

A Publication of the Yale Faculty Practice & Yale School of Medicine

SPECIAL BEST PRACTICES ISSUE

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS BEST PRACTICES

The 1999 patient satisfaction survey results are in and benchmark season has begun. "The survey allows us to gauge performance of one practice compared to another," explained Dr. Stephen Rimar, YFP Medical Director. "The beauty of benchmarking is that we can identify our strongest practices and explore how and why they are successful. We can then learn from these practices and adapt their approaches to other clinical areas so they can excel as well," he said. "The logic behind our Practice Standards Initiative is to have all practices meeting and exceeding the standards."

...continued on page two.



MEDICAL CENTER READIES FOR CONFIDENTIALITY MANDATE

Last fall the Yale Faculty Practice initiated an effort with the Yale New Haven Health System to prepare for the new federal Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) by creating the Clinical Information Confidentiality Committee. "Our group is energetic and members know that we have a window of opportunity to ready our organizations for these new regulations," explained Dr. Stephen Rimar, the Committee's Chair. "We've brought together a large and knowledgeable group of individuals who are committed to protecting privacy and confidentiality of health information and medical records," Dr. Rimar said. This group includes individuals with expertise in legal issues, information systems, research, clinical care, operations, finance and medical records.

...Continued on back page.

THE ANATOMY OF CONTRACTING

Last year, the Yale School of Medicine entered into a new affiliation agreement with the Yale New Haven Health System, replacing the original agreement that had been in place for over 20 years. The agreement called for a new centralized approach to managed care contracting. Here, Yale Practice introduces the Health System's contracting team and explains how contracts are negotiated or renewed on behalf of the YFP.

Leading the Health System's contracting team is **William Gedge**, Senior Vice President for Payer Relations, and **John Bradley**, Director of Contracting. According to John Bradley, the role of the centralized contracting team is to represent the Health System's three member hospitals and their physician organizations (IPAs) and the Yale School of Medicine in contracting activity. "There are several reasons for the move to a centralized contracting model," Bradley said. "There is the economic rationale



John Bradley

...continued on back page

Have You Completed Your Compliance Training?

Have you completed your one-hour billing compliance training this year? Now there's an easy way to check your status. Go to the compliance web site at: <http://info.med.yale.edu/yfp/comply/alert/CompletedQuiz.html>. The site alphabetically lists faculty members who have completed the training. If you have not completed the required training, this can be done through the on-line quiz, a one-hour seminar, or a compliance presentation at a faculty meeting. The next seminar is scheduled for May 17 at 5:30 p.m. in the Fitkin Auditorium. **Faculty who have not completed training by June 30 will not be able to bill for services.**

For more information contact **Judy Harris, Compliance Officer**, at 785-3868 or judy.harris@yale.edu

SAVE THIS DATE

Be sure to mark your calendar to attend the opening exhibit of the **Yale Physicians Building Art Space on Friday, June 2 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** The reception will be held on the bridge between the Yale Physicians Building (YPB) and the Dana Building. "We hope that all members of the medical center community will attend this special event," said Lorraine Roseman, Director of YPB Operations and the project's champion.

The development of the YPB Art Space is supported by the contributions of area businesses and volunteers from the Medical School and University. "It wouldn't have been possible to launch our program without Yale



Artists **Terry Dagradi**, **Dr. Lisa Geiselhart** and **Dr. Amy Friedman** preview their works with **Lorraine Roseman** and **Bitsie Clarke** of the **New Haven Arts Council**

volunteers and the local companies that pledged support," Roseman added. Yale departments donating services include YSM Building Services and Operations, ITS-Med Media Services, YSM Copy Center and Reprographic Imaging Services (RIS).

...Continued on back page.

