

# Medical Staff News

Newsletter for the Medical Staff of Bridgeport Hospital | September 2021

Yale  
NewHaven  
**Health**  
Bridgeport  
Hospital

## From the desk of the CMO

Hello Colleagues,

The past 18 months have been nothing but extraordinary, unprecedented and challenging. In response, our medical staff has proven themselves heroic, strong and resilient. Each word should be capitalized, underscored and printed in bold, because they describe the work, dedication and support shown to patients and families as well as to your colleagues during this pandemic. The sacrifices you have made in the midst of constant change, heartbreaking circumstances and painful situations have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated. Even though most of us had never dealt with a pandemic before, your skill, endurance and flexibility helped Bridgeport Hospital prepare for and care for hundreds of COVID-19 patients.

And the scary thing is, we are not done. The uncertainty that comes with this ever-changing COVID crisis is still very much with us and will be for the foreseeable future.

The good news, though, is that the COVID-19 vaccine is readily available, and more and more people in our communities are getting vaccinated. In the state of Connecticut, vaccination rates are comparatively high and continue to climb. The rate of COVID transmission in our state, while higher than we would like it to be, is still among the lowest in the country. We are hopefully on the cusp of approval for a vaccine that is safe for our children. Finally, COVID cases, hospitalizations, and deaths continue a slow decline and are nowhere near levels seen in the spring of 2020, nor this past winter.

As we continue to move forward in the fight against COVID, please remember to take care of yourself. Although we'd sometimes like to think we have superpowers, we are human beings who need rest, community and hope in order to recharge and care for our physical, mental and emotional health. There are a number of resources to help us do just that – please take advantage of them.

Aside from COVID, there are many important initiatives underway both at Bridgeport Hospital and throughout the health system. Please take a look at this edition of *Medical Staff News* for information on just a few current projects as well as some recent news and plans for the future. Continue to look for this newsletter each month for information of interest to the Bridgeport Hospital Medical Staff community.

Victor Morris, MD, Chief Medical Officer

## Mandatory COVID vaccination deadline approaching

Yale New Haven Health now requires all members of its workforce (including medical staff, employees, volunteers, students, contractors and traveling staff) to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The requirement, which took effect July 12, aligns with the Connecticut Hospital Association's statewide policy endorsing mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for hospital and health system clinical staff and employees.

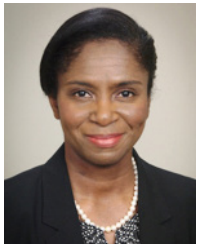
Individuals must have requested any COVID vaccination exemption or deferment for a medical reason or sincerely held religious/spiritual belief by Aug. 1. Failure to comply with YNHHS' vaccine mandate may result in disciplinary action by the Medical Staff office.

### Important vaccination deadlines:

- **Sept. 30, 2021:** Final day to receive Dose 2 of Pfizer or Moderna or one-dose vaccine (J&J/Janssen) or to submit documentation of vaccination outside of a YNHHS-affiliated vaccination clinic.
- **Oct. 18, 2021:** Termination for non-compliance

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## Bridgeport Hospital welcomes new surgery chair Karen Gibbs, MD



Karen E. Gibbs, MD, officially came on board this month as the new Chair of the Department of Surgery.

As Chair of Surgery, Dr. Gibbs will work closely with Department of Surgery leadership to further develop the hospital's reputation as a destination

for the provision of academic surgical care throughout the region.

Dr. Gibbs most recently served at Northwell Health as the associate chair, Department of Surgery; Chief of General, MIS & Bariatric Surgery; director of the General Surgery Residency Program and the Advanced GI MIS Fellowship; and director of Performance Improvement & Quality at Staten Island University Hospital Northwell Health.

Dr. Gibbs succeeds Nabil Atweh, MD, who retired after 30 years at Bridgeport Hospital, including 20 years as chair of Surgery and surgeon-in-chief.

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## Amit Khanna, MD, to lead Colorectal Surgery for Digestive Health



Amit Khanna, MD, joins Bridgeport Hospital this month as the director of Colon and Rectal Surgery for the Bridgeport region. He is responsible for leading the provision of colorectal surgical services across the area, in collaboration with the Digestive Health service line and Smilow Cancer Hospital Network teams.

