

Clinician Update

September 11, 2025



[Listen](#) to an abbreviated audio version of Clinician Update.



CEO Publishes Op-Ed on Champions of Humanity

A statewide business magazine has published an essay by Dennis Pullin, Virtua President and CEO, titled “Let us all be Champions of Humanity.” In the essay, Dennis discusses how Virtua focuses on human connection, health equity, and meeting people where they are. He encourages others—legislators, businesses, schools, and community groups—to join health care entities in these efforts.

“During this time of uncertainty, let’s lead with compassion,” Dennis wrote. “Let’s build partnerships that are anchored in mutual respect and common purpose. And let’s remember that when we create conditions where everyone can thrive, we all grow stronger.”

Read in [BINJE](#).

New Jersey Becomes Latest State to Expand Access to COVID-19 Vaccines

New Jersey and Pennsylvania have joined a growing number of states that are [taking action](#) to ensure broad access to COVID-19 vaccines as respiratory virus season approaches.

In a significant move this week, the New Jersey Department of Health issued a new order making COVID-19 vaccines available to all residents aged six months and older for the upcoming respiratory illness season. The department also passed a standing order that authorizes pharmacists to administer the vaccines

to individuals 3 and older. Children younger than 3 will be able to receive a vaccine directly from their healthcare provider.

"We want New Jerseyans to be clear. If they want a COVID-19 vaccine, they can get one," said Acting Commissioner Jeff Brown of the New Jersey Department of Health.

The state-level action follows recent changes at the federal level that have caused uncertainty.

To learn more, click [here](#), [here](#), or view [here](#).

Dr. Jermyn Appointed to Vice Chancellor of Virtua Health College

Richard Jermyn, DO, dean of the [Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine](#) (Rowan-Virtua SOM), will now also serve as vice chancellor of the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences of Rowan University, overseeing its three schools. In this expanded role, Dr. Jermyn will oversee the college's academic, research, and clinical affairs.

With three vibrant schools, the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences of Rowan University is an essential part of New Jersey's work to address predicted shortages of nurses, doctors, and other health professionals in the state. Driven by empowerment, excellence, and inclusion, this historic partnership impacts clinical care, education, and innovative research now and for decades to come.

"We're approaching three years that Virtua and Rowan unveiled plans for this incredible partnership, and it's been a treasure participating in this journey to see how far we have already come," said Jennifer Khelil, EVP & chief clinical officer. "We work well together because of compatible values and a shared desire to advance the health and well-being of the South Jersey communities we serve. And we know that Dr. Jermyn will now take us to newer heights that continue to draw from the worthy resources of both our missions."

Founder of the NeuroMusculoskeletal Institute and considered a pioneer in the field of pain management, Dr. Jermyn is one of the most influential health care leaders in the nation, whose clinical trial research interests have exceeded \$25 million in extramural funding. He knows the power of like-minded collaboration.

“Together, Virtua and Rowan are national leaders in innovation, with an unwavering focus on improving health and empowering the well-being of everybody we teach and everyone we reach,” he said. “We offer an inclusive, team-based, and high-quality learning experience developed from teaching and researching principles that advance all aspects of human health. The college also provides a home for research and provides clinical care to South Jersey’s most vulnerable populations. I am so excited to be a part of bringing our very talented clinicians together for the betterment of our community.”

In addition to Dr. Jermyn’s appointment, the college announced the following appointments:

- Terri Drye, MBA, FACHE, who previously served as system vice president, chief human resources officer for the university and the college’s chief administrative officer, will now focus on growing Rowan’s partnership with Virtua and advancing the college. Her new title is senior associate dean for Rowan-Virtua SOM and Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences chief administrative officer.
- Dianne Langford, PhD, will serve as dean of Rowan-Virtua School of Translational Biomedical Engineering & Sciences and associate vice chancellor for the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences.

Read more in [New Jersey Business Magazine](#) and [Rowan Today](#).

Important Notice: Discontinuation of Fluoroscopic Defocography Services

The Virtua Radiology Department has discontinued its fluoroscopic defocography services effective Sept. 2.

“We recognize that this service has been an important resource for many of our valued medical staff and their patients,” said Gregory J. Goodworth, MD, Virtua’s chief of radiology. “We are committed to ensuring a smooth transition for all patients affected by this closure.”

To that end, Virtua has developed a transition plan with the following key components:

- **For current patients:** All patients with existing appointments through December will have their fluoroscopy defocography exams performed.
- **For future patients:** We will continue to offer MRI defocography.

