

Medical Staff News

Newsletter for the Medical Staff of Bridgeport Hospital | October 2023

Yale
NewHaven
Health
Bridgeport
Hospital

Norma Pfriem Breast Center gets new quarters at Bridgeport Hospital

Smilow Cancer Hospital's Norma Pfriem Breast Center officially opened their new, brighter and more spacious quarters at the Bridgeport Campus this month. The new offices are in the former Finance Department space on the third floor of 226 Mill Hill Ave.

"The space is much better laid out than our previous locations at the hospital," said Donna Twist, PhD, executive director of the center. "There are windows which make it bright and airy, and it's more accessible for all our employees. Plus, it's also on top of our primary care location which is very accessible for the patients in our clinics.

"We also have a provider on site five days a week," Twist added. "It's far more convenient in terms of parking for patients who utilize this location."

YNHHS acquires PhysicianOne

YNHHS CEO and President Chris O'Connor announced this month that Yale New Haven Health has fully acquired PhysicianOne Urgent Care and all of its locations, adding that it is an important component of the system's growth strategy and commitment to expand access to high-quality services across the region.

For the past six years, the Health System has had a close clinical affiliation with PhysicianOne. During this time, YNHHS has helped provide their patients with access to our high-quality primary care clinicians and specialists. This type of continuity of care is so essential to the health and wellbeing of our patients and the community.

PhysicianOne's 26 locations across Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts will be integrated into the Health System as a wholly owned subsidiary of YNHHS, as will their clinicians and employees. Urgent care is an important part of the care continuum, and this acquisition bolsters the comprehensive range of health services that we offer, including our existing urgent care centers in Fairfield and Milford, NEMG walk-ins across Connecticut, and orthopedic walk-in centers in North Haven and Stamford.

Newsweek names Milford IRU #4 in Northeast

Congratulations to the Milford Campus Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit (IRU) for being recognized as a top Physical Rehabilitation Center 2023 by *Newsweek*. The Milford IRU was in the top 50 in the United States as well as being ranked fourth in the Northeast.

Research shows that physical therapy following surgery reduces recovery time. Additionally, patients treated with physical therapy experience reduced pain and improved mobility, which results in better function.

There are more than 1,000 inpatient physical rehabilitation centers in the United States, allowing more choices than ever before. *Newsweek* and the global market research and consumer data firm Statista are proud to announce our ranking of America's Best Physical Rehabilitation Centers for the fourth year.

Work underway to get patients in more quickly for Radiology visits

This article is part of our Strengthening Our CORE news series that looks at how teams across Yale New Haven Health are working to reposition the health system for the future by focusing on strategic priorities through a systemwide initiative called Strengthening Our CORE (Collaboration, Optimization, Resiliency, Efficiency). Multiple workstreams have been designed to improve operational efficiencies; foster innovation; and improve quality and safety for patients and employees. Access 365, a major component of CORE, is dedicated specifically to providing patients with greater, more timely access to our services across the health system.

“Why does it take so long to get an MRI?”

“I called to schedule my mammogram and my appointment is five months out!”

“I have to travel almost 20 miles to get the soonest radiology appointment...”

Sound familiar? Health System leaders say they are well aware of the access problems across the enterprise for radiology, tests and procedures, and that patients often wait for weeks or months for an appointment. A multi-disciplinary team that includes frontline staff and managers as well as employees from ITS, Central Scheduling, the Office of Strategy Management, JDAT, and others, is working to change all of that.

Increasing and improving access throughout the enterprise is the goal of Access 365, an initiative to create a world class experience for all consumers, inclusive of patients, providers, referring providers and staff members. One area of focus supported by this initiative is Radiology and access to appointments for imaging procedures.

“When it comes to imaging for our outpatients, we know that patients and providers are having trouble accessing our services,” acknowledged Daniel Alexa, executive director, Radiology Operations, YNHHS. “There are many variables to consider when making a radiology appointment, and we have been diligently working on strategies to get patients scheduled at the right time, in the right place and with the right exam,” he said.

“Simply put, the demand for many of our radiology services exceeds our capacity to perform them,” said Alexa. “We have many talented people throughout the health system working to solve the problems, but we need to be universal in our approach in order to establish a standard Care Signature for ambulatory radiology services.”

“Care Pathways can help us reduce waste, ensure appropriate imaging requests and help clinicians assess the acuity of the need for imaging,” explained Rob Goodman, MBBCh, chair of Radiology & Biomedical Imaging, Yale School of Medicine, and radiologist-in-chief, Yale New Haven Health, along with Alexa, co-lead the Executive System Radiology Optimization Committee.

Alexa explained that our current state of operations is not sustainable for the long term, and that the health system is taking steps to address the issue by developing standardized templates, creating efficiencies and implementing technology to streamline access. YNHHS is implementing several strategies to align the supply and demand of radiology imaging services. Plans include short, middle and long-term tactics.

“In the short term, we can increase efficiencies and decrease appointment times,” said Alexa. There is an initiative currently underway to standardize scheduling templates and decrease some MRI appointment lengths. This will allow time for an extra two MRIs a day, per site, which can add up to an additional 5,000 MRI appointments per year across the health system. Plus, work is underway to automate the appointment scheduling process so that patients will be able to self-schedule more of their imaging exams online. This feature will be rolling out in select areas in the weeks ahead.

Longer term goals to improve workflow include expanding hours for radiology appointments; establishing a staff pipeline of talent to fill vacancies; and developing internal programs to train qualified individuals.