Dr. Khanna, an associate professor in the Yale School of Medicine Department of Surgery, specializes in the minimally invasive treatment and management of inflammatory bowel disease, colorectal malignancy, and anorectal diseases. Most recently, he was chief of Colon and Rectal Surgery and director of Digestive Health Services at Tower Health System in Philadelphia.

A graduate of Mount Sinai/NYU School of Medicine, Dr. Khanna completed his general surgical training at the University of Rochester, Strong Memorial Hospital and a fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at The Cleveland Clinic Florida.

When he is off duty, you can find Dr. Khanna performing stand-up comedy or playing golf – “not necessarily at the same time,” he says.

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## Tune in to The Thriving Clinician education video

With medical staff well-being a top priority, YNHHS is introducing a new resource to encourage the conversations and actions that will enable clinicians to get the support they may need, particularly as it relates to their emotional well-being. The Thriving Clinician is an educational video that candidly discusses stress, depression and potential harm and conveys that it is OK to need and ask for help, and that we must look out for each other and say something if we see someone struggling. The video features compelling vignettes based on confidential conversations with YNHHS medical professionals. This resource is available to medical staff members, including community physicians and employees across YNHHS. To view The Thriving Clinician video, visit the Medical Staff Portal.

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## Taking unsigned medical orders to task

Health Information Management needs your help to be compliant with the bylaws for medical record completion, which includes documentation (discharge summary) *and* orders. Across the health system, the average rate of delinquent documentation including orders is 8 percent. Work has been done to decrease the number of orders that require cosignature. Beginning in September 2021, YNHHS Health Information Management will follow the same process for unsigned orders used at here at Bridgeport Hospital, including outreach communications, and if orders are not signed, **privilege suspension**. Remember to sign your orders.

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## Newsletter submissions

Deadline for submission of content for the October 2021 issue of *Medical Staff News* is Thursday, September 30. Please submit items for consideration to Myra Stanley, Yale New Haven Health at 203-688-1531 or [myra.stanley@ynhh.org](mailto:myra.stanley@ynhh.org).

## New wayfinding app uses GPS to guide patients, visitors

Hospitals and outpatient medical centers can be confusing mazes of hallways, offices and tunnels for patients, visitors and staff to navigate. That's why Yale New Haven Health is launching a free wayfinding app, *Yale New Haven Go*, to help patients and visitors get to their destinations at locations across the health system using their smartphones and devices.

In addition to Bridgeport Hospital campuses and Park Avenue Medical Center, *Yale New Haven Go* is also available at Greenwich, Lawrence + Memorial, Westerly and Yale New Haven hospitals. The app also covers the YNHHS emergency departments, walk-in/urgent care centers and Northeast Medical Group centers. People can download the *Yale New Haven Go* app from the App Store or Google Play or scan a QR code located at each destination. GPS guides people, step-by-step, to patient rooms, offices, cafeteria/vending machines, restrooms, patient registration, imaging and lab locations, gift shops, and ATMs. The app, created by robotic mapping company Gozio Health, also provides quick access to web-based features such as physician locator, COVID-19 vaccine information, bill payment, price estimator and on-demand video visits.

## New Bilingual Competency Program will help patients with limited English proficiency

Yale New Haven Health recently launched a program to help staff effectively communicate with patients with limited English proficiency (LEP) and enhance care, quality and patient safety. The new Bilingual Competency Program (BCP) is a voluntary test for bilingual physicians and staff members to assess their ability to communicate in a targeted language with patients. The test, which is available in different languages for different roles, were developed by Kaiser Permanente and are the only tests validated by The Joint Commission. ALTA Language Services, an independent vendor, administers the test.

YNHHS' Language Services Department will soon roll out the BCP across the health system, starting with physicians, physician associates and nurse practitioners, followed by nurses and medical assistants, then non-clinical staff. For more information about the BCP, visit the Language Services intranet site or email [BCProgram@ynhh.org](mailto:BCProgram@ynhh.org).

