

Clinician Update August 18, 2022

Making History: Rowan University Hosts White Coat Ceremony

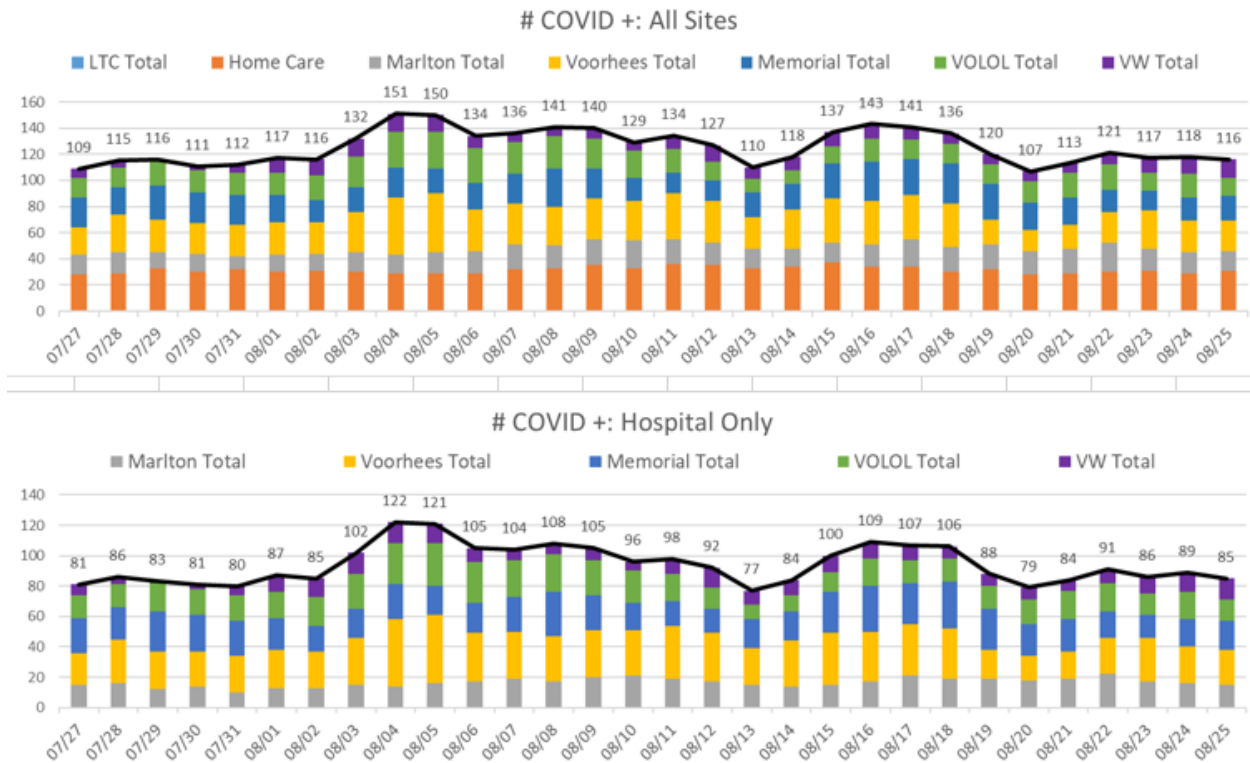


Last weekend, the Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine officially welcomed 288 future physicians with a special celebration at its Glassboro campus. The Class of 2026 is ever more celebrated as it is the largest class in the program's history, and is the largest of any New Jersey medical school.

The Class of 2026 is the first to enroll at Rowan following its affiliation with Virtua. Fittingly, Virtua's Dr. Reg Blaber, executive vice president and chief clinical officer, provided welcoming remarks along with Rowan faculty and leadership. Dr. Blaber told the future physicians, "The most powerful healing tool of all will always be the compassion and empathy that we show our patients." [Watch this video of the 2022 White Coat ceremony and to hear Dr. Blaber's full remarks.](#)

To read more about the white coat ceremony, [visit the Rowan website.](#)

COVID-19 Census



Latest COVID-19 Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is as of yesterday: 0.86.
- The total number of cases reported as of 3 p.m. yesterday:
 - Atlantic County 63,831 cases
 - Burlington County: 100,447 cases
 - Camden County: 122,081 cases
 - Gloucester County: 62,615 cases
- COVID-associated mortality for Camden, Burlington, Gloucester, and Atlantic counties: 4,835.
- The state’s Vaccination Overview dashboard reported 18,482,490 doses of vaccine have been administered.

