

Clinician Update

Dec. 10, 2020

TONIGHT! COVID-19 Vaccination Webinar Part 1– What You Need to Know

Please join us **tonight at 5:30 p.m.** as Virtua’s clinical leaders share Part 1 in a two-part series on COVID-19. This first session will focus on the latest vaccine developments. A second webinar next week will highlight Virtua’s strategy for vaccine distribution. All VMG, members of Virtua’s Clinically Integrated Networks, and Virtua medical staff are invited to attend.

Please note that you may have received a previous Skype invitation, but due to anticipated audience levels, we have switched to a Zoom format.

Important: Please use *this* Zoom link to join the webinar

<https://zoom.us/j/97937561084?pwd=Nkl5aWVpZjVWcFJmaHBRRkcreVFkdz09>

Webinar ID: 979 3756 1084

Passcode: 031421

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +13126266799,,97937561084#,,,,,0#,,031421# or +19292056099,,97937561084#,,,,,0#,,031421#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782

More Questions Answered on the COVID-19 Vaccine

Below is a continuation of our ongoing vaccine Q&A with Virtua’s in-house experts on infectious diseases, Drs. Martin Topiel and Alejandro Herrera, as well as Virtua’s Chief Clinical Officer, Dr. Reg Blaber. Please email your questions to virtuainfo@virtua.org.

Plain and simple: Should I get vaccinated?

Vaccination appears to provide protection from COVID-19 infection in more than 94 percent of study participants in the Pfizer and Moderna trials. These studies included more than 40,000 and 30,000 participants, respectively. Furthermore, those who have underlying illness, such as diabetes, obesity, or chronic kidney disease – who are at higher risk to advance to more severe COVID illness – show protection as well. There was only one presentation of a severe case of infection that developed in the Pfizer trial, and none in the Moderna trial, giving much optimism.

The Pfizer study has been released via the FDA’s website and can be found [here](#). A similar study from Moderna is expected next week.

Consider the following questions regarding the vaccines:

- What is my risk of developing infection?
- What is the likelihood of the infection becoming severe?
- What are my potential exposures as a healthcare provider? What are the potential exposures for/from the other members of my household?

What impact would it have on my family if I developed infection?

Balance any potential downside of the vaccine in terms of safety as to whether that would stop or prevent you from vaccinating.

Bear in mind: Infection is pervasive in the community, so exposure potential is significant both at work and in the community. On December 6, the State of New Jersey reported 6,046 new COVID cases *in one day*. More than 600 of those cases required critical care, and, sadly, 54 people died within a 24-hour window because of COVID infections.

As to safety?

The mRNA vaccines of Pfizer and Moderna **do not** have live virus. Yes, some reactions to the injection can occur – including pain at the site, fatigue, muscle aches, headaches, chills, and fever – but these resolve within a few days.

Some would say the undesired reactions indicate the response of your immune system. To this point, no significant safety events or longer-term reactions have been reported to the public in association with either vaccine candidate.

How can I find more information about the vaccine?

There is opportunity for the public to view the FDA hearings as livestream events. Today's hearing on Pfizer has been captured [here](#). The purpose of these events is to provide transparency and full disclosure for those who are inclined to participate.

Excellent summaries on the [Moderna](#) and [Pfizer](#) vaccines are also available on the *Wall Street Journal* website, although you may need a subscription to access the information.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also prepared fact sheets on vaccine safety and related topics. Each of them is available in a print-friendly format and in five different languages, including Spanish. To change the language, click the tab toward the top of each webpage.

- [Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [8 Things to Know about Vaccine Planning](#)
- [Understanding How COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)

Are you going to get the vaccine?

Yes. As health care providers, we recognize that we have a heightened risk of exposure to COVID-19. Because of this, each of us intends to take advantage of this opportunity that will most likely protect ourselves from getting sick and from potentially passing on the virus to our family, colleagues, and patients.

This is not a hastily made decision. Rather, it is the result of reviewing the data, assessing the risk, and safety, and recognizing the role that vaccines have played in eradicating other diseases in the past. The decision to get vaccinated is one that everyone will have to make for themselves. Our goal for the days and weeks ahead is to provide all colleagues with as much factual well-researched information as possible to support their decision-making.

Vaccine Q&A will continue in upcoming editions of Clinician Update.

6.4 days

Across Virtua, the average length-of-stay for hospital patients diagnosed with COVID-19 decreased from **10.3 days** in spring 2020 to **6.4 days** today.

