

Clinician Update

December 14, 2023

Virtua Performs State's First Tigereye ST Case for Treatment of PAD

This week, Michael Lieb, DO, vascular surgeon with Virtua Surgical Group and medical director of The Vein Center at Virtua & Non-Invasive Vascular Lab, was first in New Jersey to utilize the Tigereye ST, Avinger's next-generation image-guided chronic total occlusion (CTO) crossing system. Tigereye ST incorporates design upgrades to the tip configuration and catheter shaft to increase crossing power and procedural success in challenging lesions. Additionally, the device includes enhancements for ease of image interpretation during the procedure.

Dr. Lieb also presented a noteworthy case featuring a hybrid approach for optimal results. The patient's complex dissection flap in the distal CFA, extending into the PFA and SFA, led to chronic embolization and disabling claudication, marking the inaugural use of Tigereye ST in New Jersey a significant stride in health care innovation.

Dr. Lieb employed a comprehensive strategy, combining open femoral artery reconstruction with endovascular treatment of the SFA CTO. The procedure involved skillful crossing with Tigereye ST and targeted treatment using Pantheris 7F. This innovative hybrid intervention demonstrates the commitment to achieving optimal outcomes in challenging vascular cases.

For more information, click [here](#) for a LinkedIn post of the achievement.

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:

"He is amazing. Wonderful, compassionate personality. Highly knowledgeable. Would recommend in a heartbeat. No pun here!" (Antonio Valone, DO)

"I was a new patient, and he listened, and made me feel no question was silly or unimportant. He is very knowledgeable and caring. I am very glad that he's my cardiologist." (Eduard Koman, MD)

"I was very nervous about this visit, but the entire staff and especially Dr. Mulhall made me feel at ease and I felt like I was on the right track. My sister is going through a similar issue and was also put at ease. We look forward to continuing our treatments with this facility and staff. Top notch!" (Patrick Mulhall, MD)

"I am so grateful to have her as my infectious disease physician. She is one of the most caring, responsive doctors I have ever met. She has the kind of personality that immediately made me feel comfortable and trusting. Thank you for taking care of me." (Kimberly Stawarz, MD)

“She and her entire team are very caring and professional. I had an endoscopy done, and due to past bad experiences, I had so much fear to go inside a surgical room. The anesthesiologist listened to me and was very kind and professional, making me feel comfortable and confident. Everyone at the procedure site and at the doctor’s office was very nice and professional. My husband will be your next patient soon.” (Padma Chamarchy, MD)

Virtua Launches Palm Vein Scanning at Patient Registration

Virtua has launched palm vein scanning in patient registration to ensure accurate identification. The scanning device is called PatientSecure and is manufactured by Imprivata. The biometric technology utilizes vein scanning to identify each patient by using the unique characteristics of their palm veins. Palm vein scanning provides a fast and safe way to correctly identify each participating patient and accurately link to their medical record.

“Identification with palm vein scanning prevents misidentification of patients, eliminates serious safety events, and ensures clinicians are looking at the right record for the right patient,” said Jennifer Khelil, DO, MBA, senior vice president and chief medical officer at Virtua. “Using palm vein scanning for patient identification also decreases chart duplication and gives clinicians access to a more complete patient medical history.”

The device is currently being introduced to multiple Virtua departments beginning in Washington Township. It will be rolled out system-wide in a phased approach in early 2024.

Virtua registrars will make the one-time enrollment easy by assisting the patients. Once enrolled, the patient will use the palm scanner at patient registration throughout all Virtua care locations.

“Patients trust their clinical providers,” said Dr. Khelil. “So, it’s important for clinicians and all colleagues to emphasize the safety and accuracy of palm vein scanning in patient identification.”

To learn more about palm vein scanning at Virtua, click [here](#) to download the FAQs.