Adapted from the NJHA Coronavirus Update August 24, 2022

- **Study Reaffirms Dubious Benefits of Three Drugs:** A new study finds that three repurposed drugs – metformin, ivermectin and fluvoxamine – displayed no effectiveness in protecting individuals against COVID-related ED visits, hospitalization or death. [The study, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*](#), evaluated these drugs in preventing serious SARS-CoV-2 infection in non-hospitalized adults who had been enrolled within three days after a confirmed diagnosis of infection and less than seven days after the onset of symptoms. The patients were between the ages of 30 and 85 years, and all had a BMI associated with being overweight or obese. The primary composite endpoint was hypoxemia (less than or equal to 93 percent oxygen saturation on home oximetry), emergency department visit, hospitalization or death. A total of 1,323 individuals were included in the primary analysis.

The phase 3 trial, using a double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled design, found that none of the drugs prevented hypoxemia, ED visits, hospitalization and death among those infected with SARS-CoV-2.

- **Workout to Fight COVID:** A new study suggests that regular exercise may have benefits in resisting COVID-19 infection and minimizing its severity. The data review and meta-analysis of 16 published studies found that at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity weekly (or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise) was linked to lower risk of COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, severe illness and death. The analysis drew on data gathered between November 2019 and March 2022, when the Beta and Delta variants were predominant. Compared with non-exercisers, those who engaged in physical activity had the following reduced risks: COVID-19 infection (-11%), hospitalization (-36%), severe COVID-19 (-44%) and COVID-related death (-43%). The study was [published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*](#).

Monkeypox: Latest NJ Resources

- The total number of cases in New Jersey reported as of today: **450**
- Monkeypox vaccination is available for NJ eligible residents at [selected locations](#) by appointment only.
- The NJ Department of Health (NJDOH) has created a webinar to share the facts about monkeypox (hMPXV), its symptoms, how it spreads, testing, and vaccinations from experts. [Watch the webinar here.](#)
- NJDOH has a [demographic dashboard](#) on people infected with monkeypox in the state.
- For Alerts, Vaccine Information, Education Materials, as well information for healthcare providers and local health departments, click here for [monkeypox resource information from NJDOH.](#)

Defense is the Best Offense

Colleague Flu Vaccination Program Begins Wednesday, Aug. 31

Virtua will soon release the flu vaccination schedule for colleagues. Help protect our patients, visitors, and yourselves from the flu by getting a flu vaccination.

Flu shots are mandatory for all Virtua colleagues. Virtua will begin offering free flu shots on **Wednesday, Aug. 31**. All colleagues should receive their flu shots by 11:59 p.m. on **Tuesday, Nov. 1**.

Click to view [frequently asked questions and answers about flu vaccinations](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and share the [flyer](#) with your team members.

Register Today: Cardiology for Primary Care Sept. 10 (In-Person Event)

Join us for the 12th Annual Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium, a continuing medical education program offering a maximum of 5 AOA Category 1-A/5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. The program will be held **in person** at Rowan College at Burlington County in Mount Laurel (with a livestream option). Masking and other COVID cautions will be in effect. [Register now.](#)

Event details:

12th Annual Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium

Sept. 10, 2022

6:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Rowan College at Burlington County

Votta Hall, 900 College Circle
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

This year's agenda includes presentations on: cardiac monitoring; structural heart and TAVR; chest pain in children and adolescents; cardiac rehab; heart failure medications; geriatric cardiology; peripheral vascular assessments; and the cardiovascular effect and impact from tobacco use.

The registration fee is \$149, and includes instruction, education materials, continental breakfast, refreshment breaks, and lunch. Parking is free. Questions? Email VirtuaClinician@virtua.org.

Virtua in the News

- **A Facebook Post—and Advanced Transplant Surgery—Saved Man's Life.** A Texas woman responded to a South Jersey stranger's online plea for a kidney donor. A few months later, Dr. John Radomski, a Virtua surgeon, oversaw the lifesaving transplant at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. Recently, the donor, recipient, and their families met for the first time and celebrated their very special bond. Read in the [Press of Atlantic City](#) and [Christian Broadcasting Network](#).
- **Colleges Need to Prepare for Monkeypox.** Dr. Martin Topiel, Virtua's chief infection officer, said colleges should educate students about how to protect themselves from infection and promote vaccination for people considered at high risk. For example, people who are sexually active need to take precautions. And while monkeypox can also spread through respiratory secretions, it appears that exposure must last about three hours or more for someone to become infected that way, he noted. Read in [PhillyVoice](#).

Virtua Health Marks Ukraine Independence Day with Fundraiser Event

Yesterday, **Aug. 24** was Ukraine Independence Day. In anticipation of the holiday, six Virtua campuses hosted special fundraisers yesterday to support humanitarian aid in the war-torn country. The Virtua cafeterias prepared and served Ukrainian meals—based on recipes provided by a Ukrainian-American colleague—and proceeds from the sales will be donated to reputable relief organizations through Virtua's philanthropy team.

Several local news outlets visited Virtua Voorhees Hospital to learn more about Virtua's commitment to being Here for Good and to meet colleague Olena Pikhotska and her family. Olena is a native of Ukraine and is understandably concerned for the health and safety of brother, nephews, and other relatives. This spring, her 85-year-old mother took a harrowing trip across Europe in order to escape the war and live with her daughter in New Jersey.

