

Clinician Update February 17, 2022

Virtua to Close COVID-19 Testing Center in Voorhees

In recent weeks, Virtua has seen a steady decrease in the volume of colleagues and community members who seek COVID-19 testing at the Virtua Barry D. Brown Health Education Center (HEC) in Voorhees. Friday, Feb. 18, at noon will mark the last day for COVID-19 Testing at the HEC.

After Feb. 18, curbside testing will be performed at select Virtua Urgent Care locations. We encourage you to view specific details below.

- **Testing for colleagues:** Colleagues should continue to click on the self-scheduling link, which will direct them to Virtua Urgent Care locations in Voorhees, Washington Township, and Mount Holly for curbside testing.
- **Testing for Virtua Medical Group patients:** Clinicians will schedule patients for testing at one of the [Virtua Urgent Care locations](#) via Epic.
- **Testing for the general public:** Open scheduling will be discontinued and patients will be directed to Virtua Urgent Care or Primary Care locations for an exam and, if necessary, testing. Testing will only be offered as part of an exam, and not as a standalone service. (Community providers can refer patients to Urgent Care for an evaluation and, if needed, testing.)

“I want to express my sincere gratitude to all of our colleagues who were *Here for Good* and contributed countless hours to operating the testing center at the HEC over the past six weeks,” said Rob Baron, VP of operations for Virtua Medical Group. “Your collaboration and teamwork helped ensure that our community members and colleagues had timely access to testing during the latest omicron surge.”

Virtua Broadens Hospital Visiting Guidelines

For the first time since early December 2021, Virtua Health’s collective hospital census of COVID-positive patients is fewer than 100 individuals. Because of this and other key COVID metrics, Virtua will broaden its hospital visitation guidelines effective today, Feb. 17.

Visiting hours will remain from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at all Virtua hospitals. Starting tomorrow, a patient may have up to two visitors at a time—however, department-specific exceptions apply. For instance, the emergency rooms and same-day surgeries/procedures will remain limited to one support person per patient. Also, visitation is not permitted for hospital patients in isolation (with very limited exceptions based on the discretion of the care team).

As before, all visitors must:

- Be 18 years old or older.
- Wear a facemask upon arrival. Visitors wearing cloth masks will be provided with a medical-grade ear-loop mask that can be worn instead of their cloth mask or under their cloth mask. KN95 masks are acceptable.
- Participate in a brief health screening.
- Be healthy and exhibit no symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or seasonal illness.
- Refrain from eating or drinking in patient rooms. Visitors may use the cafeterias and coffee shops, but are encouraged to eat offsite to reduce the need to remove their mask.

- Social distance whenever and wherever possible.

Also like before, patients should wear masks (if medically able) when a visitor is present.

For additional, department-specific information, visit virtua.org or the [VINE](#).

Top COVID-19 Questions About COVID-19 Booster Shots

In compliance with New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy's [Executive Order 283](#) (EO 283), Virtua Health has added the requirement of a booster shot for Virtua colleagues and contractors covered by the booster mandate contained in EO 283. In light of the executive order, below are answers to a few of our colleagues' top questions about COVID-19 booster shots.

When am I eligible to receive a booster vaccine? Colleagues are eligible for a booster five months after their second mRNA vaccine, meaning Pfizer or Moderna. Anyone who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine can get a booster two months after the initial vaccine, and they can switch to an mRNA vaccine if they prefer.

Please note, there is new guidance from the CDC for those who are immunocompromised to receive the booster three months after completion of the mRNA vaccine primary series (instead of five months).

What if I am not eligible for the booster by Feb. 28? Colleagues do not need to take any action until they are eligible for your booster. Virtua has the date of the second mRNA vaccine or initial Johnson & Johnson vaccine, and will track compliance accordingly. Colleagues will not receive a reminder when it is time to receive the booster. Rather, it is the colleague's responsibility to comply. We encourage colleagues to mark the date on their calendars to ensure compliance.

