



The Brooklyn  
Hospital Center  
*Keeping Brooklyn Healthy*

# CMO

# UPDATE

A PUBLICATION FOR TBHC PHYSICIANS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

AUTUMN 2023

## From the Chief Medical Officer

## QUALITY WINS & AN INTRODUCTION TO A FAMILIAR FACE



Sam Amifar, MD, MS

I was going to center my inaugural newsletter message with a thank you to all my colleagues, clinical and non-clinical for being so supportive as I move into this new role (as well as retain my role as Chief Information Officer). It is truly an honor to represent our physicians, both at

the hospital level and in the community. But before I launch into what my goals are, I need to first acknowledge some really big quality “wins.”

### Recent recognitions

The Brooklyn Hospital Center has been named a **Best Regional Hospital** by **U.S. News & World Report** in its 2023-2024 “Best Hospitals” rankings. The rankings assist patients and doctors in choosing a hospital.

*U.S. News* evaluated more than 4,500 hospitals across 15 specialties and 21 procedures and conditions; only 12% of evaluated hospitals earned a Best Hospitals ranking. Hospitals awarded a “Best” designation excelled at factors such as outcomes, nursing care and patient experience.

Additionally, TBHC was acknowledged as high-performing in its treatment of COPD (congestive obstructive pulmonary disease), diabetes, heart attack, heart failure, hip fracture, kidney failure and stroke.

In addition, this July, TBHD received an **“A” grade for social responsibility from the Lown Institute**, a Massachusetts healthcare think tank. TBHC was the only Brooklyn hospital to receive this grade and only one of 39 hospitals in all of New York State.



What is notable about this grade is that it is measured according to 50 different metrics including equity, outcomes, community benefits, inclusivity, cost efficiency, and patient safety and satisfaction. The information in obtaining this grade was not provided by TBHC but rather gathered from public sources.

And finally, we also saw **significant improvement in our CMS ratings** with the addition of a star. A big factor has been the improvement of patient satisfaction scores (Healthfirst also recognized a measurable increase in patient satisfaction). For this progress, I want to thank Chief Quality and Patient Experience Officer, Lenny Gorelik who has worked hard with the Quality team, and Judy McLaughlin, Chief Nurse Officer, and her team.

### Ease of appointment making

Many physicians and their staff want to help patients make appointments. This is easy.

- Going to MyChart ([tbh.org/mychartopenscheduling](https://tbh.org/mychartopenscheduling)). If your patient is not signed up for MyChart, now is the time to encourage them to do so!
- Calling 1.888.TBHC.NOW (1.888.824.2669).
- These options are easily by going to our home page

at [tbh.org](https://tbh.org), which is really easy to remember!

For TBHC staff physicians (and all staff), you can directly call 718.260.2749 or email [appointments@tbh.org](mailto:appointments@tbh.org).

### Building connections

I intend to focus on building our interconnectedness with each other and with community physicians. We'll be trying new ways to improve communication, better share info and get the right info to the right person at the right time. When we work as a fine-tuned collaborative team, it is safer for our patients, more effective and less costly.

To that end, in 2024, we plan to work on an app that will facilitate communication between community providers and the main hospital. I am very excited for this project and think it will be an important step forward.

### Reach out to me!

Please feel free to reach out to me with your comments, suggestions, news. You can call x6733 or 917.310.0349. You can also email me at [sam@tbh.org](mailto:sam@tbh.org).

Thank you again for being so supportive. It is an honor to represent you both at the hospital and in the community.

## New Covid-19 Vaccine Approved

The FDA and CDC have approved the 2023-2024 version of the COVID-19 vaccine. Here are a few key points to know:

- Everyone 6 months and up is eligible for this shot, regardless of their previous vaccination history.
- This is NOT being called a booster. It is now considered the 2023-2024 vaccine, similar to how we refer to the seasonal flu vaccines.
- For those 5 years and up, the vaccine is a single dose, whether the child has gotten COVID vaccines in the past or not.
- For children 6 months through 4 years, it is a three-dose series. Previous shots count towards the three dose count.
- Those 65 years and up will be eligible for an additional "booster" of the vaccine FOUR months after receiving the 2023-2024 vaccine.
- Those deemed moderately to severely immunocompromised by their provider may also be eligible for a "booster" of the 2023-2024 vaccine TWO months after receiving the 2023-2024 vaccine (patients on

chemotherapy or other immunosuppressive medications, HIV patients with significant viral loads).

- This COVID shot can be given along with flu and RSV vaccines. Keep in mind that the best protection is likely to last about 4 months with the COVID vaccine and about 6 months with the influenza vaccine. Flu season has been starting and ending later than in past years (December to June). Thus, timing the autumn vaccines together may make sense in November for the best defense against the flu, but one may want to get their 2023-2024 COVID vaccine sooner. If patients are hesitant, or unlikely to come back for a second vaccine, it may make sense to include the flu vaccine at the same time. RSV vaccines will be available soon for those over 60 years of age.
- All insurance plans cover the vaccine and administration charge without a copay.