- **Alternative resources:** For providers and patients who still desire fluoroscopic defocography exams, the Hospital at the University of Pennsylvania offers this service.
- **Point of contact:** For any questions regarding the transition process, please contact our radiology directors:
 - Audrey Lanzalotti at 856-247-2294 or alanzalotti@virtua.org
 - Deana Carducci at 609-914-6015 or dcarducci@virtua.org

“We understand you may have concerns about how this change will affect your patients,” said Dr. Goodworth. “We are grateful for your trust and collaboration in caring for our community. We are confident that through careful planning, we can ensure that patients continue to receive the care they need with minimal disruption.”

Just Breathe, Breathing Life Into Innovative Therapies for ARDS

Virtua Research periodically shares trials for your consideration. Just Breathe is a phase 2 clinical platform trial investigating multiple therapeutic options for the treatment of hospitalized patients with acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). A brief synopsis of the eligibility criteria is listed below. Physician colleagues are vital to the success of the research program, even when they are not participating as investigators. Emilio Mazza, MD, PhD, medical director of the ICU at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, is the principal investigator for this new trial.

Currently, there are no FDA-approved therapeutics for acute respiratory distress syndrome. Identifying new treatments for patients with ARDS remains challenging since ARDS is a highly heterogeneous condition. Many drugs have been tested in previous clinical studies with no success, although post-hoc analyses often provide positive signals in subsets of patients with ARDS. Therefore, there is an urgent need to understand the clinical and biological features of ARDS to better classify patients into sub-phenotypes that might be more responsive to a given therapy.

This study is a multicenter, randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blinded, platform clinical trial that allows investigational products (IPs) to be added and dropped during the study for efficient testing of IPs against placebo within the same study infrastructure. This phase 2 platform clinical trial will evaluate the safety and efficacy of host-directed therapies in hospitalized adults diagnosed

with ARDS. As a hypothesis-generating study, this study is intended to gather as much data as possible on the ARDS patient population to better inform future clinical studies.

A brief synopsis of the eligibility criteria is listed below.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Participant with signs and symptoms of ARDS according to the Berlin definition of ARDS. Note that participants on noninvasive ventilation may be screened.
- Condition is precipitated by an acute predisposing risk factor, including, but not limited to, pneumonia (viral or bacterial), non-pulmonary infection, and/or shock.

Exclusion Criteria

- Participant with ARDS or at risk of developing ARDS due to the following reasons: trauma, large volume aspiration, or transfusion.
- Participant with pulmonary edema due to cardiogenic pulmonary edema/fluid overload or hypoxemia primarily attributable to atelectasis, in the absence of a predisposing risk factor for ARDS.

The remaining inclusion/exclusion criteria are extensive and can be shared by reaching out to our research team. If you have a patient who meets the criteria above, please contact the Virtua Research team at research@virtua.org and a research coordinator will review their eligibility with you.

The Importance of Alzheimer's Disease Research

One-third of people older than 85 in the United States are estimated to live with Alzheimer's disease today, according to the National Institute on Aging.

"The condition's characteristic long, slow decline places an enormous burden on families and on society," said geriatrician Kevin Overbeck, DO, director Rowan-Virtua New Jersey Institute for Successful Aging (NJISA). "It's a complex disease that requires multidisciplinary research across a wide range of specialties. It's why all that we can do in treating this disease is important, most paramount being the caretaking for those currently afflicted along with providing support for their families, but especially to be tenacious in our research."

Virtua has worked in close collaboration with NJISA, a nationally recognized center of excellence within the Rowan -Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine,

to support early detection programs and receive coaching from the Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative (DAC), a global initiative to prevent Alzheimer's and improve brain health. DAC's Healthcare System Preparedness Program includes more than 70 program sites across 19 countries. Virtua is the only participant in New Jersey. Read more about the collaborative [here](#).

Join Virtua at the Walk to End Alzheimer's THIS SATURDAY

The attention to research is a reason Virtua is sponsoring the Walk to End Alzheimer's at Cooper River Park. Please join us as we continue to raise awareness and walk in solidarity with those affected by this disease and their families and caregivers. Feel free to spread the word.

When: Saturday, Sept. 13, Registration at 8:30 a.m., ceremony at 10 a.m., walk at 10:30 a.m.

Where: Cooper River Park, Pennsauken

Registration is free, and no donation is required (though always appreciated). Register today by clicking [here](#).

SJ Mag Media and South Jersey Magazine **Release Top Physicians Lists**

Congratulations to the many Virtua physicians included in *SJ Mag Media's* 2025 Top Docs list. Check out the complete list [here](#).

South Jersey Magazine's Top Physicians 2025 list includes many familiar names as well. To consult that full list, click [here](#).

Practicing Excellence

This week, we continue to focus on the Guiding Principle, **WE Invite Belonging**. [Click to view the tips by track.](#)

Virtua Urgent Care Patient Reviews Up 207% Since July

Google patient reviews for Virtua Urgent Care locations show a remarkably impressive upswing for all [Virtua urgent care locations](#). The number of reviews received so far this year has already surpassed all of 2024's total. The feedback includes 173 reviews in August alone (a 207% increase from July) with a 4.93-

star average rating. The centers continue to exceed industry benchmarks in the categories of quality, bedside manner, staff, and wait time.

