Announcements

Milbank Foundation Funds Supportive Care Navigator Program

Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital recently received a $1 million gift from the Milbank Foundation to support streamlined access to the supportive care services for patients and families across the Smilow Network. The Milbank Foundation Supportive Care Navigator Program will launch in late 2021 and create a single point of access to 14 of Smilow Cancer Hospital’s supportive care services. In addition, specially trained navigators will help to prioritize patient needs, refer to appropriate supportive care services, and be available to answer patient inquiries. Oversight of supportive care services will be streamlined under the direction of a program manager and with a shared data dashboard to track value and usage of the supportive care programs.

"With the generous support of the Milbank Foundation and Jerry Bogert, the Yale Palliative Care Program has developed key initiatives, including our bereavement program, the Yale hospice and palliative care fellowship, the York Street outpatient program interprofessional team, and our Smilow Care Center palliative care team," said Jennifer Kapo, MD, The Sherwin B. Nuland and Michael K. Vlock Associate Professor of Palliative Medicine and Chief of the Palliative Care Service. “We are deeply grateful for the generosity of the Foundation.”

The Milbank Foundation has made a transformational impact on the Smilow Cancer Hospital Palliative Care Program with more than $4 million in support since 2012. Yale Cancer Center board member, Jerry Bogert, is Chairman and Secretary of the Foundation. We are extremely grateful for the continued support of the Foundation, which has made a significant difference for our patients at Smilow Cancer Hospital and throughout the Smilow Cancer Hospital Network.

Dr. Kevin Du Appointed to Therapeutic Radiology

The Department of Therapeutic Radiology is pleased to announce that Kevin Du, MD, PhD, MSCI, will join the Smilow Radiation Oncology team in Trumbull in September. Dr. Du joins Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital from NYU School of Medicine.

from the desk of
Nita Ahuja, MD, MBA, FACS
Interim Director, Yale Cancer Center
Interim Physician-in-Chief, Smilow Cancer Hospital

News Center

Centerpoint Magazine: Spring | Summer 2021
Smilow Cancer Hospital from NYU Langone Health in NYC, where he is currently an Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology and Director of the Residency Program in Radiation Oncology.

Dr. Du received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in 2006, where he also received his PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology in 2003. More recently, he received a master’s degree in Clinical Investigation from the New York University School of Medicine and has led numerous clinical trials at NYU. His research interests include medical education and gastrointestinal malignancies.

Notables

Joseph W. Kim, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine (Medical Oncology) at Yale Cancer Center, has received a 2021 Cancer Clinical Investigator Team Leadership Award (CCITLA) from the National Cancer Institute. The award recognizes and supports outstanding mid-career clinical investigators at NCI-designated cancer centers who are working to improve the lives of people with cancer through NCI-funded collaborative clinical trials and whose leadership, participation, and activities promote clinical trials and research. Kim is one of ten recipients of the CCITLA for 2021. Learn More

Qin Yan, PhD, Associate Professor of Pathology, Director of the Epigenetics Program, and a member of Yale Cancer Center’s Genomics, Genetics, and Epigenetics Research Program, has received a Breakthrough Award from the Department of Defense to fund his research on “Targeting a Bromodomain Protein CECR2 in Breast Cancer.” The award funds $1.67 million of research over three years.

The Harrington Discovery Institute has named Joseph Contessa, MD, PhD, Professor of Therapeutic Radiology and Pharmacology and Co-Leader of Yale Cancer Center’s Radiotherapy and Radiobiology Research Program, one of eight Harrington Scholar-Innovators for 2021. Harrington Scholar-Innovators are accomplished physician-scientists whose research demonstrates innovation, creativity, and potential for clinical impact. Dr. Contessa will use his research funding to continue studies on targets and therapies for lung cancer.

Congratulations to Scott Huntington, MD, MPH, MSc, and Natalia Neparidze, MD, on their recent promotions to Associate Professor of Medicine (Hematology). Drs. Huntington and Neparidze’s leadership, mentorship, and excellence in academic medicine, research, and patient care are valued within the Section of Hematology, Yale Cancer Center, and beyond, and we are excited to celebrate their promotions!

