

Clinician Update

May 13, 2021

Virtua Celebrates Philanthropy Day

Today, Virtua celebrates Philanthropy Day, where we recognize and honor our generous donors, whose impact is always transformational. Especially over this past year, the outpouring of support we have received from our patients, community, auxiliaries — and caring Virtua colleagues — has touched our hearts. In 2020, nearly 1,300 Virtua colleagues joined together, making philanthropic gifts to our Give for Good campaign and supporting the Virtua programs and services that are most meaningful to them. Together, WE make a difference!

We invite you to watch this [special video production](#) highlighting the lasting impact of gifts to Virtua! The video features a look back, details about our expanded food access efforts, and a preview of the future. We are also sharing [a tribute to Dr. Martin Topiel](#), chief infection control officer, as the inaugural recipient of Virtua's Achievement Award in Clinical Excellence. Dr. Topiel's leadership and clinical expertise has been critical to Virtua throughout the pandemic, and we are so pleased to recognize the lasting impact he has made on our organization.

Visit GiveToVirtua.org/celebration to watch our full Celebration of Philanthropy and see first-hand the difference our generous colleagues and donors have made. Thank you for being Here for Good!

Proton Therapy Center Progress

Construction of the Penn Medicine Virtua Health Proton Therapy Center continues at the Virtua Voorhees campus. More than 300 truckloads of concrete were delivered to build the vault, which will enclose the 125-ton cyclotron. The steel installation is complete and the crew is busy working on the interior structure in anticipation of the equipment delivery in August. The center is set to open in the fall of 2022 and will be the only proton therapy center in South Jersey. The center will provide access to the most advanced radiation treatment to precisely target certain cancers, offering new hope for recovery and improved quality of life. You can find more information about the Proton Therapy Center at virtua.org/PennProton.



Clinician Feedback Essential to Planning of Care After COVID Program

In February, Virtua conducted a clinician survey on experiences treating COVID-19 patients who may have “long-hauler” syndrome. That feedback was critical to developing the Care After COVID program, which was just recently [highlighted in a report by NBC10](#).

Based on the results of the clinician survey, Virtua found that:

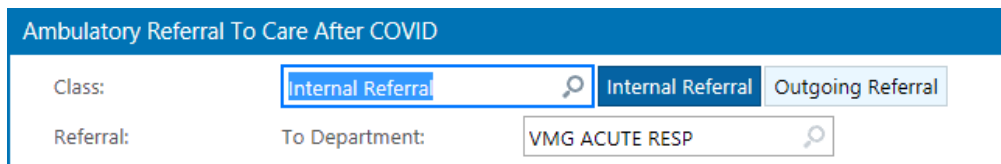
- 51% of total respondents are currently treating three to 10 patients on a monthly basis with “long” or “chronic” COVID-19.
- The top two most common symptoms reported were chronic fatigue (77%) and breathlessness (51%).
- 44% of total respondents describe their care plan needs for patients as chronic primary care follow ups.

Thank you to the clinicians who took the time to take the survey!

Care After COVID: Epic Workflow Makes Referral Easier Than Ever

Virtua’s recently launched [Care After COVID](#) program is an evaluation and recovery program for those living with lingering symptoms of COVID-19. Recent studies suggest that up to 30% of recovered COVID patients experience symptoms for weeks, or even months — which is both mentally and physically draining.

For referring physicians with access to Epic, there is an option to refer a patient into the program by choosing the “Ambulatory Referral to Care After COVID” option. With that selection, the Care After COVID team will manage the referral from there. See image below.



The image shows a screenshot of the Epic workflow interface for "Ambulatory Referral To Care After COVID". The interface includes a header bar with the title "Ambulatory Referral To Care After COVID". Below the header, there are two rows of input fields. The first row is labeled "Class:" and has a dropdown menu with "Internal Referral" selected, and a search icon. To the right of the dropdown are two buttons: "Internal Referral" and "Outgoing Referral". The second row is labeled "Referral:" and has a "To Department:" field with "VMG ACUTE RESP" selected and a search icon.

Individuals may also self-refer by calling **856-325-3200**.

Care After COVID begins with a virtual visit, where the patient’s symptoms are reviewed and a full medical evaluation is established with one of our physicians.

From there, the patient and doctor will develop a customized treatment plan tailored to the patient’s specific conditions. Our team will work with the patient to coordinate visits and follow-up appointments.

To learn more, visit this [link](#) on Virtua.org, or call 856- 325-3200.

Pfizer’s Vaccine Authorized for Adolescents; Mega-site Administers First Scheduled Youths

Yesterday, a [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) advisory committee recommended](#) the expanded use of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for adolescents age 12 to 15, adding that providers can start immediately to vaccinate this population.