“The most important element that we provide is thoughtful and compassionate care to the people we serve,” said Elyse Morel, MD, lead clinician for the Urgent Care service line. “So far this year, our urgent cares have completed over 94,000 visits. We are Here for Good to provide high quality care and positive experiences to our community at each and every encounter.”

“Our strong Google star ratings reflect the outstanding experiences our clinicians and staff provide to our patients every single day. The number of reviews received is a direct result of a coordinated team effort to actively welcome our patients to express their feedback,” said Rob Baron, VP of VMG operations. “We listen to what our patients have to say and are pleased that their feedback represents a strong sense of loyalty and trust in our service.”

Here are some sample reviews recently received:

“This is the best urgent care I’ve ever been to. The staff are all so friendly and polite!”

“They were the absolute best! I was highly anxious, and they had such a calming/reassuring presence that made me feel much more comfortable.”

“They made me feel like I had been their patient for years. I highly recommend this clinic.”

“I’m currently not feeling well and had no desire on a Sunday to visit an urgent care (from mediocre previous experiences). But since my wife insisted, I went. These folks made that a wonderful decision.”

What Patients Are Saying About Our Clinicians

Positive feedback continues to come in from our patients. Note the following recent examples and how the patient felt about the experience, and the clinician referenced:

“She and her staff were wonderful. I was treated as a family member. I am a very happy patient!” (**Rita Butler, MD** – Vascular Medicine, Interventional Cardiology)

“Dr. Chong was very friendly, with a terrific personality. He examined me and knew exactly what the problem was. He said he could fix this today, and yes, he did.” (**Christopher Chong, MD** – Sports Medicine)

“She is a wonderful doctor. Very caring, easy to talk to, and extremely knowledgeable. I've never had a doctor as great as her.” (**Michele Tartaglia, DO** – Obstetrics and Gynecology)

“Dr. Klinger is not only a great doctor, but also a caring person who treats you more like family instead of just another patient. He takes the time to listen to you, not only about your ailment, but about your life and family as well. He doesn't rush you out.” (**Frederick Klinger, DO** – Infectious Diseases)

“Excellent bedside manner. She truly listens.” (**Julia Lancaster, APN** – Obstetrics and Gynecology)

“Dr. Margolin was unbelievably considerate. He was gentle while doing the exam. His staff was kind and knew how to relax me before meeting the doctor. I would recommend this office to everyone.” (**Greg Margolin, MD** – Obstetrics and Gynecology)

“Everyone from the staff to the surgeon was warm, welcoming, and very competent. All of my questions were answered, all of my fears dissipated.” (**Gregg Baranski, MD** – General Surgery)

“I have had an outstanding experience with Dr. Sharma, his entire staff, and Virtua. He has a very friendly and comfortable manner. The support I receive as a patient is without limit. (**Gaurav Sharma, MD** – Bariatric Surgery)

“She and her team are second to none. Thank you, Dr. Shemanski and your team, for everything. I can never thank you enough for all you've done for me!” (**Kimberly Shemanski, MD** – Thoracic Surgery)

Virtua Spotlighted for Innovation in Robotic-Assisted, Minimally Invasive Care

Virtua was presented as a thought leader at this year's Intuitive 360 Conference held this past weekend in San Diego. The annual event hosted by Intuitive Surgical is for executive, clinical, and operational leaders in health care organizations using robotic technology. It focuses on advancing program excellence in robotic-assisted, minimally invasive care through team learning, technology innovation, data insights, and strategic planning.

Craig Zaretsky, MD, chairman of Virtua's department of surgery, and Jacqueline Wills, director of robotic services, took the stage to discuss Virtua's implementation of innovative growth strategies centered on activating the right

approach at the right time. They relayed key insights on Virtua's robotic surgery success and shared how to leverage the ecosystem effectively to support health system goals and objectives.

"What we are doing at Virtua through our commitment to the latest technology and investment in advanced surgical robots resonates nationally because patients everywhere can benefit from the options provided through robotic-assisted surgical expertise," said Dr. Zaretsky. "We're using small incisions, so recovery is faster and there's less chance of infection. It allows us to operate with greater precision, resulting in quicker recovery time so our patients can return to their normal activities."

[For pictures and more, click here for LinkedIn.](#)

Dr. Lieb and Surgical Residents Discuss Carotid Artery Intervention

Virtua vascular surgeon Michael Lieb, DO, FACS, FSVS, RPVI, [posted on LinkedIn](#) about a "very successful" journal club gathering with the Virtua Health general surgery residents discussing carotid artery interventions. "They all did a great job presenting the NASCET, ACAS, CREST, and ROADSTER2 studies, followed by an overview our institutional experience with transcarotid artery revascularization (TCAR)."