Am I required to get the booster on the first day I am eligible? Gov. Murphy's Executive Order 283 provides that Virtua colleagues and contractors covered by the booster mandate contained in the EO 283 must receive the booster by Feb. 28, 2022, or within three weeks (21 calendar days) of becoming eligible for a booster dose, whichever is later. If colleagues have not received the booster within the three week period, they will be non-compliant with Virtua's vaccination policy.

Can I get a different vaccine for my booster shot than I received for my initial vaccination? The CDC advises that, in most* situations, Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are preferred over the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for primary and booster vaccination. We invite you to read the following situations:

- If you received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, Pfizer or Moderna are preferred for your booster in most* situations.
- If you received the Pfizer vaccine, the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines are preferred in most* situations for your booster.
- If you received the Moderna vaccine, the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines are preferred in most situations for your booster.

For more information on the CDC booster recommendations, see [COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots | CDC](#).

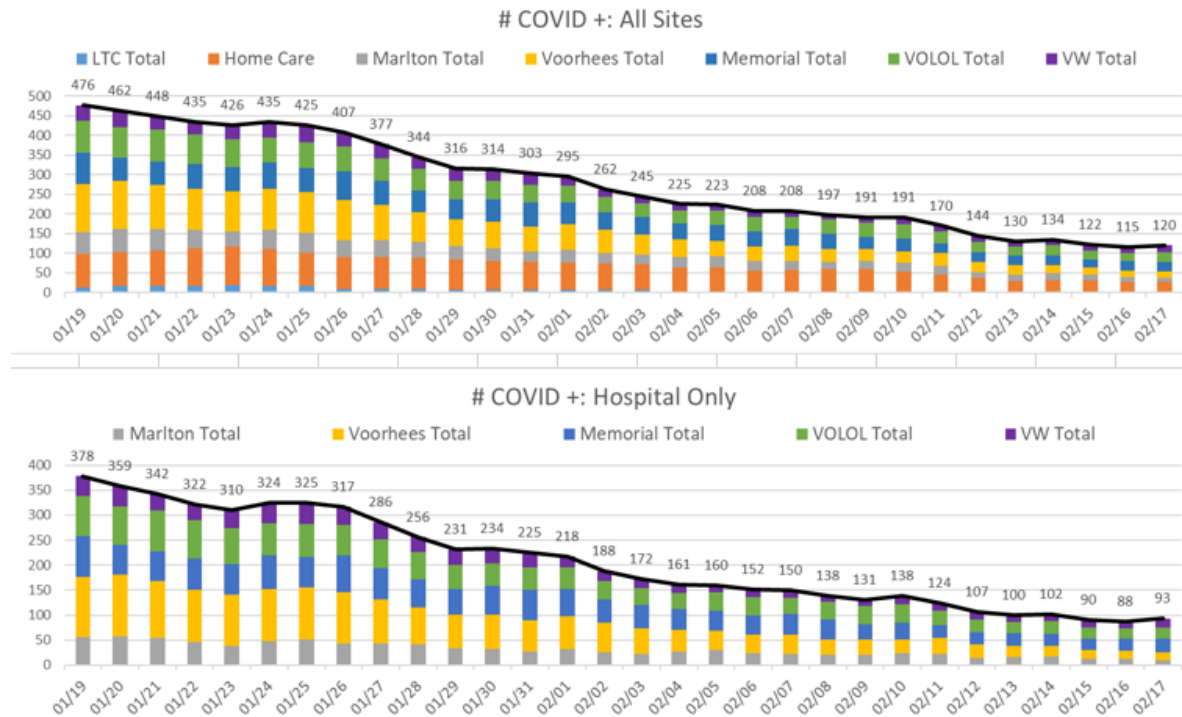
**Although mRNA vaccines are preferred, the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine [may be considered in some situations](#).*

I am due for a booster, but I tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days. When do I need to get my booster shot? If you are due for a booster shot but have recently tested positive for COVID-19, you should receive the booster no less than 14 days from your positive test and no more than 90 days from the positive test.

If Virtua has a record of the positive test (because you tested at Virtua and/or notified the Employee Hotline of your positive test), you do not need to take any further action. If Virtua does not have a record of a positive test, you may email it to Employee Health & Safety at covid@virtua.org.