Virtua Heightens AI Capability With New Partnership

Virtua is adopting artificial intelligence (AI) to tackle a challenging patient safety issue that is nearly impossible to improve solely through human intervention. Rad AI Continuity leverages the most advanced AI algorithms to seamlessly identify, track, and manage incidental findings in radiology reports, with the highest degree of automation. Virtua has selected the platform for automated tracking and management of actionable incidental findings.

Rad AI Continuity identifies and categorizes follow-up recommendations from radiology reports using the latest AI models, automates communication to the outpatient provider and patient, and tracks patient adherence to follow-up recommendations to determine if the loop is closed.

“We are committed to creating outstanding and frictionless experiences for our patients and helping them to navigate the care they need when they need it. Rad AI Continuity is the most comprehensive follow-up management platform on the market, tracking more than 50 categories of incidental findings and significantly increasing patient follow-up rates,” said Virtua VP of Radiology Lisa Iacovelli. “We’re very excited about this collaboration, as it will allow us to have improved visibility and provide a safety net over our entire patient population to ensure our patients feel informed and empowered.”

LAST CALL: Quarterly Cardiology Grand Rounds **Wed., Dec. 20, 7 to 8 a.m.**

Please join us for the next Virtua Cardiology Grand Rounds. Our guest will be Rupal O’Quinn, MD, MHCI, FACC, director, cardio-oncology, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center and associate professor of clinical medicine (cardiovascular medicine). This session will cover the importance of cardio-oncology and cancer therapy related to cardiac dysfunction; diagnosis and management of cancer therapy-related cardiac dysfunction; and recognition of common cardiovascular side effects occurring from newer cancer therapies and optimal management of these toxicities. The target audience is physicians and the interprofessional teams. To register for this online event, click [here](#). To learn more, click to [view the flyer](#).

Wound Care Today Now Posted to Digital 411

Our most recent issue of the *Today* series of physician education newsletters centers on how new materials and technologies are improving wound healing.

“Our ability to resolve nonhealing and chronic wounds keeps getting better with such strides as automated irrigation and improved skin substitutes,” said Christopher LaRosa, DPM, medical director of the Virtua Wound Center - Voorhees. “With advanced technology and more awareness of centers like ours, we are truly saving more lives and limbs.”

To learn about this and other wound care advancements, [click here to view Wound Care Today](#). Remember, our library of publications has a home base on [Digital 411](#), found under “Additional Resources/Clinician Publications.” There, you can find archived copies of *Clinician Update*, as well as a growing resource of the *Today* series.

WE Support – Virtua’s Peer Support Network

Virtua is proud to launch *WE Support* to our physicians, providers, nurses, clinicians, and patient logistics colleagues. *WE Support* is an emotional support program that leverages the time and talents of trained volunteers representing a variety of departments, clinical areas, and experiences. These compassionate colleagues are available to lend an empathetic ear and provide support during difficult times.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance, and complete privacy will be maintained.

Together, we will continue to foster an environment where sharing and seeking support for our struggles is not only welcomed, but actively encouraged. To request a peer support connection for yourself or a colleague in need, click [here](#).

Click to [view the flyer](#).

Virtua Hand Hygiene Policy Updated

Hand hygiene is one of the most fundamental strategies to preventing infections and has become increasingly vital as we face the threat of multidrug resistant organisms. With that in mind, the Virtua Hand Hygiene Policy has been updated and includes some significant changes:

All colleagues with direct patient contact are **strongly encouraged to avoid** artificial nails, extenders, wraps, gels, and gel nail polish.

All colleagues that work in the following roles or areas within Virtua are **prohibited** from wearing artificial nails, extenders, wraps, gels, and gel nail polish:

- ICU
- NICU/SCN
- Surgical services
- Dialysis
- Compounding pharmacy
- All other perioperative settings
- Staff who insert central lines

All colleagues will need to sign the following attestation at hire and annually when completing the Infection Prevention module, which is part of the annual online competencies:

I confirm that I have completed the Infection Prevention module and:

- Understand how hand hygiene prevents infections
- Know when to perform hand hygiene
- Know how to perform hand hygiene, including the minimum time required, using alcohol-based sanitizer or soap and water
- Know when to change my gloves
- Know that if I have direct patient contact, I am strongly encouraged to avoid artificial fingernails, extenders, wraps, gels, and gel nail polish
- Know that if I have direct patient contact and work in the following areas, I am prohibited from wearing artificial fingernails, extenders, wraps, gels, and gel nail polish

The Joint Commission places a high priority on hand hygiene and will be checking to see that our practice across the system matches our policy.

