCH in New Haven and the emergency department at Greenwich Hospital. In collaboration with the medical director of the Greenwich Emergency Department, YNHCH and the Department of Pediatrics at Yale, Dr. Santucci brought 24/7 pediatric emergency medicine specialists to the hospital. She played an active role in developing this program as well as the Pediatric Hospitalist program, which provides pediatric provider coverage to the pediatric inpatient floor.

Dr. Santucci is board certified in Pediatrics and Pediatric Emergency Medicine and is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She completed her Pediatric Residency and Chief Residency at SUNY Downstate in Brooklyn, NY and her Fellowship in Pediatric Emergency Medicine at Hasbro Children’s Hospital/Brown University School of Medicine in Providence, RI.

YNHHS expands COVID-19 healthcare worker testing

Widespread testing is now available throughout Yale New Haven Health, including at Greenwich Hospital, for all employees (clinical and non-clinical), affiliated medical staff and Yale Medicine clinical staff.

The testing is for asymptomatic healthcare workers – those without symptoms of COVID-19. While not mandatory, testing is strongly recommended.

Appointments are required. No approvals are needed. The goal is to test more than 10,000 healthcare workers, including direct-care providers, all affiliated medical staff, clinical ancillary staff and those in support departments.

Widespread healthcare worker testing is a key component of YNHHS’ COVID-19 recovery plans, which will address how the health system can continue to care for COVID-19 patients while performing more surgical procedures and reopening some treatment areas and offices to other patients.

To make an appointment, visit https://ocucovidtesting.ynhhs.org.

Refer to our Frequently Asked Questions for more information about the employee COVID-19 testing program.

New Guidance for PPE

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there were continuous instances of very low supplies of the usual 3M N95 respirators familiar to many clinical employees that have been used in our facilities for many years. Thanks to preparation by the Supply Chain department, YNHHS has secured large quantities of N95 respirators manufactured by 3M and other companies. These new respirators are all...
certified by CDC/NIOSH/FDA. Throughout June, front-line teams will begin seeing a greater variety of N95 respirators being used in clinical settings.

In addition to distributing a greater variety of respirators, YNHHS continues to order, receive and deploy increased numbers of re-usable respirators, including elastomeric respirators and powered air purifying respirators (PAPRs) across our facilities.

Supporting documents that address appropriate PPE use in the ambulatory and hospital-based setting include the Updated PPE Policy which provides detailed guidance for sites of care across the System and Yale Medicine and PPE FAQ documents.

These documents also link to a regularly updated online resources with pictures of the different models and types of PPE being deployed to keep our healthcare workers safe.

New WELD council to address staff wellness

YNHHS recently announced the creation of the Yale New Haven Health Wellness, Engagement and Experience, and Leadership Development (WELD) Council. The inaugural WELD Council, co-chaired by Stephanie Sudikoff, MD, and Javier Alvarado, MSW, will work with partners across the system to find innovative, engaging and enduring solutions to improve the well-being of employees and medical staff who, like their peers across the country, are experiencing unacceptable levels of stress and burnout. The WELD committees will ensure that the many programs across the Yale New Haven Health are coordinated and share best practices.

The committee’s wellness work will be led by Maryellen Kosturko, RN, Amy Woznyk and YNHH Chief Wellness Officer Kristine Olson, MD. They will work with the chief wellness officers at the delivery networks. Ryan O’Connell, MD, and Pat Burke will lead the work on engagement and caregiver experience and look at new ways of caring for patients that are good for patients and for caregivers. Howard Forman, MD, and Jay Morris, PhD, will lead our leadership development process.

In addition, the WELD Executive Council includes Chief Human Resources Officer Kevin Myatt, Deputy Dean Linda Mayes, MD, Jodie Boldrighini, RN, and chief medical officers Spike Lipschutz, MD, Oliver Mayorga, MD, and Ronald Vender, MD.

Pandemic leaves lasting impression on graduating resident physicians

Congratulations to graduates of Greenwich Hospital’s Internal Medicine Residency Program who made history as part of a graduating class that went from new doctors to mature doctors in a matter of months by caring for the sickest COVID-19 patients.

