

Clinician Update

February 24, 2022

Hey, What's Your Handle?

Are you utilizing social media as a meaningful tool to share your expertise and amplify your voice and professional influence with your followers? Do you make the most of your LinkedIn, Twitter, or Instagram, profiles? If so, share your handle so we can follow you back and partner together to build brand and reputation.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of [health care influencers](#) in combatting misinformation and educating the public through social media. Beyond COVID-19, clinicians—including those affiliated with Virtua Health—are using Twitter and TikTok, among other platforms, as public health forums, gaining followers and building their personal brand.

Further, studies have found a statistically significant correlation between [social media metrics and an institution's reputational score](#) in *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. In fact, [a December study on cardiology and heart surgery hospital rankings](#), published in *Mayo Clinic Proceedings Innovations, Quality and Outcomes*, noted, "Our results emphasize how hospital leaders may leverage social media platforms as an important medium to disseminate accomplishments and increase their visibility and reputation, potentially translating to higher *USNWR* ranking."

Virtua is actively looking into ways to make better use of our networking power together. We all have the power to become social media influencers with our health care expertise, and to make a positive difference via social media channels. Becoming a social media influencer takes some strategy, and can be rewarding while helping the community and being Here for Good.

Whether you are new to this journey or a seasoned pro with tons of followers, we want to know your handles (your user names) so we find you on social. Send us your social media handles and feel free to add a brief note about how you'd like to professionally engage with your social accounts and Virtua. Just click [here](#) for ClinicianUpdate@Virtua.org.

Message about Civility in Health Care Spreading *Violence Prevention Act Announced*

Following the overwhelming response that Dennis Pullin received to his recent [opinion piece](#) about restoring civility in health care, he shares additional developments and reactions to the editorial, as well as the [impactful signage](#) that has caught the attention of numerous health systems across the country who have asked to borrow our messages that encourage civility and kindness.

Click to [view the message](#).

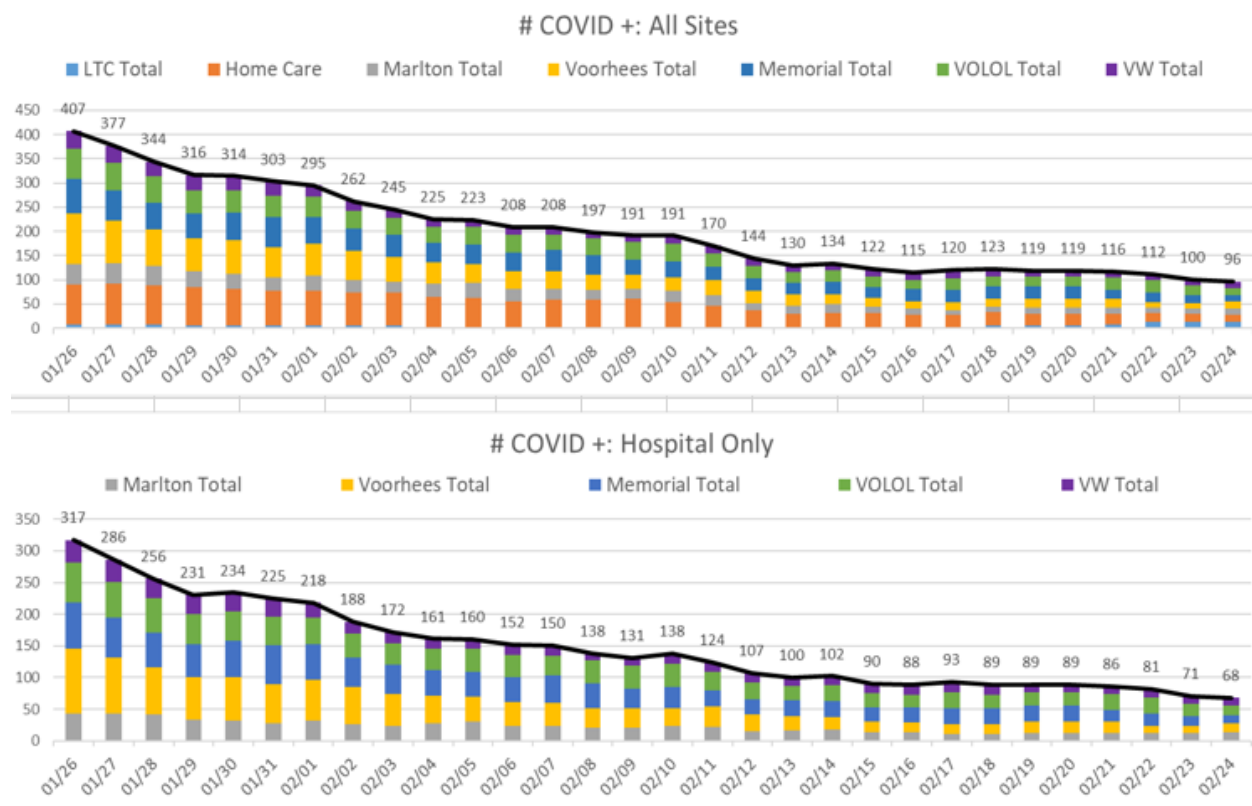
In addition, Dennis and other members of leadership participated in a press conference today where the "Health Care Heroes Violence Prevention Act" was announced. This legislation will enhance sentencing for anyone convicted of threats or violence against healthcare workers.

