Celebrating Women in Medicine
This year, the Yale School of Medicine is celebrating the 100 year anniversary of women at the School and their numerous contributions. Yale New Haven Hospital acknowledged this significant milestone with a look back at the history of women physicians at the Hospital through an historic display in the East Pavilion Atrium. Photographs on display were gathered from the Hospital Archives and the Cushing/Whitney Medical Library.

Louise W. Farnam, PhD MD, was the first woman admitted into the Yale School of Medicine in 1916, graduating in 1920.

In 1918, Yale New Haven Hospital was known as the General Hospital Society of Connecticut or more commonly the New Haven Hospital. Among its first residents were Margaret Tyler, MD – Resident in Serology, and Isabel Wason, MD – Assistant Resident in Pathology. They were soon followed in 1919 by Ethel C. Dunham, MD – Assistant Resident in Medicine, Beverly Douglas, MD – Assistant Resident in Surgery, Margaret Tyler, MD – Assistant Resident in Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Farnam – Intern. In 1920, Dunham became the Hospital’s first woman Associate Physician on the medical staff. She joined the newly formed Department of Pediatrics and specialized in the care of newborns.

Although Dunham is the first woman physician whose name we came across in the Archives, the Hospital would welcome information about any earlier physicians. Grace Hospital Society, which merged with New Haven Hospital in 1945, had a woman who is a physician on its staff as early as 1908, Dr. Adelaide Lambert, MD, born in 1860. If you have information or material regarding the history of women in medicine at YNHH, or any other facet of the Hospital’s history that you are willing to share, please contact the Hospital Archives at YNHHArchives@ynhh.org or 203-688-5450.

For an online exhibit provided by the Cushing/Whitney Medical Library visit http://exhibits.library.yale.edu/exhibits/show/100-years-women-ysm. Here is a pictorial look through the Archives at some of the many women physicians at YNHH and the YSM over the years...
The Department of Obstetrics in 1921 included Dr. Margaret Tyler, the first obstetrician on the hospital staff. Dr. Tyler, seated third from left, was a member of the New Haven Hospital and then the Grace-New Haven Hospital medical staff in the department of obstetrics and gynecology from about 1922-1949. She served a residency in obstetrics at New Haven Hospital from 1919-21 and joined the staff in 1922 as an associate obstetrician. Within her years of service Dr. Tyler delivered the 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush in 1946.
Dr. Margaret Tyler
The Department of Pathology in 1921 included residents Dr. Isabel M. Wason (left) and Dr. Helen M Scoville (standing fourth from left). They were amongst the first two female residents at Yale-New Haven Hospital, then New Haven Hospital.
Dr. Helen M. Scoville
Dr. Isabel M. Wason
Dr. Margaret Bia, associate medical director of Dialysis Services in 1982.
Dr. Helena Brett-Smith
Dr. Marie Browne, cardiac surgery, in retirement volunteering at the Primary Care Center with Dr. Ruth Whittemore in 1992.
Photographer: Peter Nuhn
Dr. Effie Chang on panel at the Hospital of Saint Raphael.
Dr. Shirley McCarthy (standing), clinical director of Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Dr. Florence Comite (seated) examine MRI scans, 1990.
Photographer: Gale Zucker
Dr. Anne Curtis reviewing x-ray results, 1984.
Dr. Josephine Fuhrmann gives a lecture at the Hospital of Saint Raphael.
Dr. Shelby Galloway working in the Hospital of Saint Raphael, Department of Radiology.
Dr. Deborah Harrison, monitors a patient’s chart post operation, 1985.
Dr. Dorothy Horstmann, a leader in the fields of epidemiology and virology was best known for her work in poliomyelitis and rubella, 1985.
Margaret Hostetter, M.D., Chief of Pediatrics, 2002
Drs. Tina Kon, M.D. (1st from left) and Sooz Hodgson, M.D. (third from left) as part of the Kidney Transplant team, c. 1970s.
Dr. Barbara Kinder, M.D., 1992. She was one of the first two surgery residents at YNHH. She went on to be a leader in Endocrine Surgery at the hospital.
Dr. Diane Komp, Pediatric Oncology Department, 1983.
Dr. Phyllis Kornguth
Dr. Michele Moss monitors the heart beat and pressure of a pediatric cardiology patient, 1984.
Dr. Sharon Kurzner (center in blue scrubs) working in the Newborn Special Care Unit, 1980.
Dr. Huang Qi-Liu, M.D. (left) and Dr. Chao Dan-Ging, M.D. (right) working with Song Xue-Kun, M.D. in the Diagnostic Radiology Department.
Dr. Sara Rockwell, working on cancer research, 1987.
Photographer: Frank Poole
Dr. Anne Savarese provides anesthesia during operation, 1989.
Photographer: Peter Hvizdak
Dr. Margretta Seashore working on birth defect research.
Sally Shaywitz, M.D., right, Director of the Learning Disorder Unit discusses treatment for patients with Reye’s syndrome with colleagues Phyllis Cohen, left, and Nancy Chapel (center), 1979.
Dr. Susan Spencer and neurophysiology assistant, Cindy Swick, use new equipment to monitor an epilepsy patient, 1990.
Dr. Lynne Tanoue, Pulmonary Medicine.
Dr. Barbara Ward, working with colleagues in women’s health, 1994.  
Photographer: Keyvon Behpour
Dr. Ruth Whittemore using a fluoroscope to view the heart of a pediatric cardiology patient in the 1950s.
U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro, Dr. Florence Comite, and Dr. Janet Henrich at a meeting of the Yale Women’s Health Initiative, 1992
In 1920, Ethel C. Dunham, MD, Associate Physician, was the first woman physician on the medical staff of New Haven Hospital. Image courtesy of the Cushing/Whitney Medical Library, Yale University.
Residents of the New Haven Hospital, 1920-1921. Photo includes doctors Louise Whitman Farnam, Ethel Collins Dunham, Margaret Tyler, and Beverly Douglas. Image courtesy of the Cushing/Whitney Medical Library, Yale University.