Anticipating the CDC recommendation—and after the FDA approved the Pfizer vaccine for adolescents on Monday—the [Burlington County COVID-19 Vaccination Mega-site](#) began scheduling youths for appointments starting today. Among the young people eager to receive the vaccine are **Donald Cucuzzella**, 14, of Burlington Township (pictured left with his parents, **Holly** and **Donald Sr.**), and **Jenna Baron**, 12, daughter of Virtua's **Rob Baron** (pictured right).



Like many kids, Donald has spent most of his time at home throughout the pandemic. He hasn't been inside friends' houses, and he's been attending school remotely for nearly the entire time.

"I miss hanging out with friends, going to their houses, going bowling, getting pizza, and watching football together," he says. "I wish I could be in school to see people."

Once fully vaccinated, Donald intends to go to Six Flags amusement park and says he'll feel safer when playing baseball with his team.

Appointments are available at the mega-site for anyone 12 or older. Visit virtua.org/vaccine to schedule an appointment. Limited walk-up vaccinations are also available from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

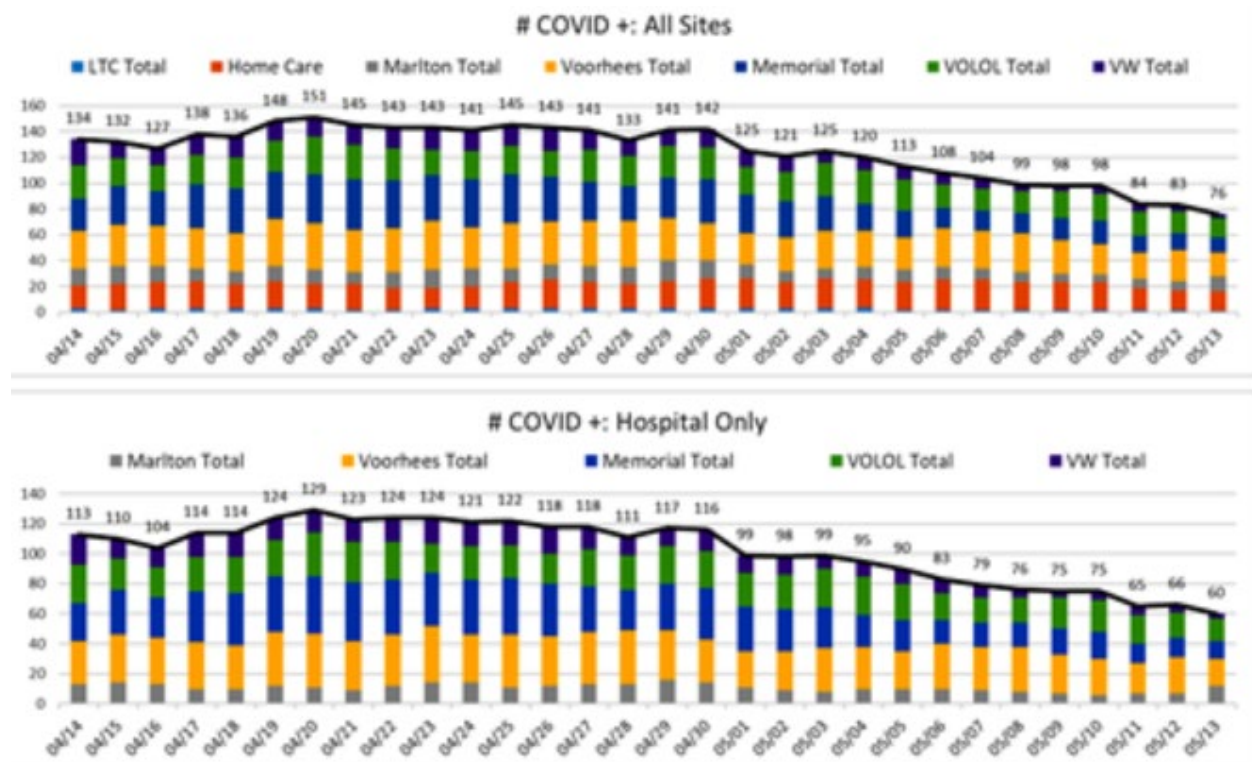
Getting the Homebound Vaccinated

Many of our clinicians have asked about the availability and referral process on vaccination for homebound patients. We are glad to report that New Jersey has launched a new process to help individuals who are homebound obtain COVID-19 vaccination.

