

YALE HEALTH CARE

news from Yale Health
winter 2022

**Not Your Average
Pharmacists**

**A New Era
Calling All Artists**



**PEDIATRICS
HEALTH EDUCATION
SPECIALTY SERVICES**



Not Your Average Pharmacists

Yale Health's clinical pharmacists bring added benefits to members

*Joseph Serio, PharmD, RPh,
clinical operations manager
for the Yale Health Pharmacy,
performs sterile compounding
in a biosafety cabinet located
in the Yale Health Center.*

WHEN YOU THINK OF THE YALE HEALTH PHARMACY, you may think of a place that simply receives orders from your provider, fills a bottle, checks you out, and sends you on your way. But there is a lot more that goes on behind the scenes to keep the process as efficient and safe as possible.

Yale Health employs four clinical pharmacists whose job is to work collaboratively with providers to find the best possible medication for each patient, meet with patients as needed to discuss their medication routine, and compound medications for particular situations. Each clinical pharmacist

NOT YOUR AVERAGE PHARMACISTS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

NOT YOUR AVERAGE PHARMACISTS
CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

requires a certain number of hours of continued training within a specific discipline and must go through a certification process.

“Essentially, they make your care safer,” said Bryan Cretella, PharmD, RPh, director of the Yale Health Pharmacy. “Because our clinical pharmacists are part of the care team, it provides more access for our patients and an extra layer of safety.”

The group of clinical pharmacists are available to meet with patients to help manage chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes, which require ongoing medication management. The pharmacists will discuss diet and adjust doses, as needed, in collaboration with the prescribing provider.

If a patient requires self-administered medication such as insulin, members of the clinical pharmacy team will meet with the patient to watch them administer the medication and provide tips on their process and technique. They will also meet with patients on blood thinning medications to test their blood with a fingerstick on site, get immediate results, and adjust the dose, if needed.

“You can’t always access your doctor every two weeks,” Cretella said. “That’s hard for any facility. We’re trying to create more touchpoints for our patients so they can work with a pharmacist to check how they’re doing with their medications.”

Additionally, the clinical pharmacists perform sterile compounding where they mix medications in an IV bag in a sterile environment located within the Yale Health Center. These IV bags are used for patients admitted to the Inpatient Care Department which, by law, requires the mixture to be verified by a certified pharmacist.

They also perform non-sterile compounding, which involves creating specific doses or forms of a medication that may not be available commercially. For example, a pediatric patient may need

a lower dose of a medication or may not be comfortable taking the medication in capsule form. The clinical pharmacy team will research ways to accommodate those needs.

The team is in constant contact with Yale Health providers and conducts presentations on new medications for Yale Health’s Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, keeping providers up to date on medication efficacy, safety, and side effects.

“We work with our providers to make sure we are all making decisions on the medications that will best help our patients with certain situations,” Cretella said. “We want to make sure the medications are safe and are the best choice for our patients.”

“If our providers have questions on a dose or a medication or an adverse reaction, we can answer those questions,” said Joseph Serio, PharmD, RPh, clinical operations manager for the Yale Health Pharmacy. “Our main job is to support our providers and our patients.”

Clinical pharmacists also help to save time and frustration when it comes to the insurance side of medications.

With an outside insurance, a provider may order a medication they think is best for the patient, but then an outside pharmacy such as CVS or Walgreens may

find out that medication is not covered under the patient’s insurance. The provider sends information to the insurance company, which sends information back to the provider, who sends information back to the pharmacy. Cretella described it as “a crazy, convoluted system.” This system often results in delays in the patient receiving their medication.

“At Yale Health, our providers know which medications are on our drug list because we make those decisions with them,” Cretella said. “When a provider orders something here, they usually know if it’s covered. In some cases, additional information is needed to see if the patient meets the required criteria for a drug to be covered. Instead of just kicking it back to the provider, our clinical pharmacists can help determine if the patient qualifies and, if not, work with the provider to find an alternative medication that would work as well or, in some instances, better for the patient.”

