

## Clinician Update

### December 12, 2024

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### Virtua Hospitals Roll Out Virtual Care Programs, ‘Smart’ Technologies

A new, high-tech program enables patients to interact with a medical expert via the TV in the patient’s hospital room. The initiative enhances patient support and communication, and far-away loved ones can even join these virtual meetings.

The care.ai program, now available at Virtua Willingboro, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes, and Virtua Voorhees, will expand to Virtua Mount Holly and Virtua Marlton next year. Virtua is the first health system in Greater Philadelphia to commit to transforming nearly every inpatient room into a “smart” room with virtual care capabilities—and is setting the standard for the industry.

“Virtual care reflects Virtua’s commitment to innovate and evolve in support of outstanding patient experiences,” said John Matsinger, DO, Virtua executive vice president and chief operating officer. “We are excited to be among the first to embrace this emerging care delivery model. In time, this technology will be the standard for the industry.”

Care.ai is just one part of Virtua’s investment in virtual care. Our Care After Discharge and Hospital at Home programs connect patients with the care they need from the comfort of their homes.

Local media recently covered a demonstration of care.ai, which helped prepare a patient for her discharge from Virtua Voorhees. Watch on [6 ABC](#) and [CBS 3](#). For more info on the program, read [here](#).

### Virtua Hospitals Receive National Recognition for Maternity and Newborn Care

Virtua’s three hospitals with maternity divisions are once again designated as “high performing” on *U.S. News & World Report’s* 2025 list of “Best Hospitals for Maternity Care.” In addition, Virtua Mount Holly and Virtua Voorhees hospitals join Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes with their redesignation as Baby-Friendly birth facilities by Baby-Friendly USA, Inc.

“We are honored to receive these designations,” said Nicole Lamborne, MD, vice president of clinical operations for women’s and children’s services at Virtua. “Our goal is to help our patients have a healthy pregnancy and safe delivery and ensure they have the support they need after birth. This recognition is evidence of the expertise of our medical staff and the effective protocols in place to assure successful outcomes and exceptional birth experiences for parents and their newborns.”

*U.S. News* evaluates maternity hospitals on multiple measures, such as rates of C-sections, newborn complications, and breastfeeding. Other criteria include frequency of routine vaginal birth after cesarean delivery, episiotomy rates, whether a hospital meets new federal criteria for “birthing-friendly”

practices, and whether a hospital tracked and reported their outcomes for patients of different races and ethnicities.

Meanwhile, the Baby-Friendly initiative helps mothers attain the knowledge, confidence, and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding. Virtua team members work diligently to implement best practices, including providing breastfeeding support and encouraging skin-to-skin contact right after birth to promote the healthiest start in life for our newborns.

For more details on these recognitions, click [here](#). Also, read in [NJ Biz](#) and the [Philadelphia Business Journal](#). Watch on [New Jersey News Network](#).

## **Virtua Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Expands to 28 Locations**

Virtua now has 28 physical therapy and rehabilitation locations, with the opening last week of Virtua Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation – Voorhees at Bowman Drive, located at 200 Bowman Drive, Suite E104. The center now joins a system-wide array of locations staffed by board-certified physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists.

“Whether a patient has experienced an injury, just underwent surgery, or has been diagnosed with a condition—we can deliver the care and support they need,” said Maria Franchio, vice president of VMG operations and Virtua rehabilitation services. “Across the system, our services include rehab for complex medical conditions, such as stroke, brain injuries, prosthetic training, joint replacement, neurologic disorders, and more. Even aquatic therapy is available, which is perfect for joint pain and arthritis-related rehabilitation, at our five therapy pools located throughout Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Virtua’s physical therapy and rehabilitation services and locations.

## **Virtua Chief Medical Officer Dr. Khelil Recognized Nationally**

A national publication for hospital systems has included Jennifer Khelil, DO, Virtua senior vice president and chief medical officer, among its “Chief Medical Officers to Know” for 2025. Dr. Khelil focuses on reliability, quality, safety, and patient outcomes. She helped establish Virtua's partnership with Rowan University and has increased opportunities for medical education at Virtua, among other achievements. Read in [Becker’s Hospital Review](#).