Homebound individuals and/or their caregivers can now go to <https://covid19.nj.gov/homeboundvax>, or call 1-855-568-0545, to complete a form to request in-home vaccination. Once the completed form is submitted, the NJ Department of Health will forward the form to a home health agency, local health department, or other vaccination provider and the individual who submitted the form will be contacted to schedule an in-home appointment.

Meanwhile, separately, for those individuals who are able to do so, they are encouraged to make every effort to safely attend any of the 750+ COVID-19 vaccination sites in New Jersey. Individuals who are Medicaid members can schedule transportation to a vaccine appointment by calling Modivcare at 1-866-527-9933 at least 48 hours before the appointment. Please be sure to mention that the trip is for vaccination.

Virtua COVID-19 Census



Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is currently at 0.94.
- Locally, in the tri-county area, there have been a total of 2,551 confirmed deaths, as of 3 p.m. today.
- The total number of cases are as follows:

Burlington County	37,957
Camden County	48,354
Gloucester County	26,297

Operation Jersey Summer Launches to Meet Vaccination Goal

According to the state's [dashboard](#), a total of 7,804,653 doses of vaccine have been administered in New Jersey. With the goal of achieving the state's initial target of 4.7 million *fully* vaccinated New Jerseyans by June 30, the Murphy Administration has outlined Operation Jersey Summer, a series of initiatives to help drive vaccinations.

The initiatives include expanded vaccination hours and locations and a six-month public awareness campaign, which includes TV, radio, and cable ads, digital ads, billboards, videos, and print ads.

Additionally, the state put out a call for individuals to [send in videos](#) on why they are getting vaccinated. The public will vote for the winning video, which will be included in the state's public awareness campaign.

Also under the Operation Jersey Summer program, the state's mega-sites are offering walk-up vaccinations. Limited walk-up vaccinations are available at the Burlington County Mega-Site each day between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. We encourage individuals to bring their I.D. and proof of insurance, if applicable, to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

For those who are interested in making a vaccine appointment at the Burlington County Mega-Site, visit virtua.org/vaccine to select a convenient date and time.

From the CDC: How to Talk about COVID-19 Vaccines with Friends and Family

It is certainly normal for people to have questions about COVID-19 vaccines. The sheer amount of information — and misinformation — can be overwhelming to anyone. As clinicians, we have a role in helping to dispel rumors and encourage the hesitant. The CDC shares the following tips on how to talk about the COVID-19 vaccine with friends and family:

Ask questions to explore their concerns. Asking open-ended questions can help you understand what your friend or family member is worried about, where they learned any troubling information, and what they have done to get answers to their questions.

Ask permission to share information. Tell them where you get information you trust. You can find answers to common questions from reputable sources, including [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), the local health department website, or other trusted sources such as their doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

Help them find their own reason to get vaccinated. Everyone who chooses to get vaccinated does it for a reason — to protect their family, to be less anxious, to get back to activities like seeing friends, resuming work, or returning to school. Steer the conversation from “why not” to their “why.”

Help make their vaccination happen. Once someone decides on their “why,” help them make a commitment to get vaccinated. To make a vaccine appointment at the Burlington County Mega-Site, visit virtua.org/vaccine.

Remember, every person who chooses to get vaccinated brings us all a step closer to moving past the COVID-19 pandemic. As a trusted messenger to your family and friends, you can play a role in their decision to vaccinate. Click to [read more](#). Click to [view a video](#) about having productive conversations with family and friends.

Spirit Week Continues!

We hope that colleagues are enjoying Virtua's [Spirit Week](#) activities so far because there is much more to come! On **Friday, May 14**, it is Magic of Music Day, where colleagues can enjoy performances from East Coast Live Drumline at all of Virtua's hospitals.

We invite you to view the schedule below and stop by to enjoy the show! Don't be late, each performance is 15 minutes long.

10 a.m. at Virtua Voorhees Hospital — Cafeteria Patio

11 a.m. at Virtua Marlton Hospital — Picnic Area (side of the hospital)

12 p.m. at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital — Front Steps (grass area)

1:30 p.m. at Virtua Willingboro Hospital — Main Entrance

2:30 p.m. at Virtua Memorial Hospital — Picnic Area (corner of Madison and South Avenues)

Cardiovascular Today Now Posted to Digital 411

Our library of publications for and about Virtua clinicians has a home base on [Digital 411](#), found under “Additional Resources/Clinician Publications.” There, you can find archived copies of *Clinician Update*, as well as a growing newsletter series, focused on Virtua’s specialty services. Our most recent issue, [Cardiovascular Today](#), features Virtua’s use of the FlowTrieber, involving an endovascular technique which captures and withdraws pulmonary embolii by suction and/or nitinol mesh snare. The issue also highlights some of the advanced options offered by [Virtua’s Vein and Vascular Experts](#).