While Yale Health has a small team of clinical pharmacists, many questions can be answered by any member of the pharmacy staff. If more information is needed, the staff will consult with the clinical pharmacy team. The Yale Health Pharmacy is available at 203-432-0033.



PHARMACY HOURS

The Yale Health Pharmacy now has standard hours throughout the entire year.

Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Saturday	8:00 am – 3:00 pm
Sunday	Closed

Please check yalehealth.yale.edu for any changes or closings.



Yale Health providers have worked hard to keep our patients as healthy as possible, despite the constraints on in-person visits over the past 20 months.

FROM THE DESK OF PAUL GENECCIN, MD

I am pleased to welcome our new Yale Health members and to greet continuing members at the start of 2022. The New Year also marks Yale Health's 51st year – the beginning of our second half-century!

No doubt, you will agree with my wish that the COVID-19 pandemic could be behind us after nearly two grueling years. However, my purpose here is not to discuss coronavirus, but instead, to reflect on the preventive care priorities that have gained prominence during the pandemic.

Yale Health providers have worked hard to keep our patients as healthy as possible, despite the constraints on in-person visits over the past 20 months. We have heartening data demonstrating our commitment to maintaining high rates of adult colon cancer screening, hypertension management, and diabetes care. We have similar data on our success in delivering pediatric and gynecologic care.

Electronic modalities such as telemedicine and MyChart have become crucial in ensuring that we can provide preventive services, many of which our adult members have traditionally associated with “general physical exams” or “annual checkups.” However, for adult patients to stay well, annual in-person appointments are not nearly as important as the care plans our providers and patients discuss at preventive visits of any sort.

To be clear, these meetings with our providers are very important. At an office visit, we can take a complete history, carry out examinations and testing, and make plans to get (or stay) healthy. Relationships between primary care providers (PCPs) and patients are vital to the development of trust, which in turn, supports the full disclosure of healthcare concerns and helps patients to understand and accept their provider's recommendations. Yale Health places great importance on clear communication and shared decision making, which means that our providers want to get to know you and understand your personal values, priorities, and health goals. As long as our interactions with our PCPs (whether in person or through telemedicine) support these goals, annual physical exams may not add additional value.

In this New Year, please consider your health goals and communicate with your provider about ways to minimize risk factors such as elevated cholesterol and high blood pressure and seek the preventive care that is so important to staying healthy. Age-appropriate vaccinations, including COVID and flu vaccines, are good examples. Cancer screening is also critically important. You may also have behavioral goals, for example, weight loss, tobacco cessation, and moderation of alcohol use among many others that you can work on with your PCP. Unless you already have clear health goals for 2022, I hope that you will contact your PCP and schedule a time to develop your preventive action plan.

The entire Yale Health staff joins me in wishing you and your family the best of health in 2022 and beyond!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Genecin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Paul Genecin
Chief Executive Officer

A New Era

**Margaret Hionis retires after 40 years at Yale;
ShaVonne Harris begins as patient representative**

MARGARET HIONIS HAS BEEN a fixture for generations of Yale Health members who need assistance navigating the healthcare system. She has seen families through



Hionis

births and deaths, new jobs and retirements, and everything else in between.

“I’ve seen our patients who have aged along the way while dealing with the changes that may occur within Yale Health itself,” Hionis said. “It’s been a pleasure doing that. I’ve known patients, couples, and their family members and we have grown together.”

Hionis retired as Yale Health’s patient representative in December after 40 years of service to Yale. One of her last duties on the job was to help in the transition of the new patient representative, ShaVonne Harris, who began on December 6th after spending the last three years as a patient representative at Yale New Haven Hospital.