## **Dr. Berio-Dorta on Practicing Excellence: A Culture of Respect**

Raul Berio-Dorta, MD, a recent graduate of the Practicing Excellence Clinician Coach program, emphasizes the crucial role of respect in health care:

“Respect is required to create a safe, supportive environment where patients feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings. Respect is also necessary for providers and colleagues to feel valued and empowered. Respect gets everyone on the same page, and that directly translates to enhanced communication, reduced errors, and better overall experiences.

“I’m proud to be part of a health system that values respect. In fact, respect was the focus of the Colleague Culture survey earlier this year. Each day, I see colleagues use clear, empathic, and personalized language to help each patient feel respected as a unique individual. How we show up matters!”

This week's "Best of the Best" Practicing Excellence tip is about cultivating a culture of respect. Click to play the tip: [Respecting Each Other Tip #5: A Culture of Respect](#).

“The ‘Try This Challenge’ is to find an opportunity to step up and demonstrate respect, and then reflect upon the impact of that action,” said Dr. Berio-Dorta. “I am prepared to give it a try, and I hope you will join me.”

## 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:

“Greatest experience ever at a GYN office. Doctor Tyagi took the time to listen and explain things. She was not dismissive, and she validated my feelings. She was not in a rush, and that is so refreshing. The office staff was wonderful. They treat their patients with respect and care.” **(Sipika Tyagi, MD)**

“I’ve been with this office for 20 years, and I would NEVER want to go anywhere else. The staff and doctors have all been the best of the best throughout my 20 years and have provided me with the best care. Thank you!” **(Jacelyn Annett, APN)**

“This is the most impressive practice I have ever been to. And, at my age, I’ve been to many. From the initial appointment to my most recent visit, everyone has been professional, yet friendly, and amazingly efficient. The doctor is personable and knowledgeable, and ready to answer any questions.” **(James Kimbaris, MD)**

“At first, I was a little mad at him because he wouldn’t do the implant surgery unless I quit smoking. Needless to say, I am five months smoke-free! I’m very glad he got me to quit. He is an awesome doctor, and I understand now why I had to quit.” **(Alexander Au, MD)**

“Dr. Ramay was very kind and made you feel comfortable from the minute she introduced herself to me. She understood my hesitation but explained everything in detail and let me know she would be doing the procedure herself. The whole experience was very comfortable because she was so informative, kind, and compassionate. I will continue to follow her as needed in the future.” **(Fariha Ramay, MD)**

## Last Call: Cardiology Grand Rounds - Pulmonary Hypertension, Dec. 18

The next cardiology grand rounds will center on pulmonary hypertension. The virtual event will take place on **Wednesday, Dec. 18, from 7 to 8 a.m.**, and will feature Kerri Akaya Smith, MD. Dr. Smith is clinical director of the pulmonary hypertension/ pulmonary vascular disease program at Penn Medicine. The pulmonologist is an associate professor of clinical medicine specializing in pulmonary, allergy, and critical care. To join the event, click [here](#).

## Advances in Orthopedics: Latest in *Today Series*

Our most recent issue of the *Today* series of physician education newsletters is now posted to Digital 411. [Orthopedic Surgery Today](#) focuses on advances in hip preservation and replacement as minimally invasive strategies continue to improve surgery through the implementation of new, visually immersive technology.

“Degradation of the hip can start at a young age, from injuries, abnormalities, and repetitive motions—sometimes sports-related—and we can stabilize the health of the hip in these patients,” said Virtua hip preservation and joint replacement surgeon Greg Klingenstein, MD. “In addition, for the typically older patient who needs hip replacement, we now have a 3D visualization capability that provides us with an advantage in the operating room.”

Also featured in this issue is how Virtua orthopedists are collaborating with academic partner Rowan University to further develop an automated, image-guided system for precise alignment of fractured femurs.