SAVE THIS DATE (continued)

Area businesses contributing to the project include:

- A.C. Perkins
- Brigham Associates, Robert Brigham
- Coastal Wine, Ben Tortora
- Crystal Rock Water Company
- Lucien's Greenhouses
- Oclassen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Roche Laboratories, Inc.
- Sullivan & Son Carpet, Inc.
- Wyeth-Ayerst Research, Richard Reed

The Yale faculty physicians and staff to be featured in the initial YPB Art Space exhibit include:

Terry Dagradi, Media Specialist, ITS - Med Media Services - photographs focusing on landscapes and portraits

Lisa Geiselhart, M.D., Assistant Professor, Section of Transplantation and Immunology - quilts and photographs

David Leffell, M.D., Professor, Departments of Dermatology and Surgery - photographs focusing on rural Connecticut scenes

Amy Friedman, M.D., Assistant Professor, Section of Transplantation and Immunology - photographs focusing on family life and African wildlife

Wayne Southwick, M.D., Professor Emeritus, Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation - bronze sculpture

Barry Zaret, M.D., Professor and Chief, Section of Cardiovascular Medicine and Vice Chair, Department of Internal Medicine - oil paintings

The exhibit will continue through the summer. Future exhibits will include works from the broader University and Medical Center community, as well as New Haven area artists.

For more information, contact Lorraine Roseman at 785-5144 or lorraine.roseman@yale.edu.

THE ANATOMY OF CONTRACTING

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with costs savings from reduced administrative overhead," Bradley added. "Problems with payers can be resolved more quickly and with fewer steps when we approach them with a common voice. Otherwise, each hospital and IPA would be chasing the payers individually to resolve similar problems."

"The goal is to make better contracts and one of the most important steps we're taking is to monitor contracting compliance and hold payers accountable to the terms of their contracts. This should reduce payment lags," he added. Bradley brings to his expanded role ten years of managed care and contracting experience. Before joining the Health System three years ago, he was the Director of Contracting at ConnectiCare.

The YFP contracting team includes Dr. Stephen Rimar, Marianne Dess-Santoro, Executive Director of PFS, Sally Berardinelli, Associate Director of PFS, and John Bradley. Team members are in daily contact as they actively manage contract negotiations, implementation and reimbursement issues. "We recognize that many of our practices have unique contracting requirements," explained Dr. Rimar. "Physicians and providers with questions or concerns should contact John Bradley or me directly and keep the lines of communication open."

To contact Dr. Stephen Rimar, call 785-2140 or stephen.rimar@yale.edu. To contact John Bradley, call 603-5507 or bradley@ynhh.com.

CONFIDENTIALITY MANDATE

(continued)

Here, *Yale Practice* presents an update on the group's progress:

- Catalogued existing confidentiality policies of the University and Health System
- Developed set of guiding principles for future policy and operations that impact patient confidentiality
- Reviewed draft HIPAA regulations as published by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Developed official Yale University and Health System comment paper on the proposed regulations and forwarded this to HHS

- Launched intranet site for Committee members to serve as a communication forum and to provide educational resources related to HIPAA and information confidentiality

"We have several steps planned as we move closer to the publication of the final HIPAA regulations," Rimar said. "We're planning a symposium on the new regulations and we will expand our web site to be open to the medical center community," he added. "The Committee continues to meet quarterly and is actively staying ahead of the HIPAA curve." For more information, contact Dr. Rimar at 785-2140 or stephen.rimar@yale.edu

YALE PRACTICE

YALE FACULTY PRACTICE

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BEST PRACTICES

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The survey was mailed to 30% of patients who had an outpatient visit or consultation with a Yale physician in October and November of 1999. Nearly 40% of patients returned the survey providing 2700 surveys for the analyses. The survey included 45 questions focusing on these dimensions of quality and satisfaction:

- Quality of care
- Appointment access and scheduling
- Provider-to-patient communication
- Courtesy and respect
- Practice operational efficiency
- Service and access after the visit

According to Dr. Rimar, a key step in using the results is to drill down into the scores and look at satisfaction at the level of each individual practice area. So where did Yale's practices excel and which clinical areas represent best practices? This summary highlights practices that are leading the way in attaining the goals of the Yale Practice Standards.