It's always great to see our clinicians' postings, and we will continue to like and share. Onward and upward.

See you on social!

More of Virtua in the News

AMA Honors Virtua for Commitment to Doctors' Well-Being

[As reported last week in *Clinician Update*](#), Virtua has received the American Medical Association's Joy in Medicine® designation. Virtua is one of about 100 nationwide to earn this important distinction, which recognizes institutions that address physician burnout. Read more in [ROI-NJ](#), [BINJE](#), and [Virtua's press release](#).

Virtua Leaders Share Strategies to Support Clinical Teams and Well-Being

In light of a new national report on rising physician productivity, two Virtua executives discussed how the organization supports doctors and their teams—

benefitting both clinicians and patients. Sam Weiner, MD, VMG's VP and chief medical officer, cited enhancements to the electronic medical record system that allow clinicians to get through clinic visits quicker and with more direct contact with the patients. This has a direct and positive impact on clinician well-being, another important focus for our organization. Clinician retention has driven increased productivity at Virtua Medical Group, noted Daniel McGovern, MBA, VMG's VP of finance. Read in [Health Leaders](#).

Virtua Urges Congress to Extend Hospital at Home

Virtua is among 52 health systems that are asking Congress to enact a five-year extension of government reimbursement for [hospital-at-home](#) services. The funding program, which allows the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to pay for acute hospital care at home, is set to expire on Sept. 30. Congress has introduced bipartisan bills that, if signed into law, would continue the funding through 2030. Read in [Becker's Hospital Review](#).

More Coverage of Nursing Innovation Fund Award

Virtua is one of just 20 organizations nationally to receive the prestigious 2025 Nursing Innovation Fund award from AARP and the American Association of Critical Care Nurses. We shared an initial media story last week and are pleased to provide new articles in [New Jersey Business Magazine](#), [ROI-NJ](#), and [Gloucester City News](#).

Virtua Executive Named a Top CFO

An industry publication has included Bob Segin, Virtua's EVP and chief financial officer, on its list of academic medical center CFOs to know. Read about Bob's numerous accomplishments in [Becker's Hospital Review](#).

Upcoming Calendar

Sept. 20, Annual Haddon Avenue Street Festival

Virtua is once again proud to support the Haddon Avenue Street Festival, which will take place on Saturday, Sept. 20. The street festival lines Haddon Avenue just a few blocks north of Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. Virtua's Community Health Engagement, Heart Failure, Eat Well, and Dental Center teams will be on hand at the event. To learn more, click [here](#).

15th Annual Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium, Oct. 4

Join us for this year's Cardiology for Primary Care, part of the Key Essentials for Optimizing Patient Care five-block CME series presented by the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine and offering up to 5.5 AOA Category 1-A and 5.5 AMA PRA Category 1 credits™.

The event will take place virtually on Saturday, Oct. 4, from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. This year's agenda includes the following topics and speakers:

- Geriatric Medicine - Kevin Overbeck, DO
- Advances in Hypertension Treatment - Kimberly Hagen, PA
- Aortic Disease: What PCPs Should Know - Eden Payabyab, MD
- Evaluation and Treatment of the Female Cardiac Patient - Nikhita Kothari, DO
- Achieving Health Equity in the Cardiovascular Population - Troy Randle, DO
- Cardiac Manifestations of Rheumatologic Conditions - Humaira Khan, MD
- The Cardiac-Pulmonary Interface - Jonathan Galli, MD

The registration fee for the individual Cardiology for Primary Care program is \$149. (VMG clinicians: this event—and the series—is reimbursable through your annual CME allotment.) These events are free to residents, fellows, and medical students. [Go here to register for this event.](#)

Note: The full five-block series includes (in addition to cardiology) content featuring psychiatry, geriatrics, pediatrics, and women's health. Registration for the full series is \$695. [Go here to review the full brochure and for more details.](#) For questions about the series, email at cme@rowan.edu.

Coming Soon: Epic Fall 2025 Upgrade

Virtua's IT team is testing and validating the newest Epic upgrade version (May 2025, 11.4), which is scheduled to go live on **Thursday, Oct. 9.**

Remembering

On this 24th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, we finish with this quote:

"If we learn nothing else from this tragedy, we learn that life is short and there is no time for hate."

— Sandy Dahl, wife of Flight 93 pilot Jason Dahl



Virtua Health

303 Lippincott Drive, Marlton, NJ 08053

You received this email because you are subscribed to Marketing Information from Virtua.

[Unsubscribe](#)

[Digital Services Privacy Statement](#)