You can review the [initial coverage here](#).

Tune In to the New *Here for Good* Podcast

The *Here for Good* podcast is back for 2022, and kicks off season three with a candid conversation with Geoff Martha, chairman and CEO of Medtronic. Medtronic, a leading global health care technology company, is committed to making meaningful differences on a local level. Hear how the two leaders view the evolution of the role of CEO, especially over the past two years of the pandemic, and how the power of inclusion, diversity, and equity can break down barriers to attract, retain, and develop the best talent in the world. The conversation also provides a great glimpse into Geoff's leadership style and more about this exciting company that Virtua proudly partners with. Listen on your preferred podcast platform or watch the video interview [here](#).

COVID-19 Census



Latest COVID-19 Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey was reported today as 0.71.
- The total number of cases reported as of 3 p.m. today:
 - Burlington County: 82,171 cases
 - Camden County: 103,019 cases
 - Gloucester County: 54,006 cases
- COVID-associated mortality for Camden, Burlington, and Gloucester counties: 3,572.
- The state's Vaccination Overview dashboard reported 16,772,719 doses of vaccine have been administered.

Update on Masking

As cases of the COVID-19 omicron variant and hospitalizations have steadily declined in New Jersey, with a seven-day average of positive tests down 43% from last week and 80% from one month ago, Virtua has made the decision to revert back to our former masking policy.

The following will be in effect until further notice:

- All colleagues must have a well-fitted ear-loop mask on at all times when in the workplace.
- With all patient-facing encounters, colleagues must follow **Universal Pandemic Precautions** and wear an ear-loop mask and eye protection (goggles or face shields).
- **All exempted unvaccinated colleagues will continue to wear N95 respirators during all patient encounters.** Ear-loop or KN95 masks may be worn at other times for source control in all other environments. Masks may not be removed in break or locker rooms when other colleagues are present. Eating should also not occur when other colleagues are present.
- With all patients who are COVID-confirmed, persons under investigation (PUI), and receiving aerosolizing treatments, colleagues must wear an N95 mask with an ear-loop mask covering. Discard the ear-loop mask between each encounter.
- Patients will continue to wear a single ear-loop mask when clinicians enter their room or when they are being transported out of their room. Reminder: When entering a patient's room, ask that the patient put on their mask before you enter.
- Visitors must wear a hospital-grade ear-loop mask. If they come into our facilities with a cloth mask, we will provide an ear-loop mask.
- Emergency department, operating room, and procedural areas will follow the current practice at this time:
 - Surgical service/procedural areas: Colleagues will only be in N95 PPE with confirmed or suspected COVID cases, high-risk transmission surgeries or procedures, when the patient is not vaccinated, and aerosol generation procedures.
 - Emergency department: Colleagues will wear N95 mask with any patient presenting with respiratory symptoms.

Pandemic to Endemic

Adapted from the New Jersey Hospital Association Coronavirus Update

Gov. Murphy announced yesterday that he will end his long-running COVID briefings on March 4. That, along with other changes like the end of the school mask mandate March 7, prompted questions of whether New Jersey is shifting from a pandemic to an endemic state.

With declining case counts and hospitalizations, increasing vaccination rates, improvements in testing capabilities and other factors, "We believe now is the time to end the briefings," said the governor, noting that his final scheduled briefing coincides with the second anniversary of New Jersey's first confirmed COVID case. "We fully understand the need to move forward from the pandemic."

As evidence of the improved status, the Gov. Murphy announced that yesterday's COVID hospitalizations dipped under 1,000 for the first time since Nov. 28. The number of hospitalized COVID patients declined 20% in just the last week, he added.

Further rollbacks of precautions will be reviewed, including the mask mandate in state offices. What remains would largely be federal requirements, such as masking on planes, trains, and other mass transit. Efforts to continue increasing vaccination and booster rates also will continue, he said.

Virtua's Journey to High Reliability: A Focus on Speaking Up For Safety

As part of Virtua's High Reliability journey and pursuit of Zero Harm, Virtua's messaging to all colleagues is now featuring a Safety Behavior of the Month. In February, Virtua highlights **Speak Up For Safety**.

Speak Up for Safety means a colleague should speak up when concerned that a patient or colleague might be harmed due to an unintended error or intentional deviation from expected practices.