May 15 Deadline - SJ Magazine Top Docs Polling

Reminder, it’s time to nominate colleagues for SJ Magazine’s 2021 Top Docs issue. Voting ends this Saturday, May 15.

Here’s how it works. “If you were ill, who would you go to?” That is the guiding question being asked. [You can vote here on this link exclusive for physicians](#). A physician license number is required, and you may cast only one ballot. Patients are able to poll as well, but would click on this separate [link](#).

The results will be published in the magazine’s September 2021 issue. As for last year’s list, to view the physicians who were chosen by their peers – and patients – as a 2020 Top Doc, [click here](#).

Five Stars for Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital

In honor of National Hospital Week and the compassionate care our colleagues provide the community, we’re happy to share a recent five-star review from **Rosemarie L.**, a patient of Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital:

*I have to praise my whole experience at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. The moment I entered the emergency room, I was greeted by the security person. He directed me to the third floor where I spoke with Nancy, the admissions person. She was pleasant and told me what to expect — with a smile. I then went to the procedure area where I met a true team of professionals. The nurses were pleasant, knowledgeable, patient, and compassionate. I would like to thank **Mary, Julie, Kristin, Jessica, and Doctor Morris**. Up to the moment I was discharged, each person I encountered was caring and concerned about my well-being.*

Since the start of the year, Virtua has received more than 2,200 4- and 5-star reviews! More than ever, Virtua’s patients and their families are interested in expressing their gratitude. To help steer them in the right direction, order your gratitude materials from the Brand Hub today. Share the new Lasting Impact Project postcards, which explain how to leave a Google review and make a philanthropic gift.

Virtua in the News

- **Virtua Program Helps Coronavirus 'Long Haulers' With Recovery:** Many coronavirus patients experience persistent complications from the illness. Virtua’s multi-disciplinary Care After COVID program helps people address these ongoing health issues. Read [here](#).
- **Mega-Site Hosts Group Vaccine Event for Eastern High Students:** Working with Virtua, the school district signed up more than 100 members of its community to be vaccinated at the Burlington County Mega-Site. Watch one of the TV stories [here](#).

- **Women's Health by the Decade:** *SJ Magazine* highlights key health concerns for women in their 20s through their 50s. **Dr. Alexandra DeSimone**, a Virtua primary care physician, offers advice for 30-somethings. Read [here](#).
- **Local Nurses Honored through Celebrate Caring:** Two Virtua nurses were recognized — **Steve Footit** was one of three award winners, while **Kelly Warren** was one of seven finalists. Read [here](#).

WE Applaud Our Colleagues for Demonstrating our Guiding Principles

Gina Pimentel, director of care coordination, recognized Linda McGovern, community resource coordinator, in WE Applaud for demonstrating our Patient and Consumer Centric Guiding Principle.

Thank you for your dedication to Virtua patients. I received a message of gratitude from a patient's wife stating how helpful you were to her and her husband in regards to his discharge. While the patient declined being in the RPM program, you ensured that the home care agency set up a visit for the patient over the weekend.

This demonstrates Patient and Consumer Centric as we consistently work to demonstrate compassion and high reliability in all interactions and experiences.

Virtua Recognizes National Skilled Nursing Care Week (May 9 to 15)

The theme for National Skilled Nursing Care Week is "Together through the Seasons," which honors the collaborative commitment of skilled nursing care facilities and their staff in providing compassionate care to their residents during this unprecedented time.

Over the past year, despite the challenges of the pandemic, skilled care centers and their staff have shown an incredible and steadfast commitment to providing quality care and ensuring the safety of their residents.

Virtua recognizes our fellow colleagues at the Virtua Health and Rehabilitation Centers in Mt. Holly and Berlin this week and every week. Thank you for your collective efforts, amazing strength, and ongoing dedication in caring for and protecting our residents and patients in long term care.

Thank you for taking the Best Places to Work Survey!

Thank you to the colleagues who took the *Philadelphia Business Journal's* Best Places to Work survey. More than 2,370 colleagues have taken the survey, which means we met our participation goal! The *Philadelphia Business Journal* will compile the results from the survey and announce the region's Best Places to Work this summer, so stay tuned!

In Case You Missed It – Musicians on Call

Musicians on Call, an organization that delivers the healing power of music to hospital patients, hosted local artist Harris Snyder virtually performing exclusively for select hospitals and health systems in our region, including Virtua. We invite you to view and share the 30-minute show found [here on YouTube](#).