Olena's daughter, Iryna Pikhotska, is a Virtua nurse. She said, "We are extremely grateful that Virtua has created this fundraising opportunity, and that the staff is being so supportive."

To hear more from the Pikhotska family, please watch these news clips from [NBC10](#), [6abc](#), and [CBS3](#).

We Invite You to Join the AHA Heart Walk

At Virtua, colleague well-being is a priority. The [WE Thrive](#) page provides resources supporting the six key areas of well-being: physical, emotional, social, financial, spiritual, and intellectual.

Upcoming for WE Thrive:

Virtua Health is a sponsor for the American Heart Association's (AHA) **2022 Southern New Jersey Fall Heart Walk** and our very own Dr. Reg Blaber is the chair for the event.

This week, we spotlight Karen Murray, clinical data quality administrator for VMG coding and captain of the VMG coding team. Karen shares why she is participating in the Heart Walk.

Why are you participating in the AHA Heart Walk?

I am participating in the Heart Walk because I am a survivor. In June 2021, I had a major heart attack, with a 100% blockage in my LAD, also known as the "widow maker." With my condition, I was told that I was lucky that I even made it to the hospital. Many people with my blockage are not as lucky as I was. After an emergency cardiac catheter procedure and drug eluting stent placement, I beat the odds, and I am forever grateful to my Virtua providers for getting me back to where I need to be. Participation in the Heart Walk is my way to give back to the AHA.

What's something you'd like to share about your Heart Walk team?

I started my Heart Walk team for a couple reasons. First, anything heart-related hits home for me. I share my story to make people aware of the signs and symptoms of heart attack in women. Heart disease does not discriminate. Second, I want to get people involved with this amazing cause. I invited my family, friends, and VMG coding team to join my Heart Walk team. My team is still small, but I am hopeful that as the event gets closer, it will grow. The team goal is \$2,500, and we are at 36% of that goal. But more importantly, I am hoping to hit 50% participation of walkers and/or donors.

What does Virtua's role in the Heart Walk mean to you?

The AHA reports that approximately 82.6 million people in the U.S. currently have one or more forms of CVD (cardiovascular disease). Virtua is a pillar in this community and sponsoring this event is another way they give back. I am honored to be a part of the Virtua team.

What is the meaning behind the photo you selected to represent your team?

I chose a photo of my mom and me to represent my team. My mom also suffers from heart disease—specifically, hypertension, atrial fibrillation, and congestive heart failure. I am the youngest of five children, and after I had a heart attack, my mom said, "I've always worried about your sister and brothers, but I never had to worry about you—until now." I think that broke my heart as much as the heart attack did. If I had the means of getting my mom's scooter to the Heart Walk, she would ride along with us.

[Registration](#) for the walk is open now. Be sure to select Virtua Health as your participating organization to receive your shirt for the day of the event. The AHA Heart Walk will take place on **Saturday, Oct. 22** at Riverwinds Community Center in West Deptford. Check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. and the start time is 10 a.m.

Reminder: Virtua Visitation Policy

In accordance with Virtua's [Visitor Policy and Guidelines](#) and our patient and family-centered care philosophy, Virtua promotes visiting hours and the direct involvement of support people or CarePartners in the patient's healing and recovery process. The philosophy is to meet the personal, emotional, spiritual, physical and psychosocial needs of the patient.

Virtua does not restrict, limit, or deny visitation based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

However, all visitors are required to abide by certain rules and regulations in an effort to provide an optimal environment for all Virtua patients and residents.

One of those regulations is to stop at the Information Desk to receive a Visitor's Pass. The Pass must be visible at all times. **Off duty employees and off duty volunteers are considered visitors**, and they must adhere to this policy and stop at the Information Desk to receive a pass.

For additional details about visiting at Virtua and the Visitor Policy and Guidelines, [click here](#). We encourage you to share the policy with your team members and emphasize the directive of stopping at the Information Desk to receive a visitor's pass when visiting a loved one at a Virtua care facility.

Thank you for your leadership and continued support.

Policy Alert – Virtua Research Investigators

If you are a potential or current investigator in a research study that is funded by the Public Health Service (PHS), you must comply with Virtua's policy regarding PHS conflict of interest. This [notification letter](#) by Dr. Reg Blaber, EVP and chief clinical officer, alerts investigators to fully understand what is required of the [Virtua Public Health Service \(PHS\) Research Financial Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

This policy is designed to promote objectivity and eliminate bias in research and to ensure compliance with federal guidelines. Incidentally, the term "investigator" means any individual, regardless of title or position, who is responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of PHS sponsored research, or proposals for such funding.

If you have questions, contact the Office of Research Administration at researchreview@virtua.org.