Please join the Smilow Stars team from our Smilow Cancer Hospital Care Read More

Wednesday’s Warrior: Tom the Pianist Routinely Visits Smilow Cancer Hospital to Perform for Patients

Studying Cancer Patients Who Received COVID-19 Vaccines

Yale Cancer Center and Smilow Cancer Hospital Remind You to Schedule Cancer Screenings
Join the Smilow Stars team from our Smilow Cancer Hospital Care Center in Trumbull at this year’s “Step Out for the Brave” event, Homes for the Brave’s signature event to support homeless Veterans. Between Saturday, August 7th and Sunday, August 15th, Step Out for the Brave is asking participants to take a 40,000 Step Challenge for each of the 40,000 homeless Veterans across the United States. Learn More

Louis Chênevert, Chairman of the Yale Cancer Center Director's Advisory Board (pictured right), stopped by Smilow Cancer Hospital and Yale Cancer Center last week for a visit, and took a moment to catch up with Daniel DiMaio, MD, PhD, Deputy Director of Yale Cancer Center, Waldemar Von Zedtwitz Professor of Genetics, and Professor of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry and of Therapeutic Radiology. We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of the Chênevert Family, and their recent support of the Chênevert Family Brain Tumor Center!

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As the National Cancer Institute moves to understand the persistent underrepresentation of Black and Latinx scientists, metrics reflecting whether there is bias in scientific review are key. The NCI Equity and Inclusion Program has now reported a striking underrepresentation of Black and Latinx R01 applicants, and troubling differences in success rates at review. To address these concerns, the Program has set both short- and long-term goals, beginning with the immediate issue of two requests for information to seek stakeholder input on how to enhance cancer disparities research and to increase diversity and inclusion in the cancer research workforce. In addition, planning is underway for a summit on “Increasing Inclusion and Health Equity in Cancer Clinical Research and Clinical Trials,” NCI Intramural Trainee Awards specific to Cancer Disparities and Minorities will be issued, and a new program focused on Connecting Underrepresented Minorities in Clinical Trials will launch. Learn More

Colorectal Cancer and Women

Meet Allison, Osteosarcoma Survivor and participant in the HEROS Clinic at Smilow Cancer Hospital. At age 13, Allison was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a type of bone cancer common in children and teens. As an eighth grader, it was tough to be away from her classmates during her treatments, but she never felt alone thanks to the support of her family, friends, and her care team. With home-tutoring, Allison was able to graduate on-time, with her class, as a survivor of cancer. In the years following, Allison became involved with the HEROS (Health, Education, Research & Outcomes for Survivors of Childhood Cancer) Clinic, which helps to bridge the gap between living as a child with cancer and living as an adult cancer survivor.

“All cancer is such an intense experience and your caregivers are constantly checking up on you and monitoring you. Once that constant care is over, you feel alone and aimless. The HEROS Clinic helped ease me...”
Employee Profile: Conni Smith, LCSW

Supporting her team of social workers so they can support their patients is the leadership approach taken by Constance “Conni” Smith, LCSW, Social Work Manager, Oncology, at Smilow Cancer Hospital. Conni oversees all social work services at Smilow, including at 10 of our Smilow Cancer Hospital Care Center sites across the state.

Advocacy has been a lifelong passion for Conni, who initially studied pre-law in college. She has always been compelled to help people and make sure they are treated well. She eventually shifted career paths to clinical social work, where she has utilized her voice and heart to be an advocate for patient care and empowerment.

She explains, “Clinical social workers use clinical knowledge and skills to respond to patients’ anxiety, depression, and psychosocial concerns relating to their cancer diagnosis. Patients are often scared and need to process their thoughts and emotions. Supporting their emotional needs empowers them towards knowledge and self-determination about their disease or treatment.”

When Conni first came to Yale New Haven Hospital in 2012 from Bridgeport Hospital, she was a social worker in the newborn intensive care unit. Three years later she transitioned to oncology, and worked with patients with benign hematologic conditions and sickle cell disease, but also supporting various areas of oncology.

