

Smilow Update: June 17, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Schwartz Rounds

Yesterday's Schwartz Rounds provided us a profoundly thought-provoking forum to have open discussions on diversity and inclusion within our Smilow Cancer Hospital and Yale Cancer Center community. We were honored to have so many members of our faculty and staff join us for an open, honest, and vulnerable conversation. Thank you to Drs. Katherine Tucker and Darin Latimore for their leadership in this arena and for sharing their own personal experiences to open dialogue among our team. Also, thank you to Drs. Tara Sanft and Jennifer Kapo and Anna Raso for their work in creating virtual Schwartz Rounds over the past several months. We especially appreciate each person who shared their feelings, personal thoughts, and concerns. We know we have many areas to improve on, and we are fully committed to working with all of you to ensure real change. Please reach out directly to our leadership team with any suggestions or concerns, at any time. We are here for you.

Clinical Research

Under the leadership of Roy Decker, MD, PhD and Joyce Tull, RN, our clinical research initiatives are continuing to expand and trials are available for new accruals for our patients.

- Our Clinical Trials Office (CTO) has successfully transitioned from Phase 0 to Phase I with limited trials open for accrual, continued remote CTO support of clinicians, and limited Clinical Research Support Laboratory (CRSL) access in New Haven, Trumbull, and North Haven.
- The CTO staff continues to remotely monitor and care for 160+ research participants weekly. Since reopening enrollment two weeks ago, they have consented 35 patients and 11 have been enrolled.
- Planning is underway for Phase II to begin on July 11 in compliance with the Provost's direction. We hope we will be able to expand accruals, expand CRSL access, and have more regular CTO personnel on campus. Updates will follow!

Talking Points for Patient Care

To continue our efforts to reassure our patients via phone, or in the clinic, please share the following information with staff:

- Patient and caregiver safety is our priority.
- We recognize that you may be nervous or anxious about what to expect when you come to Smilow Cancer Hospital or Smilow Cancer Hospital's Care Centers. Your concerns are understandable.
- Our facilities are even better prepared and safer now, given all of the extra precautions taken to keep our patients and staff safe.
- Our providers and staff at Smilow Cancer Hospital assure you that our facilities are safe for you and your loved ones. Here are just a few of the safety measures we have in place to keep you safe. [Learn More >>](#)

Cancer Survivorship

Our Cancer Survivorship teams launched a Virtual Cancer Survivorship Celebration in honor of Cancer Survivors Day on June 7. Throughout the month of June, the team is posting videos to an [online library](#) for patients and survivors to watch for inspiration and to encourage healthy lifestyle behaviors. The team is accepting additional videos submissions from throughout the Smilow Network through June 26. Please share your inspiration with our patients! Email canceranswers@yale.edu for a file transfer link to upload your video.

Asymptomatic Employee Testing

The YNHHS is rapidly escalating the volume of voluntary COVID testing for asymptomatic faculty and staff. Thus far, only 14% of healthcare workers have sought out testing, although the rates of positive infection remain extremely low at .24%. All Smilow Cancer Hospital providers and staff are encouraged to schedule testing.

- Testing is one more step in safeguarding the health and safety of staff and patients, and supplements use of PPE, adherence to social distancing, and hand-hygiene expectations.
- Please [schedule a test](#), which is available by appointment only for faculty and staff.

Smilow Star

Eileen Dehm, RN, BSN, has over 30 years of experience caring for patients with cancer, and has been with Smilow Cancer Hospital since it opened a decade ago. Currently, Eileen serves as the Smilow Patient Flow Coordinator and helps track patients admitted into Smilow, appropriately triaging their placements with the correct clinical programs and care teams. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Eileen's role has been increasingly important in ensuring our patients receive specialized oncology and hematology care during their admissions. In addition, she confirms that all patients admitted to our



Saint Raphael Campus and NP11 for Oncology have been COVID tested in advance, including assisting with the facilitation of the testing process, checking that orders are entered correctly, and verifying that patients are scheduled appropriately and being tested at the proper location.

Most recently, Eileen has been working with the Supportive Care Unit, which offers full multidisciplinary palliative care support for patients and their families, to identify patients throughout the entire hospital system who are pursuing comfort measures. Eileen is a former hospice nurse, and a cancer caregiver herself. Eileen's experience and passion for cancer care make her a true Smilow Star!

Best regards,

Charles S. Fuchs, MD, MPH

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