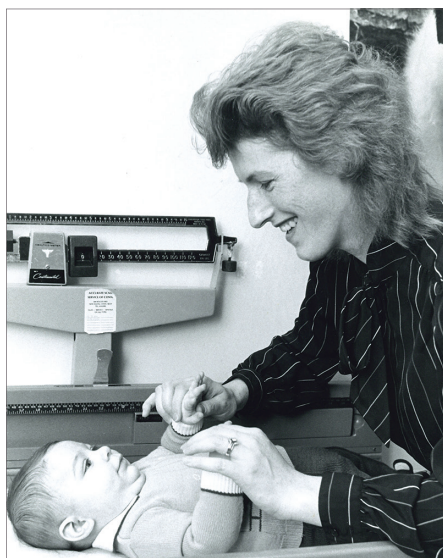
Hionis began her career at Yale Health in 1981 in medical records. She then became a representative in the Member Services Department until she left to work for Information Technology, helping students to fix their Mac computers. After the birth of her children, Chris and Tara, in the mid-1980s, she returned to Member Services on a part-time basis and eventually became the Medicare retiree coordinator. She moved to the Henry Koerner Center for Emeritus Faculty to work with retired faculty for some time, but returned to Member Services in 2009 as the department’s assistant manager and patient representative. She transitioned to the full-time patient representative in 2013 and has been in the role for the past eight years.

“The patient representative, to me, is the person who listens to the patient’s concerns

and works to find a resolution,” Hionis said. “At times, you have to explain difficult benefit and coverage issues, so you must be very well versed in the health plan benefits. Much of what drives the inquiries that we receive is patients not fully understanding that while Yale Health is where they receive their medical care, we are also the insurance provider, and must administer benefits fairly and equitably, as directed by Yale Benefits.

“The most rewarding part is finding a solution and working with the clinical teams and other partners within Yale Health and the Yale New Haven Health system to solve a concern or an issue for a patient in a way that works within the benefit structure and pleases the patient,” she said. “That’s always the goal.”

While Hionis considers the Yale Health team as a family of sorts, her career truly became a family affair when her son Chris started working in the Building Services Department at Yale Health in 2010. He subsequently moved on and is now a program coordinator in Facilities Planning.



Margaret Hionis with her son, Chris, in the Pediatric Department in the mid-1980s.

“Fortunately, I’ve gone through the full gamut in my own personal life at Yale Health,” she said. “I had excellent prenatal care, all of my children’s pediatric care, and wonderful care in Internal Medicine for myself and my husband. For me, it’s a personal example of what we want all of our patients’ families to experience. It’s that feeling of home.”

“When you have the opportunity to take care of someone from head to toe, it gives you a different outlook on life... I want to treat people how I would want them to treat my family members if they needed help.” *ShaVonne Harris*

Harris is now ready to experience that feeling. While she has enjoyed her time



Harris

helping patients at Yale New Haven Hospital, she is looking for something a bit more personal.

“The kind of work that they do at Yale Health is the kind of work I did at the hospital, just on a more intimate level,” she said. “In the hospital, we see thousands of people coming and going each day and Yale Health is different in that it’s a bit more personal. It has employees, families, and students and it gives you more of a chance to make connections.”

Harris earned her undergraduate degree in business management from Albertus Magnus College in 2013 and her Master of Science degree in healthcare administration from the University of New Haven in 2019.

She has worked in several patient-facing front desk positions at medical facilities throughout the state since 2002 and was the lead associate transplant coordinator for pre-liver transplants at Yale New Haven Hospital’s Transplant Center from 2014–2018.

Harris has also been a certified nursing assistant since 2003, having worked in the

field at Haven Healthcare Soundview in West Haven and Masonic Healthcare Center in Wallingford from 2003–2008.

“When you have the opportunity to take care of someone from head to toe, it gives you a different outlook on life,” Harris said. “I want to treat people how I would want them to treat my family members if they needed help.

“We all know that health care is often not easy to navigate, no matter where you go,” she said. “There have been people at Yale for 50 years or more and health care is ever-changing. The way things were done five or six years ago, may not be the way they are done now. I’m looking forward to being the person who can help people through that process.”

FROM OUR MEMBERS

“

“Yale Health is consistently the FINEST healthcare facility I have experienced in my 66 years. Thank you!”

“

“Yale Health is quite exceptional in my view, and the staff places a premium on courtesy and service.”

PARTNERSHIP FOR PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

Making Prevention a Priority

Adult Preventive Health Guidelines help set an “aspirational goal”

IF STAYING HEALTHY is a lifelong journey, Yale Health’s Adult Preventive Health Guidelines are the road map to help you along your route.