Would You Recommend This Yale Doctor to a Family Member or Friend?

Percent Said "Definitely Yes"
Score range across practices:
Best = 100% Worst = 59%

✓ Neurosurgery	100%
✓ Dermatologic Surgery	97%
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford	97%
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Fitkin	96%
✓ Surgical Gastroenterology	95%
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	94%
✓ Endocrinology	94%

Practices with the Highest Number of Significant Improvements

Number of survey items with statistically significant improvement from 1998 to 1999

✓ ENT	9
✓ Orthopaedics YPB -1 practice	7
✓ Dermatology - all practices	6
✓ Gynecologic Oncology	5
✓ Medical Oncology	5
✓ Urology	5

Satisfaction with Overall Quality of Medical Care Provided

Mean Score on 100 Point Scale
100 = completely satisfied
Score range across practices:
Best = 96 Worst = 81

✓ Dermatologic Surgery	96
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford practice	95
✓ Pediatric Neurosurgery	95
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	94
✓ ENT	94
✓ Surgical Gastroenterology	94
✓ Ophthalmology	93
✓ Cardiology - Dana III practice	93
✓ Pediatric Allergy & Immunology	93
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - YNHH & Lawrence & Memorial practices	93

Overall Satisfaction with this Visit

Mean Score: 100 = completely satisfied
Score range across practices:
Best = 97 Worst = 82

✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford practice	97
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	96
✓ ENT	96
✓ Dermatologic Surgery	95
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - YNHH & Lawrence & Memorial practices	95
✓ Cardiology - Dana III practice	94
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Backus Hospital practice	94
✓ Vascular Surgery	94

Median Days Between Time Called and Actual Appointment

Score range across practices:
Best = 2 days Worst = 30 days

✓ Medical Oncology	2
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Lawrence & Memorial Hospital practice	2
✓ Ophthalmology	4
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - YNHH & Backus Hospital practices	4
✓ Yale Internal Medicine Associates (YIMA)	4
✓ Cardiology - Dana III practice	5
✓ Digestive Diseases	5
✓ Pediatric Surgery	5
✓ Perinatal Medicine	5
✓ Sports Medicine Center	5

When Called to Schedule Appointment, How Kind/Friendly Was the Receptionist Who Handled the Call

Mean Score on 100 Point Scale:
100 = Kind/friendly 0 = Unkind/Unfriendly
Score range across practices:
Best = 99 Worst = 71

✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Backus Hospital practice	99
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford practice	98
✓ Plastic Surgery	95
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - YNHH practice	94
✓ Cardiology - Dana III practice	93
✓ Gynecologic Oncology	93
✓ ENT	93
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Lawrence & Memorial Hospital practice	93

When You Checked in at the Office, Did the Receptionist Greet You Promptly?

Percent Who Said "Yes"
Score range across practices:
Best = 100% Worst = 82%

✓ ENT	100%
✓ Plastic Surgery	100%
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford	100%
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Lawrence & Memorial & Backus Hospital	100%
✓ Gynecologic Oncology	99%
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	98%
✓ Pediatric Endocrinology	98%
✓ Dermatologic Surgery	97%
✓ Endocrinology	97%
✓ Sports Medicine Center	97%
✓ Transplant	97%

How Well Doctor Listened to Concerns

Mean score: 100 = completely satisfied
Score range across practices:
Best = 96 Worst = 78

✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Fitkin practice	96
✓ Pediatric Neurosurgery	95
✓ Surgical Gastroenterology	95
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Lawrence & Memorial Hospital practice	94
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	93
✓ Ophthalmology	93
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford practice	93
✓ Surgical Oncology	93



Did You See the Doctor at the Scheduled Time?

