

Continued from page 3

waiting patient sooner. The Transportation Logistics Hub will also free up staff for their other duties.

Planning for the Hub began in 2021 when the YNHHS Clinical Operations team asked inpatient teams what commonly causes patient discharge delays. Transportation came up repeatedly.

Business associates and sometimes nurses or care managers often arrange transportation for discharged patients, which includes contacting transportation companies, gathering patient information, completing forms and waiting on hold. The time spent is significant, considering the more than 62,500 patient transports YNHHS sees each year.

The Transportation Logistics Hub facilitators will streamline the process and work with transportation companies to ensure these patients get to where they need to be safely and in a timely fashion. The Hub logistics facilitators and software platform will also help improve vendor transportation operations over time. YNHHS and the transportation companies will have information about the busiest times for discharge transportation, whether the hospitals and transportation companies are meeting deadlines and how they can work more efficiently.

The Transportation Logistics Hub will be located in the Capacity Coordination Center with Bed Management and the Y Access Transfer Center at Yale New Haven Hospital, which will give the team line of sight into the status, priorities and flow challenges of each delivery network.

This article is part of a series that examines how teams across YNHHS 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.

YNHHS moving to tier “red” for masking

As of Dec. 20, 2023, YNHHS moved to the initial tier of “Red” cross the Enterprise, which requires all staff to mask for patient interactions.

For the previous several weeks, we have been in tier “Yellow”, which indicated that masking was recommended. However, surveillance by the Infection Prevention team identified an increase in respiratory virus illness. Due to this increase, there was a need to implement a higher tier of mask use in alignment with CDC core infection prevention and control practices.

As data from the height of the COVID-19 pandemic show, mask use remains one of the most important interventions during periods of increased respiratory virus transmission.

Patients and visitors are not required to mask except in specific situations. For example, patients with a possible respiratory tract infection are to mask in all ambulatory areas, when possible.

New red signage, to designate the recommended masking status, is be available for posting in departments and clinical areas. Masks also will be made readily available.

Newsletter submissions

Deadline for submission of content for the January 2024 issue of Medical Staff News is Friday, Dec. 29, 2023. Please submit items for consideration to: Alison Tighe at alison.tighe@bpthosp.org or Myra Stanley at myra.stanley@ynhh.org.

Medical Staff News

Newsletter for the Medical Staff of Bridgeport Hospital | November / December 2023

Yale
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New technology enhances stroke care at Bridgeport Hospital

With the help of a generous philanthropic gift from the Elizabeth M. Pfriem Foundation, Bridgeport Hospital has unveiled new imaging technology to treat stroke patients. The Siemens Healthineers ARTIS Icono is the most advanced biplane neuro-angiography imaging system. Its “biplane” imaging provides intraoperative views from multiple angles to help surgeons remove blood clots up to 24 hours after the onset of a stroke.

In addition to clearer visualization, the system also requires lower radiation exposure. It supports endovascular neurosurgery treatment for all stroke types, brain aneurysms, brain tumors and carotid artery disease. The system can also be used for interventional treatment of complex spine conditions and spine cancer, as well as interventional radiology treatment of pulmonary embolisms, deep vein thromboses and many types of cancer.

Stroke patients can be treated 24/7 within minutes through emergent thrombectomy – removal of blood clots to re-establish blood flow to the brain with no need for transfer to other hospitals. Emergent thrombectomy can benefit patients up to 24 hours after stroke onset.

“The Bridgeport Hospital Foundation is proud to support this exciting project with proceeds from its \$5 million capital fundraising campaign,” said Steve Jakab, president of the Foundation. “Philanthropic contributions from our community, led by the Elizabeth M. Pfriem Foundation, will help significantly expand access to these critical services and improve clinical outcomes, especially for our highest-risk patients.”