Rosenbaum

The guidelines include recommendations for when you should seek preventive care including exams, cardiovascular health screenings, and additional screenings such as for cancer and sexual health. They are based on guidance from the United States Preventive Services Task Force and take age as well as personal risk factors into account.

“We really want this to be a partnership between a patient and their provider,” said Dr. Julie Rosenbaum, chief of Internal Medicine and Acute Care. “These guidelines set an aspirational goal. Having the Adult Preventive Health Guidelines provides a way for the clinical staff to be on the same page with our patients, but also provides a way for patients to engage in their own health care.”

The guidelines were updated in 2021 and include the following new recommendations:

Diabetes: Screening every five years starting at age 18 if you have cardiac or diabetic risk factors. If you are overweight or obese, start at age 35.

Cervical cancer: Screening every three years starting at age 21 until age 30. Every three to five years from ages 30–65.

Colon cancer: Routine screening at age 45. Screening recommended earlier based on risk factors.

Lung cancer: Screening annually at age 50 for those with a 20-pack per year history and who currently smoke or have quit smoking in the past 15 years.

Chlamydia and gonorrhea: Screening for all sexually active women annually under age 25. Additional screening based on risk factors.

Hepatitis C: All adults should be tested once.

While routine physical exams are important, Rosenbaum said the most impactful part is often the interaction between the provider and patient. Preventive visits for those with low-risk health conditions and no concerning family history are recommended every five years for those ages 18–40, every two years for those ages 40–50, and annually for those older than 50. Well-woman exams are recommended annually for ages 18–24 and every two years at age 25 and older. See Dr. Genecin’s “From the Desk of” on page 3 for more.

To see the latest recommendations, visit yalehealth.yale.edu and search “Adult Preventive Health Guidelines.”



"Piccolo Trumpet," a photograph by Harold Shapiro, hangs in the Yale Health Center as part of his "Luminous Instruments" exhibit.

Calling All Artists

The Arts at Yale Health offers a talent showcase

THE FIRST PIECES OF artwork created by members of the Yale community went on display throughout the Yale Health Center in February 2019. Since that time, more than 50 pieces of art from over 25 artists have adorned the walls, including the current exhibit, "Luminous Instruments," by Harold Shapiro, a professional photographer known for his work at Yale, including as the photographer for this newsletter.

The Arts at Yale Health is now looking for its next round of artists for its 2022 theme of "Care." Some examples include caregiver, childcare, healthcare, eldercare, and self-care, but this list is by no means exhaustive. The committee welcomes artwork in all media and invites artists to submit individual works for consideration, or a small series of 8–10 pieces. It is also seeking site-specific proposals for creative installations for the rooftop healing garden and terrace.

The submission deadline is February 15th.

Meredith Miller, a senior photographer at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and a 2003 graduate from the Yale University School of Art, had the idea for adding artwork around the Yale Health Center a few years ago after spending time in hospitals visiting family and friends.

She reached out to Yale Health representatives with the idea of gifting some of her work to the Yale Health Center. Upon meeting with Yale Health staff, she proposed an art program. Yale Health was receptive and The Arts at Yale Health was born.

A committee with members from across Yale was formed and includes artists, Yale Health staff, and Yale faculty members from across disciplines. The committee is tasked with reviewing the submissions and deciding which ones will be installed in the Yale Health Center. There are certain criteria

that must be met and the artwork must be deemed appropriate for family viewing in public spaces with respect for cultural backgrounds and the Yale community. The artwork is switched out throughout the year.

Submissions are considered by anyone with an affiliation with Yale, which includes staff, faculty, students, alumni, and their immediate family members. The displays have ranged from paintings to photographs to textiles.

Artists can also choose to sell their artwork if they wish with a 20 percent commission fee going to The Arts at Yale Health to help build a permanent collection of artwork.

For more information on The Arts at Yale Health, including submission information, guidelines for artists, and current exhibits, visit yalehealth.yale.edu/about/arts-yale-health.