“Clinical social work supports holistic patient care, where patients—and sometimes even staff—are cared for medically and emotionally,” Conni explains. “We come together around the patient.”

Recent Publications


With no female professors or women running labs around her in the 1960s, Dr. Joan Steitz initially never thought to aspire for such a role herself. Even her first choice for doctoral advisor turned her away, stating that, as a woman, she would just get married and have a family. Despite this, she went on to head her own lab at Yale University in 1970, just one year after the school first accepted female undergraduates, and became a pioneer in the field of RNA biology.

Dr. Steitz's lab has made fundamental discoveries about the roles of non-coding RNAs in many areas of biology, including cancer. She's obtained many prestigious awards, including the National Medal of Science as well as a 2018 Lasker Award for her research and mentorship and support of women in science. As a mentor, Dr. Steitz has tirelessly campaigned for inclusive practices within the scientific community and research workforce, speaking out about biases that harmfully affect women and minorities in science.

As part of our year-long commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the National Cancer Act, follow the National Cancer Institute's Spotlight series and learn about leaders in cancer research who are working to end cancer as we know it.
Effect of Healthy Diet and Exercise on Chemotherapy Completion Rate in Women with Breast Cancer: The Lifestyle, Exercise and Nutrition Early After Diagnosis (LEANer) Study: Study Protocol For a Randomized Clinical Trial.

Contemporary Clinical Trials, Online ahead of print.
Read More

Considine B, Adeniran A, Hurwitz ME.
Current Understanding and Management of Intraductal Carcinoma of the Prostate
Current Oncology Reports, 23(9):110.
Read More

Mazzone PJ, Silvestri GA, Souter LH, Caverly TJ, Kanne JP, Katki HA, Wiener RS, Detterbeck FC.
Chest, S0012-3692(21)01304-0, Online ahead of print.
Read More

Mazzone PJ, Silvestri GA, Souter LH, Caverly TJ, Kanne JP, Katki HA, Wiener RS, Detterbeck FC.
Chest, S0012-3692(21)01307-6, Online ahead of print.
Read More

Justice, A.
Alcohol and The Global Burden of Cancer: What Are We Missing?
Lancet Oncology, S1470-2045(21)00329-6, Online ahead of print.
Read More

Percutaneous Cryoablation Provides Disease Control for Extra-Abdominal Desmoid-Type Fibromatosis Comparable with Surgical Resection.
Annals of Surgical Oncology, Online ahead of print.
Read More

Chagpar AB, Berger E, Alperovich M, Zanieski G, Avraham T, Lannin DR.
Assessing Interobserver Variability of Cosmetic Outcome Assessment in Breast Cancer Patients Undergoing Breast-Conservation Surgery.
Annals of Surgical Oncology, Online ahead of print.
Read More

Burtness B.
A commentary on: Camrelizumab Versus Placebo in Combination With Gemcitabine and Cisplatin as First-Line Treatment for Recurrent or Metastatic Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma (CAPTAIN-1st): A Multicentre, Randomised, Double-Blind, Phase 3 Trial.
at:
Read More

Saggi S, Carmen GD, Chen YW, Udelsman BV, Goldstone RN, Chang DC
The Paradoxical Protective Effect of Immigration on Colorectal Cancer Survivals.
*Journal of Surgical Research*, Online ahead of print.

Read More

Kho RM, Desai VB, Schwartz PE, Wright JD, Gross CP, Hutchison LM, Boscoe FP, Lin H, Xu X.

**Endometrial Sampling for Preoperative Diagnosis of Uterine Leiomyosarcoma.**

Read More


**Updated Overall Survival Analysis From IMpower110: Atezolizumab versus Platinum-Based Chemotherapy in Treatment-Naive PD-L1-Selected Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer.**
*Journal of Thoracic Oncology*, S1556-0864(21)02286-3, Online ahead of print.

Read More


**Nivolumab Plus Ipilimumab vs Nivolumab for Previously Treated Patients With Stage IV Squamous Cell Lung Cancer: The Lung-MAP S1400I Phase 3 Randomized Clinical Trial.**
*JAMA Oncology*, Online ahead of print.

