

Smilow Update: December 22, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Over the past week we have seen a rise in COVID-19 cases on our campus community and continued increases in COVID-19 infections throughout Connecticut and the nation. Yale University has changed our status to **Orange campus alert level** indicating “moderate risk” for our campus community. We write to share the latest updates for our Smilow Cancer Hospital community, and to remind you to take extra precautions to keep you, your family, and our patients safe during the holiday season. Thank you for all you do every day for our patients. We wish you and your families a healthy holiday season.

Updated Visitor Information

- **Inpatients:** Beginning on Thursday, December 23, all visitors going to an inpatient unit will have to show proof of vaccination or a negative PCR test that was done in the past 72 hours. This check will happen at our hospital entry points. If a visitor comes every day, they will have to show proof every day. Only one visitor is allowed per inpatient, per day, no swapping allowed. Visiting hours will remain from 10am – 8pm daily.
- **Ambulatory:** At this time, we will not be requiring proof of vaccination for visitors in ambulatory areas/offices (inclusive on NEMG and YM). On Monday, December 27, all ambulatory services/sites will change visitation to one visitor per patient only when medically necessary.
- Visitation is for **COVID negative patients only** (unless there is an ADA, hospital support person, or end-of-life exception).
- **Exceptions** will be made for patients with disabilities (as a reminder, patients with disabilities are always allowed a support person) and at imminent end-of-life. Visitors with approved exceptions do not need proof of vaccination or a negative test.

COVID Testing

The Yale New Haven Health and Yale Medicine COVID Testing collection sites and Laboratory Medicine draw stations are operating beyond 100% capacity and same day and next day appointments are becoming extremely limited throughout the Health System.

- Effective immediately, appointments are now required at the following testing locations: Greenwich, Bridgeport, Milford, Shoreline, Mohegan, Lawrence + Memorial, and Westerly Testing Sites

- Walk-up/no appointment necessary workflows will still be available at the following locations, but patients without appointments may experience extended wait times to accommodate patients with appointments: Fairfield, Strong School, and Wallingford Testing Sites and Bridgeport Walk-Up Trailer
- Community members should make appointments at www.ynhhs.org
- Healthcare workers should make appointments at <https://ocucovidtesting.ynhhs.org/>
- Appointment blocks or holds will be created to ensure appointment availability for the following patient populations:
 - Pre-Procedure
 - Healthcare Workers
 - Symptomatic Community w/ LIP Order
 - Symptomatic Self-Scheduling
- Appointments will be limited for patients needing testing for travel or recreational purposes to ensure access for our priority populations
- Appointments will be added at draw stations for asymptomatic patients

Medicine Units

Due to the rising number of COVID-positive admitted patients, all medicine inpatient units have become hybridized except for NP 1, EP 10-6, V2 South (obs), & Cel 2. This does not impact Smilow NP inpatient units. A hybrid unit represents acceptance of COVID positive patients and non-positive patients and is an effort to improve patient throughput and maximize unit space.

Town Hall

Please plan to join us for our monthly Town Hall on Thursday, January 6 at 5pm. Hosted by Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, January's town hall will include timely clinical announcements from Kevin Billingsley, MD, MBA, FACS, a presentation on the Cancer Outcomes, Public Policy and Effectiveness Research (COPPER) Center from Cary Gross, MD, and an Enrollment Prioritization Update from the Clinical Trials Office from Roy S. Herbst, MD, PhD, and Alyssa Gateman, MPH, CCRP. [Learn More](#)

Children's Hospital Entrance (West Pavilion)

The entrance to the Yale New Haven Children's Hospital (West Pavilion) is closed for approximately 8-10 months as Yale New Haven Hospital builds temporary space for our Adult Emergency Department. In the interim, patients and visitors will use the Smilow Cancer Hospital (North Pavilion) entrance for both Smilow and YNHCH. Patients and visitors should check in at the Registration Desk at the Smilow Hospital entrance. Staff will direct them to their appointment or location.

Clinical Trials Operational Planning Communications

As our Clinical Trials operational planning initiative continues, the project leadership aims to keep Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital stakeholders engaged and up to date. Email distribution lists for Principal Investigators and Sub-Investigators on CTO-managed studies and CTO staff have been developed for this purpose. Additionally, an opt-in list has been created for other staff who are interested in receiving initiative-related updates and

communications. Relevant communications are also posted to the project website and posted in existing newsletters.

If you are not a CTO staff member or investigator on a CTO-managed trial but would like to receive email communications regarding the YCC Clinical Trials operational planning initiative, please **register** to join the optional communications list. The Clinical Trials operational planning team looks forward to keeping you informed throughout this effort.

Smilow Star!

Brianna Gallant, BSN, RN, is the Assistant Patient Services Manager on NP7, our Hematology/Oncology Outpatient Clinic. Brianna has been at Smilow and in this role for a little over three years and the passion she has for the unit, the nurses, and the patients that she supports is evident every day. Brianna enjoys working with the team and being able to assist and encourage them in any way she can. Sandy Morgan, Patient Services Manager on NP7 said of her nomination, “Brianna is an amazing resource to all the staff on NP7. No matter what she is involved in, if someone needs help, she is the first one to volunteer.” Brianna was the only manager for NP7 for several months during several transitions of staff and stepped up to take on many leadership roles and fill in where needed, while still managing her daily work and supporting the entire team. She has been in oncology nursing for 13 years and continues to learn and grow personally, while encouraging her team and providing mentorship. Thank you for being a true Smilow Star, Brianna!



Best regards,

Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, FACS
Interim Director, Yale Cancer Center
Interim Physician-in-Chief, Smilow Cancer Hospital

Lori C. Pickens, MHA
Senior Vice President and Executive Director
Smilow Cancer Hospital

Kevin G. Billingsley, MD, MBA
Chief Medical Officer
Smilow Cancer Hospital

Kim Slusser, MSN, RN, CHPN, NEA-BC
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