Yale Geriatrics is devoted to the health and health care of older adults. Our faculty members provide clinical care informed by cutting-edge discoveries in aging, and we are home to one of the largest and most productive aging research programs in the world. We have a deep and longstanding commitment to training leaders in medical practice, education, and clinical investigation. Embedded throughout our work is the recognition that older adults differ widely in their health conditions, life contexts, and priorities. Embracing and understanding this heterogeneity is essential to ensuring that these elders receive high-quality care.

**Medication Safety and Optimal Medical Therapy**

By some estimates, more than two-thirds of older adults (aged 65 and older) take at least five medications per day for multiple medical conditions. Polypharmacy has been a major focus of our work in the 2018–2019 academic year. In an article published in June in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, Marcia Mecca, MD, and Terri Fried, MD, point out that the benefits of a medication are attenuated when it is added to an already complex regimen, while the potential harms increase. They offer clinicians a new model for evaluating medication appropriateness in older adults. Medication prescribing and deprescribing is also the main area of interest for Gregory Ouellet, MD, who was recently awarded NIH funding to study anticoagulation use in adults with dementia and atrial fibrillation.

**Building a Geriatric Workforce and Focusing on What Matters Most**

Our faculty members continue to be leaders in two large-scale efforts to improve the health care delivered to older patients. Richard Marottoli, MD, MPH, is the director of the Connecticut Older Adult Collaboration for Health, or COACH 4M. Building upon partnerships between Yale University, YNHHS, and other organizations in greater New Haven, COACH 4M is working to increase the number of health care professionals with expertise in the principles of geriatric care. Its goal is to build and retain a diverse multidisciplinary geriatrics workforce. COACH 4M is supported through a grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration; funding was renewed for a second cycle in the 2018–2019 academic year.

Momentum has also continued to build for Patient Priorities Care, a project led by Mary Tinetti, MD, section chief of geriatrics. This approach to care helps patients and clinicians make health care decisions aligned with what matters most to the patient. A new free online training curriculum for health care professionals developed by the Patient Priorities Care team in partnership with the American College of Physicians was disseminated nationwide in May.

**New Investigation into Multifactorial Geriatric Conditions**

Yale Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center, directed by Thomas Gill, MD, provides intellectual leadership and innovation for aging research that is directed at enhancing the independence of older persons. In the 2018–2019 academic year, the Pepper Center was funded for another term by the National Institute on Aging and has now been continuously funded for more than 25 years. In addition to providing support to dozens of aging-related projects, a core mission of the
Embedded throughout our work is the recognition that older adults differ widely in their health conditions, life contexts, and priorities.

Pepper Center is to encourage junior faculty members to pursue research that benefits older adults. This year, career development grants were awarded to two outstanding young investigators. Brienne Miner, MD, MHS, is conducting work to understand insomnia in older patients; and Maor Sauler, MD, is studying the response to DNA damage in the aging lung and in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

**Future of Yale Geriatrics**

We hope to expand the clinical, education, and research areas of Yale Geriatrics, increasing the number of faculty in all three areas. We continue expanding our scope through collaboration across the department, school, university, the greater New Haven community, and other institutions.

To learn more about the Section of Geriatrics, visit [medicine.yale.edu/intmed/geriatrics/](http://medicine.yale.edu/intmed/geriatrics/).

*James Lai, MD, meets with 104-year-old Frances Goering at her residence as part of the section’s Home Visit program.*