Read More


**The Role and Impact of Social Media in Cardio-oncology During the COVID-19 Pandemic.**
*Current Oncology Reports*, 23(8):99.

Read More

Hosier H, Sheth SS, Oliveira CR, Perley LE, Vash-Margita A.

**Unindicated Cervical Cancer Screening in Adolescent Females within a Large Healthcare System in the United States.**

Read More


**Oncology Medical Home: ASCO and COA Standards.**
*JCO Oncology Practice*, Online ahead of print.

Read More

Diab A, Tykodi SS, Daniels GA, Maio M, Curti BD, Lewis KD, Jano S, Kalinka T.

**“Dr. Lannin’s integrity and thoughtfulness have anchored our program through many changes,” said Chief of Breast Surgery, Rachel Greenup, MD, MPH, who assumed the leadership position earlier this year. “This legacy of kindness across patient-centered clinical care and research will guide Yale Breast Surgery for years to come.”**

Read More

Congratulations to Jun Deng, PhD, Professor of Therapeutic Radiology! Dr. Deng has been named a Fellow of ASTRO (FASTRO) in recognition of his significant service to ASTRO and his contributions to the field of radiation oncology. He will be honored at the 2021 ASTRO Awards Ceremony to be held at ASTRO’s 63rd Annual Meeting on October 26, 2021.

Read More

Sound Healing Meditation is a full-body listening experience and guided meditation that uses sound to invite gentle yet powerful therapeutic and restorative processes. Roberta Brown, RN, Integrative Medicine and Healing Touch Coordinator at Greenwich Hospital guides you through a session.

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Kotecha R, Aneja S. Opportunities for Integration of Artificial Intelligence into Stereotactic Radiosurgery Practice. Neuro-Oncology, Online ahead of print.

Read More


Read More

Funding and Award Opportunities

Yale SPORE in Skin Cancer Awards
Developmental Research Program: Support a broad spectrum of innovative pilot projects applicable to human skin cancer risk, prevention, diagnosis, prognosis, or treatment.
Career Enhancement Program: Support new investigative cutaneous oncologists and other scientists committed to multidisciplinary studies investigating the relevance of biological discoveries in human skin cancer.

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"Oncologists should weigh the risks & benefits of moving forward with an available PD-1 inhibitor in combination with chemotherapy." —@BarbaraBurtness reviewing recent trial data for #headandneckcancer in @practiceupdate.

“Patients have to make a decision between, ‘do I go and earn a living or do I comply by these guidelines that were set without maybe consideration of all facets of society?’”

Register now to listen to Dr. Cecelia Calhoun @cececalhounMD at 12:30pm today discuss with a panel of experts Health Care Resilience & Sustainability relating to #COVID19.

New research in the journal #GeneticEpidemiology led by Dr.
investigating the relevance of biological discoveries in human skin cancer risk, prevention, diagnosis, prognosis or treatment, and enhance the careers of individuals who are already productively investigating this field.

Application Deadline: July 26, 2021 Please email David F. Stern df.stern@yale.edu with questions about DRP and CEP awards.

Robert E. Leet and Clara Guthrie Patterson Trust Mentored Research Award in Clinical, Health Services and Policy Research and the William O. Seery Clinical Investigator Award

The primary goal of the Program is to support research that focuses on the causes of human disease and/or improving treatment. To achieve this goal the Patterson Trust supports mentored clinical investigators in the early stages of their research careers to promote the pursuit of academic research careers as successful independent investigators.

Application Deadline: July 27, 2021

Launching Future Leaders in Global Health (LAUNCH) Research Training Program (D43)

The purpose of this program is to provide opportunities for up to six consortia to develop or expand global health research training programs

Application Deadline: August 20, 2021

AACR Clinical Oncology Research (CORE) Training Fellowships

This grant program pertains to the following fellowships: AACR-AstraZeneca Clinical Immuno-oncology Research Training Fellowships and AACR-Bayer Clinical Oncology Research Training Fellowships and is designed to provide an effective industry-academic clinical practicum with a unique training opportunity to develop academic clinicians in drug development.