Percent Said "Yes"

Score range across practices:
Best = 95% Worst = 51%

✓ Pediatric Neurosurgery	95%
✓ Plastic Surgery	91%
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford practice	88%
✓ Dermatologic Surgery	87%
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	85%

If You Were Not Seen at the Time of Your Appointment, Were You Informed of the Delay? Percent Said "Yes"

Score range across practices:
Best = 100% Worst = 6%

✓ Pediatric Neurosurgery	100%
✓ Dana III (all practices)	82%
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford practice	80%
✓ Pediatric Specialty Center (all)	72%
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	71%

After the Visit, If You Left a Message for Your Doctor or Nurse, Was the Call Returned the Same Day? Percent Said "Yes"

Score range across practices:
Best = 100% Worst = 46%

✓ Neurosurgery (all practices)	100%
✓ Pediatric Surgery	92%
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford	91%
✓ Plastic Surgery	88%
✓ Dermatologic Surgery	85%
✓ Reproductive Endocrinology	85%

How Kind & Courteous Nurse Was

Mean Score: 100 = completely satisfied
Score range across practices:
Best = 98 Worst = 82

✓ Dermatologic Surgery	98
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Branford practice	97
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Backus Hospital practice	97
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	96
✓ Digestive Diseases	96
✓ Gynecologic Oncology	96

Satisfaction with the Amount of Time Doctor Spent with You

Mean score: 100 = completely satisfied
Score range across practices:
Best = 95 Worst = 78

✓ Pediatric Neurosurgery	95
✓ Surgical Gastroenterology	94
✓ Cardiology - Branford	93
✓ Pediatric Allergy/Immunology	93
✓ Plastic Surgery	93
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Fitkin	93

How Well Doctor Explained Tests & Treatments

Mean score: 100 = completely satisfied
Score range across practices:
Best = 96 Worst = 79

✓ Surgical Gastroenterology	96
✓ Cardiology - Branford practice	95
✓ Dermatologic Surgery	95
✓ Therapeutic Radiology - Lawrence & Memorial Hospital	95
✓ Ophthalmology	93
✓ Pediatric Allergy & Immunology	93
✓ Pulmonary Medicine - Fitkin practice	93

What Has the Biggest Impact on Patient Satisfaction?

While all of the questions asked in the YFP patient survey were included because they represent important aspects of the visit, some variables have greater impact on overall satisfaction than others. Using satisfaction with airlines as an example, the price of a ticket does impact satisfaction, but not nearly as much as the skill of the pilots. In the 1999 survey, 45 questions were included. An analysis of returned surveys identified the following questions as the strongest indicators of overall satisfaction:

- Overall quality of medical care
- How well the doctor listened to concerns
- How well doctor explained tests and treatments
- Doctor's skills and abilities
- The amount of time doctor spent with you
- How well doctor explained care at home
- How kind and courteous doctor was
- How involved you were in making decisions about care
- Time waited to see the doctor once at office
- When checking out at the reception desk, how well coordinated was the scheduling of tests and treatments

WHAT OUR PATIENTS ARE TELLING US

Comments from patients complete the story of Yale's best practices. Here are comments from patients who participated in the 1999 satisfaction survey:

"Dr. Madeline Wilson, M.D. (Yale Internal Medicine Associates) is very kind. She always takes the time to answer my questions. If I don't understand something, she will explain it to me in a better way. She does not rush. She is a very special physician."

C. Bailey, East Haven, CT

"Dr. Marie Egan (Pediatric Respiratory Medicine) is an extraordinary physician. We were referred to her for treatment of our son's asthma. His asthma has been well controlled, but just as importantly, he views visits to see her as a real treat. We have given her our highest rating in referring other friends to her. We are both deeply grateful to her and view her as embodying much that is great about receiving medical care at a university hospital."

M. Sermjah and I. Petrakis, Branford, CT

WHAT IS BENCHMARKING?

Benchmarking includes measuring, assessing and comparing practices to one another to find the strongest performers. Once the "best practices" are identified, the entire practice organization can learn from them and assist other practices to achieve the same level of performance.

WHAT IS A BEST PRACTICE?

When it comes to clinical practice, the "best practices" are those that consistently perform at their best levels in meeting the needs of their patients and customers. These practices excel at continually refining how they practice and set the standard for others.