

Yale Practice

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FOLLO TO LEAD PRIVACY EFFORT



Marie Follo has been appointed the first Deputy Privacy Officer for the Yale School of Medicine. In this role, Follo will be responsible for overseeing

those activities related to the development, implementation, maintenance and adherence to the University's policies and procedures covering protected health information (PHI) as defined by HIPAA. Also, she will oversee the management of medical records for the School.

Previously a Clinical Practice Manager in Internal Medicine, Follo brings 15 years clinical and operations experience, strong knowledge of the organization, and excellent execution skills. Follo said: "I am excited to be working with the departmental HIPAA representatives and providing them with the support they need."

Follo reports jointly to **Janine Evans, MD**, Associate Director of Clinical Affairs, YMG and **Susan Bouregy, PhD**, Chief Privacy Officer, Yale University. Evans commented: "As Medical Records Director, Follo will be responsible for directing the activities related to the development of the School's decentralized medical record policies and procedures. Her previous experience and knowledge of workflow for intake and discharge procedures that impact billing and medical records are valuable assets." Bouregy added: "Follo is already an excellent resource of organizational knowledge and has played key roles in strategic initiatives, including IDX and HIPAA implementations. Most recently she participated as a departmental HIPAA Specialist to streamline related policy and procedures."

Please join us in adding your congratulations to Marie Follo at 737-6085 or marie.follo@yale.edu.

PATHOLOGY REAPS MARKET SHARE THROUGH OUTREACH

In the mid-1990s **Jon Morrow, MD, PhD**, Professor and Chair of Pathology, and **José Costa, MD**, Professor and Vice-Chair, recognized the need to increase discretionary income to support the Department's many missions and to sustain the specialty-oriented practice required of a tertiary medical center. One avenue to achieving this goal has been marketing and clinical outreach. They recognized that successful marketing of pathology services required a clear understanding of service issues and customer needs; this knowledge led them to develop a more market-driven practice and to grow their outreach venture. Morrow said: "When you provide solutions to problems, you become a business partner. When the choice was to cut costs or add value for our customers, the long-term strategy had to be to add value while remaining cost-effective. We had to build strong submitting physician and office staff relationships."

Yale Pathology Labs
2004 Calendar of Diagnostic Programs



Yale Pathology Labs

According to Morrow, the core of service marketing is the service itself. Discussions with faculty and staff continually re-shape the pathology service. The integration of customer feedback into operational discussions reinforces that quality-

over, please

FINALLY: SECURE PATIENT MESSAGING



YMG piloted a new, electronic secure patient communication system in four departments. YalePatientOnline.org integrates with the IDX database to provide secure physician/patient communication in

compliance with HIPAA regulations. It allows providers and patients to manage health care communications at their convenience, such as requesting prescription renewals, scheduling and changing appointments, updating their personal information, changing insurance information and verifying whether insurance referrals are current. It is expected this will significantly reduce the number of incoming and outgoing phone calls, lessen the number of "no show" appointments, increase patient satisfaction and improve patient care. The convenience will translate into practice efficiency.

Faculty should contact laura.smith@yale.edu or katrina.osorio@yale.edu to enroll.

FOUR DEPARTMENTS ACHIEVE ZERO TOLERANCE, CASH UP

In February 2002 YMG renewed an initiative to reduce the number of missing charges for visits scheduled in the IDX practice management system. As of July 30, 2002, there were 2,418 missing charges, representing 1.0% of total visits. A year later, comparing the same period measured at the same point in time in the year, missing charges were 1,532 representing 0.6% of total visits. "This 40% decrease in the percent of total visits reflects a conscientious effort by members of the clinical team to focus on this problem area. It's very exciting to see four departments successfully reach and sustain the goal of zero percent," commented **Laura Smith**, YMG Programmer Analyst and IDX Scheduling Supervisor.

Smith suggests further reductions may be achieved by focusing on the following:

- Reduce the number of pending visits. Arrive and no-show patients at the time of service to clearly identify those visits that require charges.
- Reduce the lag time between date of the visit and date charges are entered.
- Utilize and work the Missing Charge List on a routine basis.

Zero % Goal Met *	Most Improved *
Internal Medicine	Surgery 85%
Therapeutic Radiology	Ob/Gyn 73%
Orthopaedics	Pediatrics 50%
Dermatology	

*Ranked by visit volume. Source: IDX as of 7/31/2003.

PATHOLOGY REAPS MARKET SHARE (Continued)

improvement needs are opportunities to be explored as a team. Two key members of this team are **Deborah Blood**, Associate Administrator, responsible for marketing and quality improvement, and **Courtney Trotta**, Sales Coordinator. "You have to show you are willing to act on the feedback," explained Blood. "It's how you put meaning to partnering and how faculty and staff become aware of the impact of their function and understand their role as it relates to the overall strategy. It comes down to understanding all of the players, empathizing with what they have to do and trying to make their lives easier."

Outreach billings have multiplied by a factor of 15 since 1994, with Pathology's client base now extending from Stamford to Middletown and Norwich. Sustained growth is attributed to:

- new technology that moves tests from the lab bench to the bedside (a strong differentiator from the competition)
- development of partner relationships with submitting MDs to help retain and grow their medical practice. This includes accurate and timely diagnoses, value-added reports to help with patient management, a strong customer service program emphasizing the personal touch, CME programs, and more
- customer-oriented faculty and staff who understand the clients and how quality improvement translates into opportunities for new services/new revenue
- listening to the customer and sharing field information with all staff
- making a practice of studying the

competition and using market data

It is the goal of Pathology's new Clinical Administrator, **Lauren Hackett**, to further enhance the service, and to utilize modern information technology to facilitate specimen submission, order entry, tracking and report delivery.

Today, 7,000 submitting MDs and other important groups, such as medical directors of insurance companies, receive an annual calendar created by the faculty. Blood and Trotta make personal visits to clients on a regular basis throughout the year, often accompanied by lab managers and faculty to answer specific clinical concerns. For more information you may contact Deb Blood at deborah.blood@yale.edu or 785-6848, or visit the department's web site at www.yalepath.org.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE HITS ALL TIME LOW

Accounts receivable (A/R) is a measure of how quickly your bill for services is collected. In health care, the longer a bill is outstanding, the less likely it is that the bill will be paid. Low A/R is also an efficiency measure of the billing operation.

Average days in accounts receivable for December 2003 was 44.7. This is the lowest ever for YMG and one of the lowest across all academic peer organizations.

Congratulations to everyone!!

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