

COVID-19 Update: May 8, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

National Nurses Week

We were honored to gather together virtually yesterday to recognize the incredible work of our oncology nursing team, and their unprecedented leadership and response during the COVID pandemic. Our nurses are the continuity and link that binds us all together in the care of our patients at the bedside, and this has never been so evident as it has in the last two months. We thank each of our nurses for their dedication and compassion and are so proud to be part of the unique and wonderful Smilow community. We look forward to celebrating with you all again in person, and awarding the 2020 nursing awards at that time. If you missed the virtual celebration, you can view it [online](#).

Bonnie Indeck Retires

We are incredibly appreciative of Bonnie's dedication and leadership throughout her storied 39-year career at Yale New Haven Hospital, and never have been so inspired by her service as over the past five weeks. Bonnie was scheduled to retire on April 3 and selflessly extended her time as Manager of Oncology Social Work to help transition our social work team and support groups to a virtual care model over the last month. Bonnie's leadership and dedication to our patients and staff has once again shown us just how much we will miss her. Please join us in thanking Bonnie, and wishing her well as she joins her husband in retirement.

Surgical Procedures

Over the next two weeks, the Department of Surgery will begin to schedule postponed surgeries deemed **semi-elective**. **This category includes many oncologic procedures that were delayed related to COVID-19.** There is a backlog of 3,500+ surgeries, and the recovery will take time. **The pace of operational recovery will be linked to the availability of Personal Protective Equipment, testing availability, and ICU resources.**

- Postponed surgeries have been categorized into [four levels of priority](#), in accordance with the American College of Surgeons recommendations. Clinical judgement will always play a role in determining which surgeries must proceed quickly, and which can safely be done at a later date.
- The Saint Raphael Campus and Shoreline Ambulatory Surgical Suites will be prioritized for safe, easy patient access.

- All patients will be COVID-tested within 24 hours prior to proceeding with surgery.

Survivorship Clinic

The Smilow Survivorship Clinic continues to provide services for returning patients, and to accept new patient referrals. Cancer survivors who have completed active treatment or are on stable, long-term therapy are appropriate for referral.

- The Clinic addresses multiple concerns in one visit, including late effects from treatment, fear of recurrence, questions about diet content, supplements, and starting or resuming exercise.
- The team includes a Physical Therapist, Registered Dietitian, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and Physician Assistant for one-on-one counseling.
- Patients can be referred by any provider from their care team by placing an order in Epic as “Survivorship.” Patients may also self-refer by calling (203) 785-2273.

Smilow Stars





Today we honor our **Medical Assistants** from **NP4** and **NP8**, who quickly transitioned our practices to North Haven and have been resilient, dependable, and reassuring to our patients throughout the last month. Together, the group quickly helped to pack our clinic spaces early in April and unpacked them in North Haven over the Easter holiday weekend to ensure we would be ready for the first patients on Monday, April 14. Since then, the team have been at their best, always ready and willing to help and, even more importantly, always encouraging and supportive of our patients. Thank you to each and every one of you, you truly are Smilow Stars!

Medical Assistants (top-bottom, left-right): **Erica Millet, Alicia Alston, Sarah Francois, Delisa Claxton, Al Cabrera, Bernadette Alicea, Coralie Reyes, Iris Munoz, Crystal Comstock, Adassa Cummings, Lisa Stevens, Jatique Lugo, and Qiyaar Kirk.**

Best regards,

Charles S. Fuchs, MD, MPH
Director, Yale Cancer Center
Physician-in-Chief, Smilow Cancer Hospital

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

Kevin G. Billingsley, MD
Chief Medical Officer

Smilow Cancer Hospital

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

Vice President for Patient Services

Smilow Cancer Hospital

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