Virtua Is “All In” on Excellence

Thank you for being All In on Excellence! This week, we continue in the second chapter of our All In program “Everyone Matters.” With your team or on your own, view the third tip of the series: “Helping Each Other.” Click to [view the tip](#).

It is critical that all colleagues who have not yet completed the Patient Experience Certification Program make doing so a priority before Dec. 31. We have hit 500,000+ tips viewed by Virtua colleagues since kicking off earlier this year.

Visit the [Practicing Excellence page](#) on the Colleague Corner to view and share the Patient Experience tips with your teams.

Virtua in the News

Virtua Provides EMT Training to Camden Students

The Camden School District is partnering with Virtua to launch an innovative EMT training program for students from two high schools. The initiative teaches students hands-on skills at Virtua’s EMT training center in Berlin and includes three years of intensive health-sciences coursework. Upon completion of the program, the students will become CPR-certified and eligible for the EMT licensing exams. News coverage includes 6ABC [here](#) and [here](#), [Fox29](#), [CBS 3](#), [KYW Newsradio](#), and [Tap Into Camden](#).

Virtua Psychiatrist Discusses the Chronic Disease of Mental Illness

New Jersey Business Magazine recently spoke with S. Tyler Veterano, DO, medical director for ECT, on various therapies that can help those with mental illness, which is often a chronic condition. Read in [New Jersey Business Magazine](#).

Anti-Obesity Drugs May Be Risky for People with Osteoarthritis

Rapid weight loss from anti-obesity drugs may increase the chance of premature death among people who are overweight and have knee or hip osteoarthritis, according to a new study. Lenny Powell, DO, an associate professor of medicine at Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine, provided outside commentary on the research. Read in [Medical News Today](#).

Virtua’s Chief Strategy Officer Recognized by Industry Publication

Becker’s Hospital Review has named Stephanie Fendrick to its national list of “65 Chief Strategy Officers to Know.”

Her 20-year career at Virtua “has been integral to the growth of the system,” *Becker’s* wrote. “She was a major player in the development of the new Penn Medicine | Virtua Health Proton Therapy Center, in

Virtua's academic affiliation with Rowan University, and in the [new] Mobile Health & Cancer Screening Unit. Ms. Fendrick also serves on the Counseling Committee of the Jewish Family and Children's Services Board of Directors."

Read in [Becker's Hospital Review](#).

Virtua Brings Eat Well Mobile Food Program to Atlantic City

Like many parts of New Jersey, Atlantic City has no supermarket—making it difficult for residents to access healthy, affordable food. To help address this vital need, Virtua's [Eat Well Mobile Grocery Store](#) program has begun visiting the seaside community, with funding from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority.

"Hunger is in every ZIP code. But here in Atlantic City, it's even a little bit more challenging. There are transportation barriers, there are access barriers," said April Schetler, AVP of community health engagement.

"I love this," said Delorese Butler Whaley, who shopped at the Mobile Grocery Store in Atlantic City last Friday. "I was able to get everything I needed for the rest of the week right here. This is something we all need."

Journalists visited the program last week, too, resulting in extensive media coverage both locally and nationally. Select stories and videos include [Associated Press News](#), [Associated Press Video](#), [NJ PBS TV](#), [NJ.com](#), and [Breaking AC](#).

In addition, the *A.P.* story appears in [The Press of Atlantic City](#), [U.S. News & World Report](#), [MSN](#), [The Hill](#), [ABC News](#), and many other outlets nationwide.

