



Clinician Update

May 1, 2025



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Virtua Voorhees, Our Lady of Lourdes Among Castle Connolly Top Hospitals 2025

Castle Connolly, a trusted and credible health care research and information company, recently evaluated hospitals nationally on key performance metrics such as outcomes, quality of care, and expertise in medical procedures. In its research, Castle Connolly has recognized Virtua Voorhees and Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes as “Top Hospitals.”

Virtua Voorhees was recognized as a top national hospital for knee replacement surgery; a top hospital in the state for mastectomy and hernia repair; and a state Gold Standard for colon surgery, knee replacement surgery, and spine surgery.

Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes was recognized as a top hospital nationally for heart valve replacement as well as a Gold Standard in the state for heart valve replacement.

Congratulations!

Virtua Launches Major Advance for Robotic-Surgery Capabilities

A longtime leader in robotic-assisted surgery, Virtua is breaking new ground: It is the first in the eastern United States and the second in the country to make a large-scale transition to the da Vinci 5 Robotic Surgical System across all applicable operating rooms. The da Vinci 5 is the most advanced platform of its kind.

The transition, to be completed by early June, will occur in 19 operating rooms across Virtua's five hospitals.

"This milestone reflects our shared commitment to advancing minimally invasive surgery and delivering the best experiences and outcomes to our community," said John Matsinger, DO, Virtua's EVP and chief operating officer.

The da Vinci 5 offers more than 150 enhancements to its predecessor, including improved accuracy and precision, enhanced views inside the body, novel force-sensing technology that may reduce trauma to tissue, and better positioning options for surgeons.

"As Intuitive releases more technology advances for the da Vinci 5 over the next few years, this standardization across our health system will position Virtua to seamlessly access these updates," noted Craig Zaretsky, MD, chair of Virtua's Department of Surgery South.

This collaboration will also help Virtua to expand robotic-assisted surgery training opportunities for surgical residents, including more access to virtual reality simulators, which enable trainees to develop their skills in a risk-free setting. Read more in [ROI-NJ](#).

In the meantime, a statewide business magazine published an overview of Virtua's robotic-assisted surgery programs. These programs include more than 70 board-certified, robotically trained surgeons who complete over 5,500 operations annually across 10 specialties. Read in [ROI-NJ](#).

Interventional Psychiatry Makes New Strides for Mental Health

The two forms of treatment that mental health care has long relied on—medication and psychotherapy—prove insufficient for a large percentage of patients. This includes the tens of millions who suffer from treatment-resistant depression. But with newer and improved tools, such as transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) and vastly refined electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), interventional psychiatry is more directly correcting the physical basis of these behavioral health conditions.

- TMS is delivered on an outpatient basis to relieve treatment-resistant depression, anxiety, and OCD symptoms. Patients benefit from increased energy levels, better sleep, and improved focus.

- ECT technology has been optimized over the years for better, more consistent results. The treatment is designed for patients suffering with severe depression, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder, schizophrenia and catatonia.

ECT is offered at Virtua Mount Holly Hospital. TMS is temporarily being provided in Lumberton.

“These approaches are not only safe and effective, but they can help refractory patients avoid the systemic effects of conventional drug therapies,” said Tyler Veterano, DO, medical director of interventional psychiatry at Virtua. “Eligible patients have tried at least two medications without relief.”

For more information or to refer a patient, call 609-914-6550 or e-mail interventionalPsych@virtua.org.

We Care Compassionately by Practicing Empathy

This week, we continue focusing on the Guiding Principle WE Care Compassionately, specifically the simple action of Practicing Empathy. [Click to view the tip of the week by track.](#)

According to this [Forbes](#) article, empathy is the most important leadership skill. Empathy is crucial in high reliability organizations (HROs) as it enhances communication, collaboration, and trust. For patients, empathy ensures their concerns are heard and addressed, leading to better care and satisfaction. For teams, a supportive environment encourages sharing concerns, improving problem-solving, and innovation. Ultimately, empathy contributes to a resilient and adaptive organization, capable of maintaining high standards even under pressure.

To view all tips for the Guiding Principles 2025 program, [click here](#).

Virtua Celebrates Patient Experience Week

At Virtua, every interaction is an opportunity to make a difference. Patient Experience Week honors the health care professionals who impact lives every day by creating personal, meaningful connections.

Our commitment to being *Here for Good* means being present, compassionate, and responsive to the needs of every person we serve—all year long. During National Patient Experience Week, observed from April 28 to May 2, we proudly recognize and thank our colleagues who bring this commitment to life.

“When it comes down to it, this is all of us, no matter our role,” shared Jennifer Khelil, DO, chief clinical officer. “Every colleague, whether in direct care or in a supporting role, shapes the experience and healing journey of those we serve.”

Thank you for embodying the spirit of Virtua—where every action, every word, and every moment matters. Together, we create a compassionate and welcoming environment that makes a lasting difference in the lives of our patients, their families, and our community.

Happy Patient Experience Week, and thank you for all that you do!

What Patients Are Saying About Our Clinicians

Confidence in care is a common reference among our clinician reviews. Note the following recent examples and how the patient felt about the experience, and the clinician referenced:

“Dr. Rossi is a wonderful doctor. She is kind and patient and very knowledgeable. She’s a patient-first type of doctor. I feel very confident that I’m getting the best care.” **(Simona Rossi, MD)**

“As always, my recent experience was beyond satisfactory. The entire staff really works well together as an outstanding team caring for the patient. Thank you all!” **(Alexander King, DO)**

“She explained everything clearly and had a wonderful bedside manner. I was grateful to have someone who had enough compassion to take the time to make things clear, which helps give peace of mind.” **(Kristen Lehmann, PA)**

“As always, treated like family.” **(John LaRatta, DO)**

“Great experience with Dr Hodde! He spoke to me, not at me.” **(Michael Hodde, DO)**

LAST CALL: Top Physicians 2025 - *South Jersey Magazine*

Later this year, *South Jersey Magazine* will highlight physicians, as voted by the public, who have made an impact on the lives of people in our area. Each person can vote one time per day [here](#). Entries must be received by **May 7**.