When the pandemic hit, resident physicians were transferred from their usual rotations to work side by side with intensivists and hospitalists to care for COVID-19 patients at the bedside and Intensive Care Unit. It was an intense experience that left a lasting personal and professional impact on the lives of these new physicians.

After the graduation ceremony, several graduates commented to the Greenwich Time newspaper on their thoughts about caring for patients during a pandemic:

“This was probably a less than once-in-a-lifetime event. I went into medicine because I wanted to treat the sickest of patients. And while all the hours were tiring, it was also a rewarding experience because I felt like I got to live up to why I became a doctor in the first place.”

Shirui Chen, MD

“No one was expecting this. Everyone has to pull together and it meant changing our structures, not just within the residency program but within the hospital.”

Essam Nagori, DO

“We were able to adjust, along with the entire staff at Greenwich Hospital, to treat the hundreds of coronavirus patients. … this really pushed us to exercise our ability to adjust in a lot of ways both at the hospital level itself and for us as residents. This was an all hands-on deck experience.”

Eleanore Black, MD

Awards presented included:

Essam Nagori, DO – Dr. Nelson A. Bonheim Resident Research Award
Waleed Malik, MD – Resident Teacher of the Year Award.
Eleanore Black, MD – Dr. Henry E. Markley Humanitarian Award in Medicine
Shirui Chen, MD – Resident Quality and Safety Award
Jennifer Hewlett, MD – Resident Service Excellence Award
Sandra Wainwright, MD – Golden Apple Teaching Award
**New platform, new plan for Know Your Numbers Plus 2020**

Yale New Haven Health’s annual Know Your Numbers (KYN) Plus employee wellness and rewards program will look and feel a little different this year, but the goal remains the same – to give employees the knowledge and tools to enhance their personal health and well-being.

By participating, benefits-eligible employees hired on or before August 30, 2020 can earn up to $500 credit toward their 2021 YNHHS medical benefits premiums. Eligible employees can also help achieve their organization’s 2020 PIP goals.

Along with the launch of KYN Plus, the health system will also introduce Virgin Pulse, YNHHS’ new online well-being portal which will serve as the new platform for participation in KYN Plus, replacing the Red Brick portal.

This year’s KYN Plus program will run from July 6 to October 9, 2020. To support social distancing, KYN Plus 2020 will be virtual and will not include biometric screenings or preventive exams. To participate, employees must enroll in the new Virgin Pulse Employee Well-being Portal and use this online platform to complete KYN personal choice activities and track earned credits.

KYN Plus 2020 includes up to three Personal Choice Activities to help evaluate overall health – an online health assessment, an online resiliency appraisal and livingwell CARES health coaching.

Employees will receive a home mailing with details about this year’s program as well as an email from Virgin Pulse on July 6 with enrollment details.

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**Check yourself!**

Remember STAR to help your brain catch up with what your hands are getting ready to do.

**Stop** – Pause for 1-2 seconds to focus on the task at hand.

**Think** – Consider the action you’re about to take.

**Act** – Concentrate and carry out the task.

**Review** – Check to make sure the task was done correctly and you got the correct result.

STAR reduces your chances of making an unintended mental slip or lapse by more than 10 times.

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**CHAMP for safety**

High reliability organizations operate successfully in high-risk industries. For hospitals, CHAMP is a mnemonic used to help eliminate instances of preventable patient harm.

- **C** – Communicate clearly
- **H** – Handoff effectively
- **A** – Attention to detail
- **M** – Mentor each other
- **P** – Practice and accept a questioning attitude

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**Medical Staff Changes (May 2020)**

**Appointees**

**No appointments in May**

**Resignation/Non-Renewal of Privileges**

Jayne Pincus, MD (Medicine)

**Change in Status**

Steven Bennett, DO (Medicine) was granted a leave of absence

**Office Move**

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**Newsletter submissions**

Deadline for submission of content for the July 2020 issue of Medical Staff News is Thursday, July 2. Please submit items for consideration to Spike Lipschutz, MD, at 203-863-3904 or spike.lipschutz@greenwichhospital.org or Myra Stanley, Yale New Haven Health at 203-688-1531 or myra.stanley@ynhh.org.