TBHC's Vaccine Center has the new COVID-19 vaccine in stock for all ages. Appointments can be scheduled through the [tbh.org website](https://tbh.org).

# Brooklyn Imaging: Another Referral Choice for Radiology

Our partnership with New York Cancer & Blood Specialists (NYCBS) has opened up new avenues for seamless collaboration and enhanced patient care. One of the key benefits of this partnership is the expanded access our patients have to diagnostic services that complement and reinforce our existing capabilities.

At TBHC's Radiology Department, your patients can find an array of advanced imaging services, including CT and MRI, general ultrasound, digital mammography and breast ultrasound, minimally invasive breast biopsies (stereotactic, MRI-guided and ultrasound-guided), as well as variety of interventional procedures such as port placement, biopsies and embolizations.

Our Radiology Department offers convenient on-site appointments, including walk-in X-ray, DEXA, screening mammography and general ultrasound imaging, as well as same-day CT appointments. Providers have direct access to our board certified radiologists for consultations and critical results reporting.

Brooklyn Imaging, located at 172 Myrtle Avenue, is a state-of-the-art facility with cutting-edge technology, including PET/CT, CT and MRI, which complement services offered by our Radiology Department. PET/CT and 3T MRI are particularly invaluable additions for cancer extent evaluation and prostate imaging respectively.

Brooklyn Imaging offers free parking, several public transportation options, same-day appointments, and walk-in availabilities to make access as convenient as

possible. Additionally, it provides you, the provider, with STAT exams in less than one hour with a call and a fast turnaround time for reports, averaging less than eight hours.

While some patients will appreciate the brand-new "boutique" experience at Brooklyn Imaging, others might find TBHC Radiology Department more convenient, as it is right on-site at the hospital.

Whichever the choice, the values and commitment to patient care demonstrated by Brooklyn Imaging closely align with our high standards of excellence. By streamlining the referral process, we aim to expedite appointments and facilitate a seamless patient care experience. **Independent of what site you choose for your patients, there is no reason to refer outside of TBHC or this partnership.**

In Epic, use the following steps: The new location is called "Brooklyn Imaging." This application workflow allows providers to place orders to this Ancillary Radiology location. The results will be imported into Epic and sent to the provider InBasket for result review. Orders that are available for ordering have a defaulted order class of "Brooklyn Imaging" for easy location as seen in the screen image below.

For more information, regarding TBHC's Department of Radiology: 718.250.6304, [tbh.org/BrooklynRadiology](http://tbh.org/BrooklynRadiology).

For more information, regarding Brooklyn Imaging: 718.696.0635, [BrooklynImaging.com](http://BrooklynImaging.com).

The screenshot shows a software interface for creating a referral. At the top, the title is "PET CT Gallium 68 PSMA-11" with "Accept" and "Cancel" buttons. Below the title, there are several fields and buttons:

- Status: Normal (selected), Standing, Future
- Priority: Routine (selected), STAT
- Class: Brooklyn Imaging (selected and highlighted with a red box), Third Party
- Ordering Physician: [Empty field]
- Pager #: [Empty field]
- Reason for exam: [Empty text box]
- Is the patient pregnant?: Yes, No, Unknown (Yes is selected)

On the right side of the interface, there are several "Medical History" buttons with upward arrows.

# Pharmacy Offerings: More Options Than Ever Before!



TBHC offers full pharmacy service to our patients and employees, including both 340B pricing with prescription and over-the-counter medications. We have two locations and a new collaboration with Clearwater Health to provide specialty pharmaceuticals. Here's a closer look:

## Downtown Pharmacy

### The Brooklyn Cancer Center

86 Fleet Place (courtyard entrance on Myrtle Ave.)

**718.250.RX98 (7998)**

**Hours:** Monday to Friday: 8 am to 4 pm

**Delivery:** Next-day home delivery service between 9 am to 1 pm or 1 pm to 5 pm

#### Services

- Access to pharmacy specialists with expertise in anti-cancer medications
- Fill and refill all your prescriptions
- Access non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications
- Quick and easy transfer from your current pharmacy
- Free home delivery in New York City (all five boroughs), Long Island, New Jersey and Connecticut
- Medication therapy management
- Comprehensive review of all medications
- Smoking cessation service
- Anticoagulation service
- Nutritional supplements
- New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) screening
- Notary Public

## The Pharmacy at The Brooklyn Hospital Center

### 121 DeKalb Avenue

(1st floor mezzanine, above main lobby)

**718.250.RX00 (7900)**

**Hours:** Monday through Friday: 9:30 am to 5:30 pm  
Saturday: 10 am to 3 pm

#### Services

- Fill and refill all your prescriptions
- Free home delivery in New York City (all five boroughs), Long Island, New Jersey and Connecticut
- Quick, easy transfer from your current pharmacy
- Private, one-on-one counseling
- Convenient bedside delivery and medication counseling (Meds to Beds)
- Free medication flavoring
- Over-the-counter products

#### TBHC Employee Benefits

- Employee discounts available on over-the-counter products
- 90-day medication prescriptions

## Specialty Pharmacy Medication

A new collaboration between Boston-based Clearway Health and TBHC was formalized to help improve access to specialty pharmacy medication for underserved patients with complex medical conditions.

