

Children's Health

**An Interview with Catherine Manno, M.D.,
Pat and John Rosenwald Professor of Pediatrics and
Chair, Department of Pediatrics, Hassenfeld Children's Hospital at NYU Langone**

EDITORS' NOTE *Dr. Catherine Manno is an experienced academic pediatrician who specializes in pediatric hematology and oncology. Dr. Manno was recruited to NYU Langone Health ten years ago, at an exciting time of growth and progress.*

INSTITUTION BRIEF *The more than 400 doctors at Hassenfeld Children's Hospital (nyulangone.org) – along with nurses, child life specialists, social workers, and other medical professionals – are committed to providing personalized, compassionate care that addresses the needs of the entire family. Their specialists treat children with conditions ranging from minor illnesses to complex, more serious issues at locations throughout the New York metropolitan area. In 2018, the hospital opened a new 160,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art pediatric hospital designed with a theme of New York City from a child's perspective.*



Dr. Catherine Manno

During that time, Sylvia Hassenfeld and her family, including Alan and Ellen and her grandchildren, made a commitment to work with us to build a children's hospital. This took several years, but the alignment of Dr. Grossman's goals with the family's goals resulted not only in the creation of a beautiful and spectacular facility for children and their families, but also the development of innovative programs and the ability to take care of every single child who comes to our emergency department or to one of our clinics.

How deeply is Hassenfeld Children's Hospital integrated within NYU Langone Health?

It is well-integrated in the medical center, both metaphorically and literally, because Hassenfeld Children's Hospital is technically a hospital within a hospital.

The facility is spectacular, and its layout is quite clever in the sense that the entrance to the children's hospital is on 34th Street; it's a separate entrance, so children and their families have a different experience from the adult patients from the moment they enter the hospital. Once inside, you can feel the presence of committed pediatric nurses and doctors, as well as social workers, and all parts of the team necessary to take care of children.

On the clinical upside, we have the ability to benefit from this large and modern facility. For instance, while all of the back

of house elevators serve the children's hospital as well as the adult side of the Kimmel Pavilion, there is minimal interaction between children and adults on the clinical care side. We have our own ORs and our own waiting areas, yet the back of house, which is expansive and intricate, is seamless between the children's hospital and the rest of the Kimmel Pavilion.

Hassenfeld Children's Hospital is committed to building a partnership with patients and families and engaging the entire family. How is this accomplished?

Six years ago we received a magnificent gift from Trudy and Bob Gottesman to establish the Sala Institute for Child & Family Centered Care. The Sala Institute infuses the concept of family – child and family-centered care, into every clinical interaction. The Sala Institute allows for the training of young nurses and young doctors in the concepts of family-centered care, helping them to learn how to speak sympathetically and empathically, as well as accurately, to children and to parents. We learn this in medical school and nursing school, but it really becomes enhanced through the work of the Sala Institute.

The structure of the facility lends itself to privacy, confidentiality, quiet, peace, but also, for the children, for distraction and play while the children are in the hospital sometimes facing very difficult circumstances. We have a fantastic group of therapists who are at the bedside

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What drives NYU Langone Health's strength and leadership in the industry?

The NYU Langone Health difference is centered around open-mindedness and dedication to never resting on your laurels, which comes from the top. Our Dean and CEO, Dr. Robert I. Grossman, is someone who leads by example. He is on top of the latest trends in healthcare, and he expects his staff to carefully consider what's new in every aspect of medicine, and how to provide new technologies, therapies, and psychosocial approaches to each and every patient interaction, particularly for those interactions with children.

What was the origin of NYU Langone Health's children's hospital?

When Dr. Grossman became the Dean and CEO, he convinced me to come to NYU Langone because he believed that to be a world-class academic medical center excellent children's health services were needed. He said, "I am not a pediatrician, but you are." I found his honesty, his leadership style and his willingness to listen to be very appealing. When I joined, a lot needed to be done to improve what we did for children, and Dr. Grossman and his leadership team allowed me to determine who I wanted to recruit to broaden the services we could provide.



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What are the different locations and facilities for Hassenfeld Children's Hospital?

Children with chronic illnesses obviously require care on the outpatient side, and our goal is to always keep children living a life that's as normal as possible, even with chronic disease. Our The Fink Children's Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders and our Stephen D. Hassenfeld Children's Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders, both located on 32nd Street, are outpatient areas where our pediatric specialists see patients. The principals of Sala child-and-family-centered care are also infused into the atmosphere of our outpatient locations. We have playrooms, therapists, clerks and medical assistants, all trained in the extra special touches that are important for the care of children and their families.

We have just embarked on a new relationship by acquiring Winthrop Hospital in Mineola in Nassau County, and we are working to imbue that same philosophy, that both Hassenfeld and Sala represent, into the care that they provide very capably in Mineola.

How critical has it been to attract and retain top talent at Hassenfeld Children's Hospital?

We have attracted a great group of pediatric specialists, and developed a network of general pediatric practitioners throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, Nassau County and Suffolk County. Our network continues to grow. In Manhattan, our specialists are a talented group consisting of gastroenterologists and cardiologists, and we have all of the specialists for pediatrics. I have been very pleased at our ability to attract fantastic clinicians as well as terrific researchers and educators to round out our academic mission.

Your expertise is in pediatric hematology. Will you discuss the advances and innovation taking place in this area?

My area of expertise is pediatric hematology with a major interest is hemophilia. Over the past 20 years, the world anticipated that hemophilia would be one of the first monogenic diseases that would be approached successfully with gene therapy. I think we are coming very close to having a couple of gene therapy products that will be on the market in the next few years. In the meantime, other new therapeutic products have improved the outlook and lifestyles for hemophilia patients.

Are you worried that the high cost of medical school will impact the next generation of leaders interested in entering medicine?

NYU School of Medicine announced a year ago that it would be a tuition-free medical school, really challenging the status quo in medical education in the United States. I think that will modify the profile of the students we attract to NYU School of Medicine, and I think it will challenge other medical school deans and boards of trustees to consider whether they need to figure out more generous scholarship opportunities for their students or even figure out how to put together an endowment to go tuition-free. I still think medicine is an incredibly challenging and fulfilling career path. I encourage young people, even family members, that medicine is worth the long period of training because the opportunity to, in my case, positively help families, and particularly children, to live their lives as normally as possible has been a real privilege over the past many years.

Are you able to enjoy the process and celebrate the wins, or are you always looking at what's next and moving ahead?

I love to share the credit for what we've accomplished in these last 10 years, not only under the leadership of our Dean and with the support of the Hassenfeld family, but with all of our faculty and all of the great people who were here before I joined and who stuck with it to do the right thing for children at NYU Langone. ●