The ceremonial ribbon cutting for the new advanced biplane neuro-angiography imaging system featured (l-r) interventional radiologist Hamid Mojibian, MD, director of cardiac CT/MR Imaging for Yale Medicine's Department of Radiology & Biomedical Imaging; Ed Rodriguez, chair, Bridgeport Hospital Board of Trustees; Earl Shook, trustee, Elizabeth M. Pfriem Foundation; James B. Stewart, trustee, Elizabeth M. Pfriem Foundation; Stephen M. Jakab, president, Bridgeport Hospital Foundation, and vice president and chief development officer, Yale New Haven Hospital; Farhad Bahrassa, MD, neurosurgeon at Bridgeport Hospital and assistant professor of Neurosurgery, Yale School of Medicine; and Anne Diamond, JD, CNMT, president, Bridgeport Hospital.

The second phase of the four-year plan will completely modernize the hospital's cardiac procedural labs on its 10th floor. A brand-new catheterization lab will be constructed, followed by two electrophysiology labs and a second cath lab. The additional space will significantly expand patient access, enabling the hospital to treat nearly double the number of electrophysiology patients annually.

Part of the Yale New Haven Health Heart and Vascular Center, the new biplane lab is one phase of a larger four-year, \$30 million project to enhance neuro- and interventional cardiac services at Bridgeport Hospital, which is certified by The Joint Commission as an Advanced Primary Stroke Center.

We Ask Because We Care campaign underway



Kicking off Yale New Haven Health's We Ask Because We Care campaign are (l-r) project sponsors Louis H. Hart III, MD, medical director, Office of Health Equity & Community Impact; Darcey Cobbs-Lomax, executive director, Office of Health Equity & Community Impact; and Thomas Balcezak, MD, YNHHS executive vice president and chief clinical officer, as they view the campaign posters, which will be stationed at each YNHHS hospital. The posters feature portraits of employees from throughout the health system and help advise patients and families that they have the option to share demographic information when receiving care.

Yale New Haven Health is committed to improving the equity, quality and safety of our patient care. "It is critically important for us to understand who our patients are, to address the root causes of health inequities and to measure our impact and success at closing health equity gaps," said Thomas Balcezak, MD, YNHHS executive vice president and chief clinical officer, and associate clinical professor, Internal Medicine at Yale School of Medicine.

To support this work, YNHHS recently launched the enterprise-wide We Ask Because We Care campaign, "This initiative is part of an overall effort to improve race and ethnicity data collection and better understand and address the root causes of health inequities," Dr. Balcezak said.

The campaign focuses on training, education and community feedback related to how we can best improve our collection of demographics for our patients.

"As patients come to YNHHS for care, they will be asked to confirm their race, ethnicity and ethnic background. Patients will also be asked their preferred spoken and written language," explained Darcey Cobbs-Lomax, executive director, Office of Health Equity & Community Impact. "The demographic information collected from patients is voluntary, private, protected by law and kept in the medical record. The data will be used to ensure we are providing health care that does not vary in quality or safety because of personal characteristics such as race or ethnicity."

Training is underway. YNHHS staff members in the call center and patient services areas are learning how to ask

these demographic questions in a respectful and completely confidential manner. Self-identification is the gold standard for reporting race, ethnicity and preferred language information. Patients also will have the option to share this information via MyChart, if they prefer.

"Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible," added Dr. Balcezak. "The initiatives wrapped into We Ask Because We Care enhance every patient's right to respectful, dignified, high quality and safe health care."

With the launch of the campaign, posters and other material will serve as a reminder of the questions that patients and employees can expect.

Learn more about our We Ask Because We Care campaign on the YNHHS website and by watching this brief video.

Latha Alaparthy, MD, named associate chief medical officer



Latha Alaparthy, MD, MBA, has been named associate chief medical officer (CMO) at Bridgeport Hospital's Milford Campus. In this role, she will partner with Bridgeport Hospital's CMO, Victor Morris, MD, in medical staff oversight as well as leadership oversight for Gastroenterology.

Dr. Alaparthy attended JJM Medical College in Karnataka, India. After

moving to the United States, she completed her Internal Medicine Residency at Yale School of Medicine's (YSM) affiliated program through Norwalk Hospital and her Gastroenterology/Hepatology training through Yale University.

