

COVID-19 Update: March 23, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

As we enter our second week of full modification of our clinical care at Smilow Cancer Hospital and our Care Centers, we hope you were all able to take some time to rest and care for yourselves this past weekend. We cannot overstate the amount of appreciation we have for the unprecedented transition of inpatient care that we were able to achieve last week from Smilow to our Saint Raphael Campus. The coming weeks will push us to challenging new levels and together we will find new ways to care for our patients in this difficult environment. Please reach out with [questions or concerns](#) at any time so we can work together to find solutions.

### Temperature Checks

To provide for the greatest possible safety for our care teams and staff, we have implemented physiologic screening with temperature checks, as well as questions pertaining to COVID-19 exposure and symptoms. These measures are now in place at our York Street Campus, at the Saint Raphael Campus (SRC), and in our Care Centers.

- On York Street, we have increased staffing capacity to implement temperature screenings for patients and visitors at the entrance of Smilow 1 and on Smilow 4, entering from the 55 Park Street bridge.
- At SRC, temperature checks are at all building entrances.
- In addition, local leadership in our clinics are working with staff to ensure employees are checking their personal temperatures twice a day.
- Our Care Centers are also standardizing temperature checks for patients, the limited number of visitors entering the Care Centers, and their staff.

**Telehealth**

We are incredibly proud of the quick transition many of you have made to Telehealth. Through these virtual appointments, we have provided continuity of care to many of our patients and enabled them to stay safely at home for consults, follow-up appointments, and many of our supportive and specialty care services.

- **Patient Information:** Downloadable [MyChart Instructions](#), [Video Visit Guides](#), and [Telehealth Information Cards](#) are all available on our website at [www.yalecancercenter.org/telehealth](http://www.yalecancercenter.org/telehealth)
- Last week, between Monday, March 16 and Friday, March 20, faculty and APPs at Smilow Cancer Hospital completed **156 Telehealth visits** and our Network Care Centers completed **142 Telehealth visits**. We anticipate this number will increase in the coming weeks. Thank you to our entire team for working together to make Telehealth an option for our patients.

### **Donate Blood**

Blood and platelet shortages continue to be a concern for our patients and at all hospitals in our region. We appreciate everyone who signed up to participate in the blood drive hosted by Yale New Haven Health on Thursday, which is now at capacity. Please consider donating blood or platelets at a local blood drive or [Red Cross Donation Center](#) during this critical shortage. Another Yale Blood Drive is being planned for April 8.

### **Virtual Schwartz Rounds, Town Hall, and Call Center**

- Please plan to join Tara Sanft, MD, Chief Patient Experience Officer; Jennifer Kapo, MD, Chief of Palliative Care, Bonnie Indeck, LCSW, and Leslie Blatt, APRN, for a virtual [Schwartz Rounds](#) tomorrow (Tuesday) at noon to discuss coping mechanisms and offer support to our community.
- We also hope you will take time to join us on Thursday at 5pm for our weekly virtual [Town Hall](#). We will provide an update on the status of Smilow Cancer Hospital and our Care Centers, and answer your [questions](#).
- An exceptionally high volume of calls continue to come in to the COVID-19 YNHHS Information Call Center. While there may be a delay, the Call Center is available for employees as well from 7am to 7pm, seven days a week: 203-688-1700; press 2 for employee options.

Best regards,

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Physician-in-Chief, Smilow Cancer Hospital

**Lori C. Pickens, MHA**

Senior Vice President and Executive Director  
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**Kevin G. Billingsley, MD**  
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