Colleagues will be in compliance with the vaccination policy as long as they receive the booster when they are eligible and no more than 90 days from a positive test. Note, colleagues will not receive a reminder when it is time to receive the booster. Rather, it is the colleague’s responsibility to get their booster shot no later than the 91st day after a positive test in order to remain compliant with Virtua’s policy.

COVID-19 Census



Latest COVID-19 Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey was reported today as 0.57.
- The total number of cases reported as of 3 p.m. today:
 - Burlington County: 81,919 cases
 - Camden County: 102,626 cases
 - Gloucester County: 53,792 cases
- COVID-associated mortality for Camden, Burlington, and Gloucester counties: 3,543.

- The state's Vaccination Overview dashboard reported 16,667,668 doses of vaccine have been administered.

Virtua Now Providing Complete Complement of Cardiac Interventions

With Virtua Mount Holly Hospital now authorized for elective percutaneous cardiac intervention (PCI), it joins Virtua Marlton and Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes in conducting coronary angioplasty and related procedures. The authorization follows the trending enhancements offered at the facilities. Both the Marlton and Mount Holly locations have provided diagnostic cardiac catheterization and emergency PCI. Virtua Marlton also provided elective PCI under a New Jersey demonstration project. In December 2021, after New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) site visits, both facilities became fully approved to provide elective inpatient and outpatient diagnostic cardiac catheterization procedures, including percutaneous coronary and vascular interventions.

The DOH approval allows Virtua to offer a complete complement of cardiac interventions within the system, providing superior collaboration and conferencing with referring clinical cardiologists. Virtua cardiac interventionalists rotate through the three campuses, with the Lourdes location remaining the surgically backed site for high-risk PCI.

Lung Cancer Screening Expanded for Medicare Patients

Medicare patients starting at age 50 and with a shorter smoking history are now eligible for a lung cancer screening. The announcement by CMS earlier this month changes the criteria for lung cancer screening with low-dose computed tomography (LCDT) from age 55 to age 50, and reduces the tobacco smoking history requirement from at least 30 packs per year to at least 20 packs per year.

The national coverage decision also simplifies requirements for the counseling and shared decision-making visit; removes the requirement for the reading radiologist to document participation in continuing medical education; and adds back a requirement for radiology imaging facilities to use a standardized lung nodule identification and reporting system.

Virtua's Lung Screening Program provides a dedicated lung nurse navigator to guide patients through the entire screening process. To refer a patient, use Epic In Basket "P Lung Screening" or contact Lindsay Davies, RN, at 856-247-7393 or ldavies@virtua.org. Patients can also learn more or request a screening at virtua.org/LungScreening.

Special Recognition Week for Heart Failure and Cardiac Rehab

With February as American Heart Month, we mark two recognition weeks that highlight important services within Virtua Health. This week (Feb. 13 to 19) is **Heart Failure Awareness Week**. The theme this year is "Heart Success: Function Not Failure." The week spotlights what goes on year-round, the ongoing promotion of heart failure awareness, patient education, and heart failure prevention.

To celebrate, the 3 East West team at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital sported their "Failure is not an option" t-shirts and hosted a number of events, including a step challenge, RISE Heart Walk, and heart healthy treats give-away.

Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital has been honored with the American Heart Association's Get with the Guidelines Gold Plus award for its heart failure program. In the outpatient setting, Virtua also offers

five outpatient heart failure centers and a home care program featuring community-based care managers. To learn more about the Heart Failure Program at Virtua, click [here](#).

This same week, we recognize **Cardiac Rehabilitation** and honor our colleagues working diligently to reduce the potentially devastating effects of cardiovascular disease. Feb. 13 to 19 presents the opportunity to recognize their invaluable contribution to the improvement of the health and physical performance of individuals at risk for heart disease and/or those individuals diagnosed with heart disease or dysfunction.

“They are inspirational heroes,” said Renee Lombo, Director of Cardiopulmonary Rehab Services at Virtua. “We are just so grateful for the staff who support patients in making the necessary lifestyle changes to improve their lives after a cardiac event. Every day they are making a positive impact.”