Patients on specialty medication therapies often require additional education, clinical management and ongoing support to remain adherent to their complex medication regimens and manage side effects. Specialty medications can be costly, increasing the challenges for patients to begin and continue these critical therapies. Together, Clearway Health and TBHC will provide specialty pharmacy services through in-clinic support from specialty pharmacists and patient liaisons to ensure patients receive coordinated, personalized care. Additionally, Clearway Health will help to unlock access to medications that are often inaccessible to local or regional hospitals, including access to limited distribution drugs and payer or pharmacy benefit manager lockouts.



# Welcome!

## BARIATRIC AND GENERAL SURGERY



**Kristen Bridges, MD**  
Attending

## FAMILY MEDICINE



**Alexis Harman, MD**  
Attending, Primary Sports  
Medicine Physician

## OBSTETRICS & GYNECLOGY



**Caitlin Carr, MD**  
Attending

## Not shown:

### CARDIOLOGY

**Sabah Siddiqui, MD**  
Attending

### FAMILY MEDICINE

**Nazik Al-Hashimi, MD**  
Attending

**Jian Yang, MD**  
Attending

### PODIATRIC SURGERY

**Zarnab Butta, DPM**  
Attending

### RADIOLOGY

**Leo Menashe, MD**  
Attending (musculoskeletal)

**Ajay Patel, MD**  
Attending

## EMERGENCY MEDICINE



**Jonathan Siegal, MD**  
Chair



**Kazi Sumon, MD**  
Director, Emergency Ultrasound

## HOSPITAL MEDICINE



**Marianne Hamra, MD**  
Medical Director



**Anunziata Mehu, MD**  
Attending Hospitalist  
and Family Medicine



**Kelley Halstead, MD**  
Attending

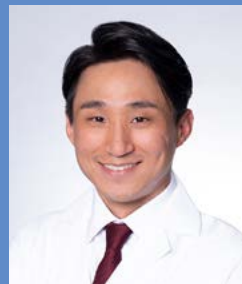


**Neil Patel, MD**  
Attending

## PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION



**Tanya DiFrancesco, MD**  
Chief



**Seungmo Suh, MD**  
Attending Hospitalist

# Focus on Dentistry and Oral Maxillofacial Surgery Center

The Dentistry and Oral Maxillofacial Surgery Center provides a full array of services for adults and children, including those with physical and cognitive disabilities. They also run two accredited residency programs. The Department is divided into two divisions:

## General Dentistry services include:

- Fillings and sealants
- Root canals, crowns and bridges
- Dentures and partials
- Bonding and cosmetic whitening
- Regular checks up and cleaning
- Orthodontics and clear aligners

## Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery services include:

- Implants at a deep discount with flexible payment options
- Surgical treatment of a gummy smile
- Outpatient anesthesia (in the OR for medically compromised patients and IV sedation in the outpatient center)
- Biopsies
- Treatment of facial pain especially including TMD and TMJ using non-surgical techniques such as oral appliances as well as arthrocentesis and Botox injections
- Treatment of teeth, orbital, jaw and mid-face fractures
- Treatment of oral, sinus and facial infections
- Treatment of benign jaw cyst and tumors
- Treatment of medically compromised patients
- Treatment of medication-induced osteonecrosis of the bones
- The placement and/or reconstruction of the jaw with bone substitutes for implants
- Treatment of skeletal jaw deformities through specialized orthognathic joint procedures
- Treatment of severe rheumatoid joint pathology with total joint replacement and custom-made joints
- Reconstruction of atrophic maxilla using zygomatic implants

Both General Dentistry and the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Center are located at the main hospital at our 155 Ashland Street entrance; for appointments and referrals, call 718.250.8963. Additionally, general dentistry services are offered at the Williamsburg Family Health Center, 99 Division Avenue; for appointments and referrals, call 718.250.7250.



**Harry Dym, DDS**  
Chair, Dentistry and Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery; Director, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Residency



**Reena Clarkson, DDS**  
Attending, Orthodontics



**Ricardo Boyce, DDS**  
Vice Chair, General Dentistry; Director, General Dentistry Residency



**Jard Miller, DDS**  
Attending, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery



**Saad Aziz Butt, DDS**  
Attending, General Dentistry



**William Perez, DDS**  
Attending, Pediatric Dentistry; Assistant Program Director, General Dentistry



**Michael Chan, DDSS**  
Attending, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery



**Marc Sadowsky, DDS**  
Attending, General Dentistry



**Earl Clarkson, DDS**  
Attending, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery



**Edward Woodbine, DDS**  
Attending, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery



121 DeKalb Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
718.250.8000

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If you have an idea for an article or feedback on this newsletter, please contact Kim Flodin at x8271 or [kflodin@tbh.org](mailto:kflodin@tbh.org).

**Let's Connect!** There are lots of ways to connect with The Brooklyn Hospital Center online, whether it be through one of the popular social media sites or our own website. Visit us at:



Facebook/brooklynhospitalcenter



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