Application Deadline: August 31, 2021

Yale Cancer Center 2022 Team Challenge Award

An internal grant program focused on advancing the work of teams who seek to address a fundamental research priority that aligns and/or has the potential to successfully extend YCC strategic goals.

Letter of Intent Due: September 1, 2021

Hope Foundation for Cancer Research 2021 SWOG Coltman Fellowship Program Request for Applications A Career Development Program for Early Career Investigators

The primary purpose of the Fellowship is to engage outstanding early-career investigators from SWOG-affiliated institutions in learning clinical trial methodology within an academic and network group environment that will lead to independent clinical research

Application Deadline: September 1, 2021

Early Detection Research Network FOAs

The mission of the EDRN is to discover, develop and validate biomarkers and imaging methods to detect early-stage cancers and to assess risk for developing cancer, and to translate these biomarkers and imaging methods into clinical tests. There are three specific units with EDRN:

#GeneticEpidemiology led by Dr. Shuangge Ma shows an assisted differential network analysis for gene expression data.

New research led by Dr. Shi-Yi Wang in @SciReports analyzes lead-time bias in evaluating the effectiveness of #lungcancer screening with real-world data.

Congratulations to .@Joseph_W_Kim recipient of a prestigious @theNCI 2021 Cancer Clinical Investigator Team Leadership Award in recognition of his work to improve #cancer patients lives through collaborative clinical trials.

Congratulations to Dr. Xavier Llor appointed Vice-Chair for the @NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in #Oncology for #colorectalcancer screening. Dr. Llor also serves on the High-Risk Hereditary Colorectal Cancer Guidelines Panel for NCCN.

"It [chemoimmunotherapy] really does show that seems to be the preferred way to go, when feasible."—Dr. Sarah Goldberg in @practiceupdate comparing the effectiveness of chemoimmunotherapy vs. immunotherapy for advanced #NSCLC.

Calendar

Yale Cancer Answers
July 25; 7:30 PM
NPR
Sickle Cell Disease and Cancer in Pediatric Patients
Farzana Pashankar, MD, MRC
Learn More

Yale Cancer Center Seminar
July 26; 11:00 AM
Targeting RNA Binding Proteins in Cancer
Sydney X. Lu, MD
Learn More

Center for GI Cancers Weekly Seminar
July 29; 4:15 PM
Cathy Eng, M.D., FACP, FASCO
Learn More
into clinical tests. There are three specific units with EDRN:
- Clinical Validation Centers (U01)
- Data Management and Coordinating Center (U24)
- Biomarker Characterization Centers (U2C)

**Application Deadlines: September 9, 2021**

**DoD Kidney Cancer Research Program**
The FY21 Defense Appropriations Act provides funding to the Department of Defense Kidney Cancer Research Program (KCRP) to support research of exceptional scientific merit in the area of kidney cancer.
- **Academy of Kidney Cancer Investigators – Early-Career Investigator Award: Letter of Intent Due:** September 14, 2021
- **Clinical Trial Award – Letter of Intent Due:** September 14, 2021
- **Clinical Research Nurse Development Award – Letter of Intent Due:** September 14, 2021

**Cancer Research Institute Irvington Postdoctoral Fellowship Program**
Supports qualified young scientists at leading universities and research centers around the world who wish to receive training in fundamental immunology or cancer immunology. Proposals should include studies that directly impact our understanding of the immune system’s role in cancer.

**Application Deadline: October 1, 2021**

**Technology Development for Single-Molecule Protein Sequencing (R01)**
This FOA solicits grant applications to catalyze major advances in single-molecule protein sequencing and single cell proteome analysis through technology development. The goal of this initiative is to achieve technological advances over the next five years that enable generation of protein sequencing data at sufficient scale, speed, cost and accuracy to use routinely in studies of genome biology and function, and in biomedical and clinical research in general.

**Application Deadline: October 1, 2021**

**The Role of Work in Health Disparities in the U.S. (R01)**
The purpose of this FOA is to support innovative population-based research that can contribute to identifying and characterizing pathways and mechanisms through which work or occupation influences health outcomes and health status among populations with health and/or health care disparities, and how work functions as a social determinant of health.