Safety First at Virtua

This week, Virtua officially opened new workstations at each of its hospitals and satellite emergency departments that are exclusively for police personnel. These dedicated "touch-down" spaces include a desk, bulletin board, coffeemaker, and mini-refrigerator, among other elements.

Virtua has long-standing relationships with all regional law-enforcement departments and wanted to provide our community partners with a place to recharge, refuel, and work from. These spaces also invite greater collaboration and communication between Virtua colleagues and officers.

Virtua Honored by Military Affairs Organization

The Burlington County Military Affairs Committee (BCMAC) has honored Virtua with its Corporate Member of the Year Award. This award recognizes Virtua's financial and volunteer support to

strengthen the organization's mission as a liaison between BCMAC and the government and residents of Burlington County.

"This recognition is a proud one for us because our military, its active personnel and veterans, will always matter so much," said Reg Blaber, MD, executive vice president and chief clinical officer for Virtua Health—and a [2023 Philadelphia Business Journal Veterans in Business honoree](#). "Whether it is through our [Here to Serve](#) program, or even through our WE SERVE [colleague community](#) of veterans, we commit to being at the ready to serve them, as they have been at the ready to serve us."

In recognition of Virtua's service, BCMAC will donate, in Virtua's name, to the Yellow Ribbon Club, which supports our United States military forces with donated supplies and welcoming home events.

Learn more through social media posts on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#).

Celebrating Gratitude at the 2023 Virtua Health Gala

On Saturday, November 4, Virtua's trustees, leaders, and generous donors gathered to celebrate the season of gratitude and the incredible impact of our philanthropic partners. Nearly 800 guests attended the annual gala benefiting our Eat Well Food Access Programs.

During the program, President and CEO Dennis W. Pullin, FACHE, presented Geoff Martha, chairman and CEO of Medtronic, with Virtua's 2023 Humanitarian of the Year Award for his remarkable commitment to improving the health and well-being of people around the world and in South Jersey. Learn about Geoff's impact and the collaboration between Medtronic LABS and Virtua to address health equity through the new Healthy Neighbor program in [this video](#).

Additionally, a special Distinguished Service Award was given to George F. Lynn, Virtua Health Trustee, and long-time New Jersey health care leader and advocate.

To watch a highlight video of the special evening, click [here](#). Learn more and view photos at [GiveToVirtua.org/gala](#).

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 2024 Virtua Health Gala set for Saturday, November 2.

Michael Hoopes and Hal Jr. Meet Dennis Pullin

It's fair to say that this is our most unique episode of *Here for Good: Inside Edition*.

Michael Hoopes, training manager for our EMS program, brought in Hal Jr., a high-fidelity simulator, to meet Dennis. These simulators allow our students to experience immersive scenarios that prepare them for the real world.

And while Hal Jr. might need a little getting used to, this technology is beyond valuable for our training program!

[Catch the full episode here.](#)

IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

As we navigate the holiday season, we're reminded of the importance of inclusivity in celebrations and team-building activities. Many have already started embracing this by actively involving everyone in sharing needs, preferences, and feedback for continuous improvement. At the Virtua Voorhees Hospital PCU, for example, Sharlene Dougan, ANC, shared:

“Our PCU unit represents different cultures, with team members hailing from the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Africa, Haiti, and beyond. To honor our varied cultural heritages, Edwige Vieux, PCT, and May Ann Aningalan, RN, proposed hosting a multicultural feast of different cuisines. Everyone enjoyed the delicious dishes and we're excited to make this feast a recurring event. It's our way of celebrating our diversity and uniting in our shared goal of delivering exceptional patient care.”

For those gearing up for holiday engagements, it's vital to contemplate the purpose and ensure inclusivity. Also, bear in mind that the holiday season can be difficult for some, owing to financial constraints, bereavement, or other stressors. We encourage you to reflect on these aspects and engage in meaningful conversations to better understand one another.

Click to [read more about inclusive celebrations in the workplace](#).