To view *South Jersey Magazine* Top Physicians of 2024, click [here](#).

More of Virtua in the News

Dr. Menditto Helps in Kidney Donation of Loved One

A family's tragedy has also resulted in a life-giving gift for a friend. Mark Valenzano's decision to be an organ donor upon his death saved the life of Frank Klimecki, who received Mark's kidney at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. And Mark's cousin—Virtua emergency medicine physician Darren Menditto, DO—helped make the connection between the donor's family and the recipient. Read in [The Paramus Post](#).

Dr. Patel Spreads the Word About IBD on WMMR

Sanket Patel, DO, director of the Virtua Crohn's & Colitis Center, appeared on 93.3 WMMR's "Preston & Steve Show" to discuss inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). He and host Preston Elliot will appear at a May 9 fundraiser and awareness event by the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation, called "[Philadelphia Take Steps](#)." The family-friendly event at Citizen's Bank Park will feature a carnival-like atmosphere and evening fireworks. Watch on [YouTube](#).

Dr. Timmerman Throws First Pitch at Baseball Fundraiser for Cancer

Lori Timmerman, DO, a Virtua breast surgeon, was recently honored at the Coaches vs. Cancer Baseball Fest held by Philadelphia's Public League. She was invited to throw out the ceremonial first pitch by her patient, Juan Namnun, who helped organize the event and wanted to honor Dr. Timmerman, whom he credits with saving his life. Dr. Timmerman has always formed close bonds with her patients, she noted. "Having personally gone through breast cancer myself changes the story," explained the Penn Medicine | Virtua Health Cancer Program physician. Watch on [NBC 10](#).

Philanthropic Partners Help Virtua Give Back

A South Jersey magazine highlighted Virtua and other area organizations that are "going above and beyond for their communities." The story cited multiple initiatives supported by Virtua's generous donors, from mobile health programs to clinical enhancements to professional development programs. Read in [South Jersey Biz](#) and view the digital replica [here](#).

Upcoming CME Events

LAST CALL: Emergency Medicine CME Event, May 8

The Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine will be hosting the 2nd Annual South Jersey Emergency Medicine Symposium on **Thursday, May 8**, 8a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Top Golf in Mount Laurel. The CME event will provide updates in the specialty of emergency medicine in various topics required to practice the specialty. The relevance to South Jersey is highlighted by this conference, as there are currently no specific emergency medicine CME events being offered to the physicians who practice in this area without a great distance of travel.

Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate knowledge in updates in stroke care
- Differentiate the presentations of cardiotoxic medications and the treatment of these toxidromes
- Apply the knowledge of emergent stabilization and interventions in acute gastrointestinal bleeding
- Explain the various and recommended treatments of status epilepticus
- Define the knowledge of transfer laws and EMTALA
- Perform a resuscitation with limited resources

The event will include lunch/golf. For CME credit details and to register, click [here](#).

CME: Quarterly Cardiology Grand Rounds, June 18

The Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine will host a virtual CME on Advancements in Renal Denervation: Current Trends and Clinical Trials. The speaker for this educational event will be Kintur Sanghvi, MD, chief of Interventional Cardiology, director of Cardiovascular Innovation, and medical Director of Virtua Lourdes Catheterization Laboratory. It will take place on **Wednesday, June 18** from 7 to 8 a.m.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the mechanisms and rationale for renal denervation and sympathetic nerve modulation in managing conditions like hypertension and chronic kidney disease
- Review the latest clinical trials in renal denervation, highlighting key findings, emerging technologies, and the evolving role of sympathetic nerve modulation in patient care

- Identify the clinical applications and implications of renal denervation in practice and discuss how the procedure can be integrated into current treatment paradigms for hypertension and other cardiovascular conditions

To learn more, click [here](#). To join the meeting on June 18, click [here](#). For more information, contact VirtuaClinician@Virtua.org.

May Happenings

This Saturday: Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Community Day

This year, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital turns 75! Come out for our Community Day on **Saturday, May 3**, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to celebrate our rich history, participate in our healthy, family-friendly activities, and get a sneak peek of our future as we share plans for our campus transformation. For more information, [click here](#).

Hospital Week, May 11-17, Colleague Appreciation Gatherings

Hospital Week is May 11 to 17. Enjoy the festivities, connect with colleagues, and share a meal. To view the schedule and locations for this year's Colleague Appreciation Gatherings, [click here](#). Virtua Medical Group colleagues and those based in other locations are encouraged to attend a celebration at the nearest Virtua hospital. Additional details will be forthcoming via an email invitation.

Supporting Organ Donation Awareness, May 17

As the only center in South Jersey performing kidney, liver, and pancreas transplants, Virtua Advanced Transplant & Organ Health is proud to be sponsoring a team to walk in this year's [NJ Sharing Network 5K](#) in Ocean Grove, NJ, on **Saturday, May 17**. To join the team, please contact transplant liaison Natalie Frament at 215-528-1195 or nframent@virtua.org.

Relay for Life, May 30

The Penn Medicine | Virtua Health Cancer Program is proud to once again sponsor the American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Marlton. Relay teams will light luminaria bags in honor or in memory of a loved one. Everyone is invited. The event will take place **Friday, May 30**, 5 to 10 p.m. at Memorial Sports Complex, 1040 Tuckerton Road, Marlton. For more information, click [here](#).



Virtua Health

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