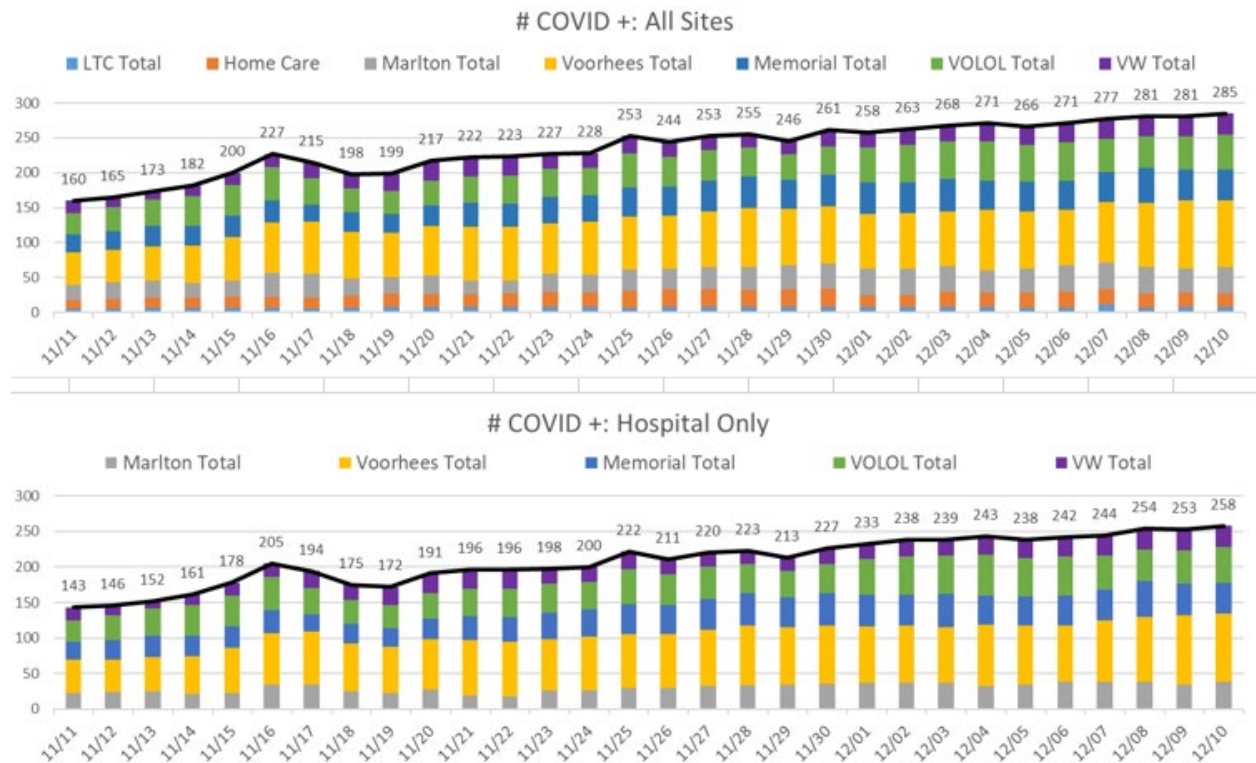
This is largely due to evolving and improving COVID-19 treatments.

 Virtua Fast Fact



By the Numbers

The following charts reflect the latest figures for Virtua-site cases of COVID-19.



Fast Facts

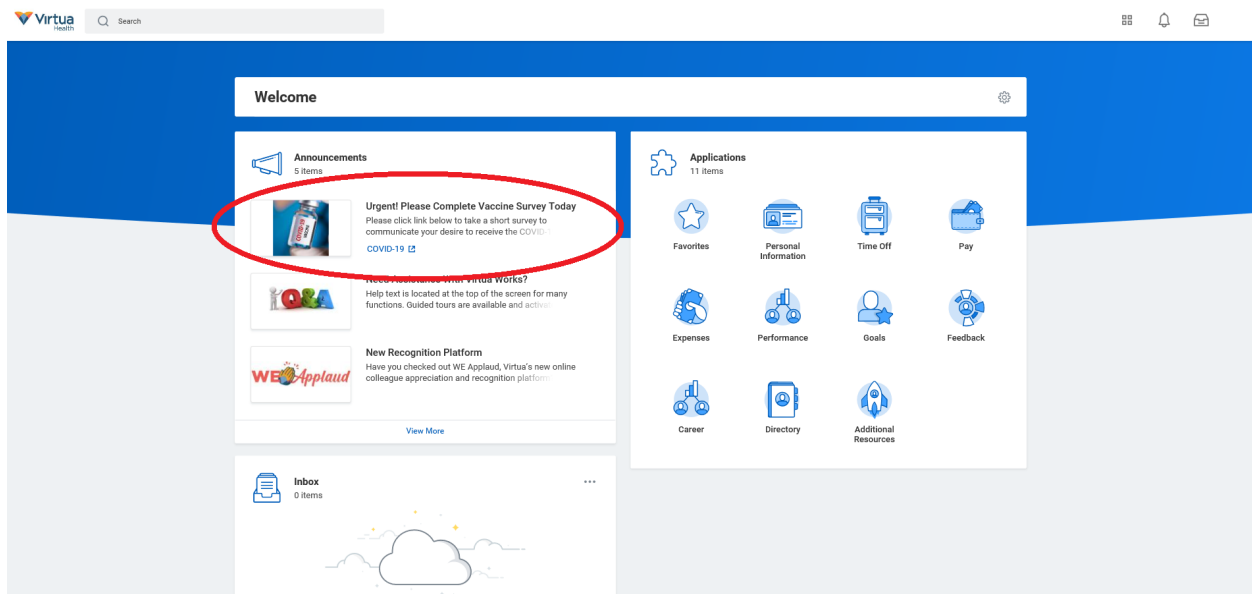
- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is currently at 1.12