“Both Alexa and Goodman acknowledged that none of the work to improve access can be successful without the support and hard work of the technologists, schedulers, and other support staff who are at the heart of these processes. “It is important for our employees to know that all of the work they are supporting is appreciated – Alexa said – so we thank them for their dedication to improve access to imaging exams. Dr. Goodman added that Imaging touches every service line at YNHHS – so any improvement in imaging access has a direct impact on patient care.”

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“Implementing a few simple strategies has already rendered positive results,” added Alexa. “Initiating reminders to patients about their upcoming appointments has helped improve the “no-show” rate from below target to up to 15 percent above target, and work is underway to establish a waitlist to help fill cancellations.”

“Earlier this year, we submitted a request with the State of CT through the Certificate of Need process for additional MRI scanners, CT scanners and PET CT machines. We were pleased to learn that the request was recently approved,” added Dr. Goodman. “Yale New Haven Health provides quality radiology service to patients – we look forward to being able to increase and improve access in the future.”

While Radiology is the first area to be featured in Access 365 work, other areas will follow. Look for more details as they are available.

Matthew Bizzarro, MD, named CMO, YNHCH



Matthew Bizzarro, MD, has been named chief medical officer (CMO) at Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital.

Dr. Bizzarro is also a professor of Pediatrics and the vice chair of Clinical Affairs for Pediatrics. He received his MD from Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School before completing residency at New York University School of Medicine

before coming to Yale School of Medicine as a postdoctoral fellow in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine.

As CMO at YNHCH, Dr. Bizzarro will play a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction of the hospital’s clinical services, ensuring the highest standards of patient care, safety, and clinical excellence. He will collaborate closely with the executive leadership team, department heads, and medical staff to drive innovation, advance research, and deliver outstanding healthcare outcomes for patients of the Children’s Hospital and Health System.

Women’s health group targets care beyond pregnancy

There is a great need for dedicated focus on women’s health, a focus that goes beyond pregnancy and takes care of the whole woman from cradle to grave. To address this issue, providers from different services across Bridgeport Hospital who play a role in women’s health meet quarterly to connect, engage and collaborate around pressing issues such as substance use disorder in pregnant and postpartum women and cardiac care for breast cancer survivors.

By bringing together different services in the same space, the Comprehensive Women’s Health Services Working Group is breaking down silos in care and encouraging collaborative and creative problem solving. The Working Group was launched under the leadership of Gregory Buller, MD, and incorporates the vision of Tabassum Firoz, MD, and Manisha Gupta, MD, to provide cohesive and comprehensive care to women.

The Working Group meets virtually each month on the third Tuesday from noon - 1 pm. For more information, please contact Tabassum Firoz, MD, at tabassum.firoz@bpthosp.org.

Remember to check out the Integrated Leadership Dashboard for up-to-date information

Check out the YNHHS Integrated Leadership Dashboard (ILD) each day for up-to-date real time information including inpatient and ICU census, number of COVID-19 patients, vaccination statistics, as well as information on numbers of readmissions, hospital acquired infections and more. The ILD can be found at <https://ild.ynhh.org/#/dashboard>.

Newsletter submissions

Deadline for submission of content for the November 2023 issue of *Medical Staff News* is Friday, Oct. 27, 2023.

Please submit items for consideration to:
Alison Tighe at alison.tighe@bpthosp.org or
Myra Stanley at myra.stanley@ynhh.org.

Onsite flu vaccinations now available

Employee flu vaccinations are now available onsite at various YNHHS locations. Employee physicians and non-employed Licensed Independent Practitioners are reminded that receiving an annual flu vaccination, or having an approved medical or religious exemption, is a condition of employment. This year's deadline for vaccination or approved exemption is Dec. 1, 2023.

Employed physicians should schedule their flu shot by signing into Infor and selecting "Get Your Flu Vaccine" under the Employee Health section on the Infor landing page.

Non-employed Licensed Independent Practitioners, as well as volunteers, students, travelers and vendors, and may schedule an appointment through ynhhs.org/GetVaccinated, or by visiting <https://fluvaccination.ynhh.org/>.

In addition to onsite locations, employees may choose to get vaccinated at their primary care physician's office or at a participating retail pharmacy. Those who are enrolled in the YNHHS Medical Plan will have their copay automatically waived if they get vaccinated after Sept. 1, 2023, at a retail pharmacy in the CVS Caremark vaccination network, such as CVS, Walgreens or Stop & Shop. Those who get vaccinated at a CVS MinuteClinic must present their Cigna card to have their copay waived.

If you receive your vaccination at your PCP or a participating pharmacy, you will need to upload your proof of vaccination on Employee Self Service.

All related forms and instructions may be accessed from Infor by going to the Employee Health section, click on Flu Validation/Exemption (which brings you to Employee Self Service), then use the left-hand menu to access and/or download all relevant documents.

Register for Oct. 24 CME dinner

Topic: Breast Cancer Update

Tuesday, Oct. 24

5:30 pm networking – 6 pm presentation

Fairfield Museum and History Center
370 Beach Road, Fairfield

RSVP to alison.tighe@bpthosp.org.

Monthly Medical Staff Breakfast on Thursday. Oct. 26

You are cordially invited to the

Monthly Medical Staff Breakfast



Last Thursday of every month
7 – 9 am

Medical Staff Lounge

A selection of breakfast foods
will be served.

YaleNewHavenHealth
Bridgeport Hospital

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Next Trust Your Gut Digestive Health session – Nov. 16

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 Amit Khanna, MD, and Ira Leeds, MD, on Nov. 16 at 5 pm when they will discuss the Management of Intestinal Obstruction. To register, 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. For questions, contact Joe Mendes, executive director, Clinical Program Development, Digestive Health at joseph.mendes@ynhh.org.