To learn more about Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation at Virtua, click [here](#).

Hello Good Happenings

Virtua would like to congratulate our leaders and colleagues for their outstanding contributions to our organization.

- Dr. Chun (Dan) Choi, VP of clinical operations, visited our partners at Philly’s B101.1X Virtua Health Studio for a *lighthearted* conversation with hosts Jenn and Bill. He shared heart-healthy tips in the spirit of National Heart Month. If you missed it, click to [watch and listen](#).
- Chrisie Scott, senior vice president and chief marketing officer, recently sat down with [HealthLeaders Magazine](#) to talk about health care marketing strategy and its impact. The extensive article includes the quote: “We’re not the surgeons, we’re not in the OR, we’re not saving lives in that way. But we can have a profound impact on somebody’s life through the way we position our organizations, tell those stories, and connect people to what matters.”
- Aimee Wills, radiologic technologist at Virtua Marlton Hospital, was honored with an Award of Excellence from Virtua’s Diagnostic Radiology Quality Committee. They formed the “X-ray Well” program for those committed to improving image quality. Lead radiologic technologist Amanda Farino presented the award to Aimee.

A Gift of Gratitude for Compassionate Cancer Care

Sometimes, the words of a patient are so powerful that there is nothing to add. We invite you to read this testimony from Ron DiAmore, who made a gift to express his gratitude for care provided by Dr. Alexis Harvey and the Penn Medicine | Virtua Radiation Oncology team at Washington Township.

“Never did I think that I was going to face a condition called cancer. I believe my faith presented a path to assist me in a fight for my life. That path has included all the people at Penn Medicine | Virtua Radiation Oncology in Washington Township. They have devoted their lives to help a frightened man, namely me, face cancer.

“Early on, I met Dr. Alexis Harvey, who immediately directed me to the hospital because she recognized the serious condition that I faced.

"I needed to be hospitalized. Since my surgery, she and her staff have consistently displayed a kindness and compassion that I have never seen from anyone else in the medical profession. I am blessed having them involved in my treatment. Rest assured, my feelings by no means takes away from all the other doctors, nurses, and staff that I have encountered while on this journey. They are all included in my praise."

Visit virtua.org/gratitude to learn more about how we invite our community to make a lasting impact through philanthropy.

Virtua Officially Transitions to Emergency Phone Number *99

Virtua will officially transition to the new internal phone number *99 to report emergency situations at all Virtua locations. **Prior emergency phone numbers (82222, 11 at Virtua Willingboro Hospital, and 7 at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital) will be disconnected on Tuesday, March 1.**

After calling *99, the operator will initiate the emergency alert. Please proceed with your department's emergency response plan.

Visit [Safety Management](#) on the VINE to view Virtua's emergency operation plans, training, policies, and the Employee Preparedness Handbook. Thank you for your continued support of our safety, security, and emergency preparedness programs.

An Important Message from the Virtua I.T. Department — Apple Issues Urgent Software Update to Address Critical Vulnerability

Apple has issued a software update to address a critical vulnerability in its products. This vulnerability could allow for malicious code to be executed on the device just by visiting a malicious website. Depending on the permission associated with the application running the exploit, an attacker could then install programs as well as view, change, or delete data on the device.

Affected versions:

- iOS and iPadOS prior to 15.3.1
- macOS Monterey prior to 12.2.1
- Safari prior to 15.3 (v. 16612.4.9.1.8 and 15612.4.9.1.8)

Apple References

- <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT213091>
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- <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT213093>

Bolstering Resilience in a Dynamic Landscape

Join the Women of Virtua Colleague Community for the virtual program [Bolstering Resilience in a Dynamic Landscape](#) on Wednesday, March 23 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. This event will present strategies to cope with and develop resilience to the ongoing stressors of the pandemic.

Additionally, this session will offer tools to improve work-life balance, instill hope, and mitigate burnout and compassion fatigue. The presenters are Kerry Echavarria, advanced practice nurse, and Samantha Nusom, psychotherapist, from Virtua Behavioral Health.

The Women of Virtua invites all colleagues to join the program. Click [to register](#) and view [the flyer](#).