PEDIATRICS**What do I need to know about the HPV vaccine for my child?**

⊕ Human papillomavirus, or HPV, is a common virus that can cause various forms of cancers later in life. HPV infections are very common and are spread through intimate skin-to-skin contact including vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has the virus, even if they do not have any signs or symptoms.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends both boys and girls be vaccinated against HPV between ages 11–12, with two doses of the vaccine given 6 to 12 months apart. The vaccine is recommended at this young age as it should be given prior to the start of sexual activity and, statistically, children are more likely to be sexually active after age 13. HPV vaccines can be given starting at age 9 and given up to age 25. Children who start the vaccine series on or after their 15th birthday require three doses given over six months.

If you have any questions about the HPV vaccine for your child, please speak with their primary care provider in Pediatrics.



*Manuel Orta, MD
Pediatrics*

WELLNESS AND HEALTH EDUCATION**How can I stay active over the winter?**

⊕ Colder temperatures and fewer daylight hours do not mean you need to trade in your sneakers for slippers. Here are a few tips for staying active this winter.

Find outdoor seasonal activities to enjoy, like ice skating, sledding, snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing. Spending time in nature provides an additional mood boost. Dress the part by insulating your body with layers to stay warm and dry. Start with a material that wicks moisture away such as lightweight polyester. Try to avoid cotton. Add wool or fleece to keep heat in and top it off with clothing that is wind and water-repellant.

There's no need for a gym membership when you create your own space to get active. Stream exercise workouts online or on your television or turn on some music and dance. Water bottles or soup cans are great alternatives to weights. Climbing stairs at home or at work for as little as five minutes offers a heart-pumping workout.

Keeping up with a fitness routine during the gloomy days of winter will keep you ahead of the game when the snow thaws and we spring forward.



*Lisa Kimmel, MS, RD, CDN
Director, Wellness and Health Education*

Making the Rounds

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS INFORMATION
FROM YALE HEALTH STAFF**

SPECIALTY SERVICES**How can I help to avoid joint pain?**

⊕ Joints are the point in your body where two bones meet each other. At their touchpoint, they are covered with a slippery coating known as cartilage, which is subject to wear and tear. As cartilage breaks down, the body compensates by producing extra fluid within the joint, which results in swelling or inflamed joints, more commonly known as arthritis.

Our degree of wear and tear arthritis may come from a genetic predisposition, overuse or injury. Your livelihood and activity level can be contributing factors. If you repeat the same task throughout the day, you may be putting added stress on your joints. Ergonomics can also play a role in your joint health. If you are sitting at your desk, writing or reading for several hours, it can lead to joint pain.

Taking breaks during repetitive activities can help. Plan out your work or activities and break them up into smaller intervals. Physical fitness, including strength and flexibility, is also important.

Your exercise routine should be appropriate for your abilities, regardless of age. Both land-based and aquatic exercises have been shown to be helpful. Medical equipment such as braces or the use of a cane may help in certain instances. Medication sometimes plays a role as well.

Listen to your body and use pain as your guide. If you have a question or concern about ongoing joint pain, contact your primary care provider.



*Thomas Brady, PA-C
Specialty Services*

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YALE HEALTH CARE

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winter 2022



KEEP IN MIND

Referrals by Outside Specialists

Except for emergency and urgent care as defined in the Employee Coverage Booklet, healthcare services outside of the Yale Health Center require prior authorization by Yale Health.

If an outside specialist refers you to another outside specialist, you must have prior authorization from Yale Health for those services to be covered.

If you need lab testing ordered by an outside specialist or other healthcare provider, the lab test must be performed at a Quest Diagnostics location in the six New England states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont) unless prior authorization is given by Yale Health.

If you need diagnostic imaging ordered by an outside specialist or other healthcare provider, all imaging including CT scan, x-ray, ultrasound, and MRI, must be performed at the Yale Health Center unless prior authorization is given by Yale Health.

If you have any questions regarding a referral or prior authorization, please contact the Yale Health Referrals Department at 203-432-7397 or yhreferrals@yale.edu.

Published by Yale Health
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