## Upcoming stories highlight new innovations in stroke care and treatment for Alzheimer's

*The latest issue of Healthy & Wise, the Bridgeport Hospital consumer newsletter, includes features on the Stroke Center and the use of thrombectomy as well as a new drug in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.*

### The quest to save 2 million brain cells a minute

When it comes to stroke, every minute counts. Stroke experts at Bridgeport Hospital now use a new procedure, called thrombectomy, that offers the brain the best possible chances of recovery. This latest cutting-edge neurosurgical treatment is an emergency surgical procedure for ischemic stroke, the most common type of stroke, when a blood clot starves the brain of oxygen.

"When 2 million brain cells die for every minute without blood flow, time is critical," said cerebrovascular neurosurgeon Charles Matouk, MD, chief of the neurovascular and endovascular program at Yale New Haven Hospital who oversees the Stroke Center at Bridgeport Hospital. "Stroke care involves the timeliest procedures in medicine."

### New Alzheimer's drug: Major breakthrough or more info needed?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved a new drug called Aduhelm for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. It's the first therapy approved for the disease since 2003. But will it provide the relief that patients and their families are seeking?

According to Bridgeport Hospital geriatrician and Executive Director of Geriatrics and Palliative Care, Vivian Argento, MD, patients and families may want to wait to celebrate.

Only a handful of medications are approved for Alzheimer's. Most aim to treat symptoms and show modest effects at best. Aduhelm, also known as aducanumab, is the first drug designed to actually slow the progression of Alzheimer's. In the full article, Dr. Argento explains why Aduhelm isn't necessarily being hailed as a miracle breakthrough. Given concerns over the drug's benefits as well as potential side effects, Yale New Haven Health has not yet included Aduhelm in its treatment protocol. Further study is needed.

*Read the full articles in the September 2021 edition of Healthy & Wise, the Bridgeport Hospital consumer magazine.*

## Updating your physician profile on [bridgeporthospital.org](https://bridgeporthospital.org)

One of the most visited sections of the Yale New Haven Health hospital websites are the physician profile pages. Please ensure your online information is current and accurate so that potential patients can find you. Visit [ynhh.org](https://ynhh.org) and select 'Find a Doctor,' then type in your name. If changes or updates are needed, near the bottom of the page, click on the 'Request an edit' link and make any needed updates, or upload a photo. Once you submit your changes, the YNHHS Physician and Services Referral Center will review the edits and update your profile page. You can also reach out to the team via email at [psrc@ynhh.org](mailto:psrc@ynhh.org).

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## Bridgeport Hospital implements new chaperone policy

Bridgeport Hospital announces a new system-wide policy on the use of medical chaperones aims to provide a safe, comfortable environment for patients while also ensuring a positive experience for providers.

A medical chaperone is a person who acts as a witness for a patient and a health professional during a medical examination or procedure. With the policy's rollout, medical chaperones will be required during any sensitive exam, treatment or procedure. Any physical exam of the genitalia or rectum or female breasts is considered "sensitive."

### **These include:**

- Pelvic examination
- Intravaginal physical therapy
- Examination, treatments, or procedures of or involving the external genitalia
- Examination, treatments, or procedures of the female patient's breast(s)
- Rectal examinations, treatments, or procedures

Medical chaperones will also be available during any other exam, treatment or procedure at the request of the provider or the patient. Providers should inform patients that they are entitled to have a chaperone present for any physical exam.

The medical chaperone will be an employee or member of the medical staff who will stand in a location where they can observe and assist as needed. When using a medical chaperone, proper documentation should be completed, particularly following sensitive examinations and procedures. Additional information about implementation will be disseminated in the coming weeks.

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## Sanford Guide now available to Bridgeport staff

The Reeves Health Sciences Library at Bridgeport Hospital now offers unlimited access to the Sanford Guide Web Edition to all hospital employees. The Sanford Guide has been a leader in point-of-care recommendations for the treatment of infectious diseases since 1969.

### **The online version offers:**

- Focused, evidence-based treatment recommendations for bacterial, fungal, mycobacterial, parasitic and viral infections
- Comprehensive anti-infective drug information
- Immunization recommendations
- Prophylactic antimicrobial therapy and comparative tabular data

This resource, designed to further enhance high-quality care, is available on the hospitals' library websites. Employees may also access the content through LibLynx and the Sanford Guide mobile app.

For more information, including instructions for mobile access, contact Todd Lane in the Medical Library at [todd.lane@bpthosp.org](mailto:todd.lane@bpthosp.org) or 203-384-3615.