To learn more, click here to view [Orthopedic Surgery Today](#).

## CME: Liver Disease and Transplantation, Jan. 28

The Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine will host a CME session entitled “[Liver Disease and Transplantation](#)” on **Tuesday, Jan. 28, from 12:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.** in the Physician Conference Room at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. The live activity is designated for *3.75 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*. The speakers include Simona Rossi, MD; Ashraf Malek, MD; and Ely Sebastian, MD.

The target audience for this activity is physicians, physician assistants, advanced nurse practitioners, medical residents, medical fellows, and nurses.

To register, go to The Virtua Learning System (VLS) and search “Liver Disease and Transplantation.” For more information, click [here](#).

## Delivering the Healing Power of Music Now and Year-Round

Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital will have another great year ahead with in-person, bedside performances by [Musicians on Call \(MOC\)](#), a nonprofit organization that has performed to more than 10,000 patients, staff, and visitors at the hospital in over a dozen years of performances.

While the in-person program is held at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes, every week there is an [ongoing virtual program](#) available on Wednesdays, as well as a Spanish-language virtual program on Tuesdays.

The healing power of live music, especially this time of the year, can be so worthwhile. Starting next week, Musicians On Call will be sharing its annual Hope for the Holidays Virtual Concert, created exclusively for patients, families, and caregivers in need of some extra holiday cheer. This festive virtual concert is filled with performances of holiday favorites and warm greetings from Brenda Lee, Dolly Parton, Better Than Ezra, Mickey Guyton, Alicia Witt, and more.

The program is available for all Virtua patients and caregivers, **Monday, Dec. 16 through Friday, Jan. 3 at 11:59 pm**. Use hospital code **lourdes** to access.

### **VOTE: 2025 Top Docs for Kids, Deadline Dec. 30**

It's that time of the year when *SJ Mag Media* asks South Jersey doctors to nominate colleagues for their "Top Docs for Kids" issue. There are many colleagues amongst us who are exemplars in pediatric medicine, and this is an opportunity to give them some recognition. Please find the ballot link here: [2025 Top Docs for Kids Ballot](#).

A few guidelines:

- The online voting link is a private link. Please do not forward it or share it with anyone who is not a physician practicing in South Jersey.
- Physicians must provide their name, practice name, and medical license number to cast their ballot
- The physicians you nominate must work in South Jersey.
- Only physicians may cast a ballot.
- **Deadline for ballot submissions is 5 pm on Dec. 30, 2024.**

Please note that our 2025 Top Docs for Kids Patient Poll is open now as well and can be shared with patients. Voting for the Patient Poll also ends at 5 p.m. on Dec. 30, 2024.

Link to Patient Poll: [2025 Top Docs for Kids Patient Poll](#)

And, if you'd like to see last year's Top Docs for Kids, [click here](#).

Separately, looking ahead, the *SJ Mag Media* 2025 “Top Docs” distinction will be on the ballot in March. That poll will honor physicians chosen by their peers—and patients—and will be published later in 2025. More details will be available when the polling opens. To see 2024’s “Top Docs,” click [here](#).

## **Give for Good Campaign: Thank You for Your Kind Support**

Virtua Health’s annual colleague giving campaign, [Give for Good](#), brings us all the opportunity to make a difference for each other and our patients through philanthropy. Gifts of all sizes matter, and 100% of each dollar goes directly to the designation selected. Nearly 800 colleagues have already participated in Give for Good this year. Your gifts make a tremendous difference for our patients, the community we serve, and each other. To learn more about the many options and to make your gift, visit [GiveToVirtua.org/Colleagues](#). If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Philanthropy at 856-355-0830 or [gratitude@virtua.org](mailto:gratitude@virtua.org). As always, thank you for your consideration and kind support.

## **IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All**

From **Dec. 16 to 24**, many originating from Latin America will celebrate [Las Posadas](#), or *The Inns*, a religious festival connected to Christmas. It occurs around the same time as the winter solstice festival.