**Application Deadline: October 05, 2021**

**Cancer Target Discovery and Development (CTD2) (U01)**
Through this FOA, the NCI will support the program Cancer Target Discovery and Development. CTD2 is focused on efforts that advance cancer research by bridging the knowledge gap between the large volumes of comprehensive molecular characterizations of many cancer types and studies of the underlying etiology of cancer development, progression, and/or metastasis.

**Application Deadline: October 6, 2021**

**Metabolic Dysregulation and Cancer Risk Program, Research Grants: a Transdisciplinary Approach to Obesity-Associated Research (U01)**
Transdisciplinary Approach to Obesity-Associated Research (U01)
The NCI invites research grant applications for transdisciplinary studies that will enhance our knowledge of the dynamics and underlying mechanisms that link obesity, metabolic dysregulation and increased cancer risk as part of the Metabolic Dysregulation and Cancer Risk Program. Through this FOA, the Metabolic Dysregulation and Cancer Risk Program will focus on metabolic dysregulation as the key process linking obesity with cancer risk.

Application Deadline: October 6, 2021
Read More

Coordinating Center for the Metabolic Dysregulation and Cancer Risk Program: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Obesity-Associated Cancer Research (U24)
Through this FOA, the NCI will support a Coordinating Center to facilitate coordination across the consortium of multiple individual research project grants for the Metabolic Dysregulation and Cancer Risk Program whose overarching goal is to enhance our knowledge of the dynamics, and underlying mechanisms, that link obesity, metabolic dysregulation, and increased cancer risk.

Application Deadline: October 6, 2021
Read More

Cancer Prevention-Interception Targeted Agent Discovery Program (CAP-IT) Centers (U54)
The purpose of this FOA is to solicite applications for Cancer Prevention-Interception Targeted Agent Discovery Program (CAP-IT) Centers (U54). The overall goal of the CAP-IT Program is to establish an agile and effective network infrastructure to undertake collaborative research focusing on precision cancer prevention and interception, with the overarching goal of discovering molecularly or immunologically targeted agents designed to prevent or intercept the oncogenic process in higher-risk populations.

Application Deadline: October 7, 2021
Read More

Cancer Prevention-Interception Targeted Agent Discovery Program (CAP-IT) Data and Resource Coordination Center (CAP-IT DRCC) (U24)
The purpose of this FOA is to solicit Applications for the Cancer Prevention-Interception Targeted Agent Discovery Program (CAP-IT) Data and Resource Coordination Center (CAP-IT DRCC) (U24). The overall goal of this FOA and the companion FOA (U54 CAP-IT Specialized Centers, RFA-CA-21-038) is to establish an agile and effective network infrastructure to undertake collaborative research focusing on precision cancer prevention and interception, with the overarching goal of discovering molecularly or immunologically targeted agents designed to prevent or intercept the oncogenic process in higher-risk populations.

Application Deadline: October 7, 2021
Read More

Program on the Origins of Gastroesophageal Cancers (R01)
This FOA is to request applications for the Program on the Origins of Gastroesophageal Cancers (R01). This new program will build on recent molecular classifications of gastroesophageal cancers, significant understanding of their cancer genomics, and advances in stem cell research to examine and define how these related cancers initially evolve at the cellular level.

Application Deadline: October 8, 2021
Coordinating Center for the Program on the Origins of Gastroesophageal Cancers (U24)

This FOA is to request applications for the Coordinating Center, Program on the Origins of Gastroesophageal Cancers (U24). This new program will build on recent molecular classifications of gastroesophageal cancers, significant understanding of their cancer genomics, and advances in stem cell research to examine and define how these related cancers initially evolve at the cellular level.

Application Deadline: October 8, 2021

Radiation Oncology-Biology Integration Network (ROBIN) Centers (U54)

The purpose of this FOA is to solicit applications for U54 Research Centers to form the Radiation Oncology-Biology Integration Network (ROBIN). The cadre of ROBIN Centers created through this FOA will establish an agile and effective national radiation oncology network infrastructure that collectively address critical hypothesis-based translational research knowledge gaps on the biological basis of responses in cancer patients who undergo radiation treatments.

Application Deadline: November 1, 2021