- Locally, in the tri-county area, there have been a total of 1,487 confirmed deaths, as of 1 p.m. today. The state also reports “probable” deaths from COVID-19, with figures shared separately on the [state dashboard](#). For the three counties, probable deaths would account for an additional 111 fatalities.
- The total number of cases are as follows:
 - Burlington County 16,264
 - Camden County 22,740
 - Gloucester County 10,959

There’s Still Time, but Act Now to Take the COVID-19 Vaccine Survey

Virtua Health expects to receive its first shipment of a COVID-19 vaccine in the coming days. In-house teams are working diligently to orchestrate the process and want to hear from all colleagues about their desire to receive the vaccine in the near future.

Employed Physicians (VMG): Please visit Virtua Works on the VINE to complete a three-question survey about COVID-19 vaccinations. The survey link is on the left hand side of the Virtua Works homepage under Announcements. (See image below.) Please encourage fellow colleagues to complete the survey as well, regardless of whether they are in a patient-facing role.



Non-Employed Physicians: We have created a survey for you to gauge and track interest. Take the three-question survey here: <https://virtuamarketing.survey.fm/covid-20>.

Information about the vaccine and its distribution is ever-evolving. Please pay close attention to all Virtua communications over the next few weeks to ensure you do not miss vital information.

Virtual COVID-19 Emotional Support Group Provides Platform for Recovering Patients

Virtua offers a virtual support group for South Jersey residents who have recovered from or are currently experiencing COVID-19. The group meets virtually and bi-weekly on Monday evenings, with

their next sessions on Dec. 14 and Dec. 28 from 7 to 8 p.m.

If you have patients experiencing the ongoing physical and emotional challenges caused by COVID-19, encourage them to register by emailing ACSupport@virtua.org. A Zoom link will be sent upon registration.

Virtua's Journey to High Reliability: A Focus on No Harm and Got Your Back

As part of Virtua's High Reliability journey and pursuit of Zero Harm, we are featuring two Safety Behaviors of the Month. In December, we highlight No Harm and Got Your Back.

No Harm

If you are ever uncertain of a situation because the information doesn't seem right, then you should stop all work activities. Clinicians should encourage colleagues at every level of the organization to feel empowered to stop the line and seek clarity. This is an expected behavior— even if the concern turns out to be unfounded. Know harm, no harm. In fact, “stop” might be the most important four-letter word in health care.

Got Your Back

To practice this behavior, colleagues are encouraged to cross-check and coach each other.

How should we use this tool?

- When cross-checking, watch out for each other's work, use the lightest touch possible, and be willing to be checked — it's not personal.
- To coach colleagues, think 5:1 feedback, meaning encourage safe and productive behaviors five times as often as you correct an unsafe and unproductive behavior.
- Point out lapses, work conditions, or hazards that your colleague might not have noticed, including a floor that recently was mopped, a supply-room key left on the counter, or an order placed in the wrong chart.
- When receiving feedback, demonstrate a willingness to be checked by saying, “Thanks for the cross-check!”

By practicing these tools, we will point out and catch errors before they reach our patients. Additionally, we will hold each other accountable for following policy and procedure.

We invite you to give us an example of how you practice No Harm and Got Your Back. Email virtuainfo@virtua.org and your story may be featured in an upcoming Daily Huddle.

Virtua in the News

- **Virtua among local hospitals preparing to receive COVID-19 vaccine:** Dr. Reg Blaber, Virtua's executive VP and chief clinical officer, discussed vaccine preparations in this *Tap Into Camden* story. Read [here](#).
- **#MaskUp to slow COVID-19 spread:** Virtua leader Dr. John Matsinger spoke on *NJ Spotlight News* about a prominent national campaign to encourage mask wearing. Watch [here](#).
- **Virtua offers free support group for COVID-19 patients:** Gina Pimentel, manager of social work at Virtua, discussed this innovative, virtual program on *KYW Newsradio*. Listen and read [here](#).

- **Local brew raises \$200,000+ for charity:** Proceeds from Double Nickel Brewing Co.'s annual "Friends Giving" IPA support efforts to reduce hunger, including Virtua's Eat Well Mobile Farmers Market. Read this *Brew Bound* story [here](#).

In Case You Missed It: Star-Studded Hope for the Holidays Concert

Yesterday, Musicians on Call shared a star-studded virtual Hope for the Holidays concert exclusively for hospital patients, families, and caregivers.

This one-of-a-kind festive concert experience featured holiday messages from iconic artists, including Dolly Parton, Kelly Clarkson, and Billie Eilish, and uplifting performances by favorites like Leslie Odom Jr., Meghan Trainor, Josh Groban, HAIM, The Rockettes, and Pentatonix.

The concert is available to watch at your convenience now through **Wednesday, Jan. 6** on the Musicians on Call Virtual Program Portal.

We invite you to share the link and access code below with fellow colleagues, patients, and their families:

Link: https://connect.musiciansoncall.org/virtual_programs/holidays

Password: lourdes