She joined a community Gastroenterology practice (PGC) and remained in practice for nearly 22 years. During this time, Dr. Alaparthy held several leadership positions within her practice and affiliate organizations as managing partner and executive board member. In addition, she served as chief of Gastroenterology and president of Milford Hospital's medical staff prior to its integration with Bridgeport Hospital.

An assistant clinical professor at YSM and Frank Netter School of Medicine. Dr. Alaparthy is passionate about women's health, equality, health education and access to care.

New SAFER reporting system

Yale New Haven Health recently launched a new patient and employee safety event reporting and management platform. The platform, called "SAFER" (Situational Awareness for Feedback and Event Review), will replace RL Datix. The new system integrates patient safety with patient experience, workforce safety, peer review and risk management on a platform that is easier to use and reduces the burden on frontline teams for initial reporting.

Key features and advantages of SAFER include streamlined incident reporting and analysis, with a user-friendly interface; real-time alerts, Action Plans, and Performance Dashboards; enhanced analytics and reporting capabilities that will help to proactively identify trends and areas for improvement; improved integration with existing hospital systems for more seamless data sharing within and across sites; anonymous reporting options to encourage transparency; and improved methods for interventions and follow-up feedback to those who report events.

"Our goal is to create an environment and a culture where all of our employees and Medical Staff across every care setting in the Enterprise feels comfortable and encouraged to report safety events, near-misses, Great Catches and other incidents," said Christian Pettker, MD, chief patient safety officer, YNHHS.

Steps for submitting a SAFER Report

(Situational Awareness for Feedback and Events Review)

- Step 1: Open an intranet browser and select "Report Safety Event" from menu bar to log into SAFER.
- Step 2: On the landing page dashboard, you will see an access pane that has green tiles. Click the green button for the type of event you wish to report. The "Add New Entry" pane will appear.
- Step 3: Click the Locations button in the Add New Entry pane and use the Location Picker to select the location where the event occurred. You can also navigate to the location in the list by typing the location name into the filter box.
- Step 4: Once you have selected a location, the Initial Report screen will appear. Fill in the information and click the green "Submit" button to complete the event report. Reports that are complete and submitted are assigned "Open" status.

Comprehensive training has been assigned via the Learning Management System (LMS). Leaders can also participate

in live and recorded training sessions. For additional information about using SAFER to report and manage safety events, including an overview and demonstration of the software, visit the news feed on the home page of the intranet.

"Together, we can harness this new platform to make care safer for our patients. Thank you for your dedication to our mission of providing exceptional care," said Deborah Rhodes, MD, enterprise chief quality officer, Yale Medicine and Northeast Medical Group; and vice president, Quality and Care Signature, YNHHS.

YNHHS' Transportation Logistics Hub to remove major barrier to on-time discharges

When a patient is ready for discharge, a team member (such as a nurse, care manager or unit clerk/business associate) on an inpatient unit or in the Emergency Department will enter an order for transportation into the StatCall function in the patient's Epic chart. The order will include the patient's destination (home, skilled nursing facility, another hospital or different location), along with relevant medical information and transportation needs (such as a wheelchair-accessible van). Future plans include extending the Hub to include outpatient rides.

One of the Hub's transportation logistics facilitators, who are emergency medical technicians or specially trained dispatchers, will receive the electronic order and, using a software platform, locate the appropriate ambulance, wheelchair van or taxi vendor that meets the patient's needs.

Transportation companies in each YNHHS delivery network area will use the same software platform, allowing Hub facilitators to see when a company dispatches a patient's ride, where the ride is enroute and when it arrives at the hospital. A software platform feature keeps staff informed through notifications and allows patients' family members to receive a text message, notifying them when their loved one has left the hospital.

Improving patient flow

With real-time information, Hub facilitators can prioritize certain transportation orders. Say a patient in the Bridgeport Hospital Emergency Department is waiting for a bed on a particular unit. The transportation logistics facilitator can prioritize transportation for a patient being discharged from that unit and help free up a bed for the

Continued on page 4