Sometimes it takes courage to speak up when we're not sure about something or we are afraid of getting pushback from a colleague. But, speaking up with safety concerns should not require courage—it should just be how we do things. We all have a responsibility to protect our patients and colleagues from harm.

Click to [view the flyer](#) being shared with colleagues.

Honoring Black History Month

Carter G. Woodson, a scholar dedicated to the celebration of Black people, led the establishment of Black History Month, which has been recognized every February since 1976.

The Black & African American Colleague Community invites colleagues to join them in honoring Black History Month through the recognition of those who have helped shape history. As the saying goes, *Black History is American History*—and it is a varied and rich legacy. Here are a few ideas to help honor Black History:

Visit a Museum — History comes alive in our nation's museums. Many have events, conferences, and celebrations surrounding Black History Month.

Read, Read, and Read Some More! — Education and awareness are key. Libraries, bookstores, online repositories, and booksellers are positively overflowing with amazing works of Black literature, history, and biographies. We encourage you to immerse yourself!

Virtua in the News

- **My Family Doctor Saved My Life** — An executive with Independence Blue Cross shares how a routine checkup led to the discovery and treatment of a life-threatening illness. In this podcast, the patient and his physician—Virtua's Dr. Ryan McCormick—discuss various ways a primary care provider can make a huge impact on your health. Listen on [Philly Voice](#).
- **How Do I Test My Toddler for COVID-19?** — Dr. Mario Maffei of Virtua Primary Care – Voorhees offers practical advice for testing young children at home or in a clinic. Read the *Philadelphia Inquirer* story [here](#).
- **Dr. & Dr. Smith: Married Virtua Physicians Share Labors of Love** — At Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Dr. Monika Smith is the first female head of the emergency department and

husband Dr. Jason Smith is director of the hospital's cardiac care unit. Read about how they balance love, careers, and family in the [Courier-Post](#) and on [NJ.com](#).

- **Students Deliver Valentines to Virtua Hospital Staff** — More than 300 second- and third-graders from an Atlantic County school created special heart-shaped messages of appreciation. Several children and adults from Hammonton's Sooy Elementary School visited Virtua Voorhees to hand-deliver stacks of the colorful cards, and Virtua's staff presented them with red bags of school supplies. See photos in the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) and a story by [CBS 3](#).
- **A Show of Gratitude** — *Suburban Family Magazine* highlighted local health care heroes— including Virtua's Maria Emerson, director of rehab services for pediatric and community-based services. Read [here](#) about how Maria and her team bring vital children's health services directly to communities in need, and other ways they're making a difference.
- **Virtua Announces New Board Chair & Members** — Longtime Virtua board member Edward Cloues II has been named chair of the organization's board of trustees, and Dr. Shahram Jay Mirmanesh and Adolfo "Pepe" Piperno are the board's newest members. Read about their impressive backgrounds and accomplishments in [ROI-NJ](#) and in this [Virtua press release](#).

Carebridge Webinars for All Virtua Colleagues

- **Feb. 28** — [Coping with COVID-19 on the Frontlines: Stress Management Strategies for Health Care Providers](#): Health care providers are facing unprecedented challenges in responding to COVID-19. Managing stress and practicing self-care is essential to both physical and emotional well-being. During this highly informative and engaging session, we'll address the stress and anxiety related to being on the front lines, identify supportive resources, and discuss practical coping tools that can be put into practice immediately.
- **March 28** — [Cultivating Mindfulness](#): Mindfulness is a way of being fully conscious and completely present in the moment—setting aside your worries, expectations, emotions, and other thoughts that take your mind away from the current moment. Participants will be introduced to the practice of mindfulness meditation and will learn insights to the art, science, and practice of mindfulness. The daily practice of mindfulness meditation has been linked to physical and emotional well-being.

WE Award Nominations

This is your last chance to nominate a colleague or team for a WE Award! Nominations are due **tomorrow, Feb. 25!**

The WE Awards are one way Virtua expresses appreciation and gratitude for the meaningful actions and remarkable achievements of our colleagues. This type of recognition can only come to life through your commitment to good—seeing it, acknowledging it, and sharing it—through peer-to-peer nominations.

We invite you to click to [access the WE Awards criteria](#) and learn how to submit your nomination in WE Applaud today!

In 2020, the **Valve Replacement Team** at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital was honored with a WE Award for Continuous Learning and Innovation.

This highly skilled, cross-disciplinary team came together to perform a unique valve replacement procedure on a 25-year-old pregnant woman. This procedure was the first-known case of its kind in the United States. We invite you to read the following nomination.

As a child, this patient suffered rheumatic fever. As she got older, she developed mitral stenosis, and at age 18, she received a bioprosthetic valve made from the heart tissue of a cow. Years later, the patient was having symptoms of heart failure. The valve she received was no longer functioning as intended. She also became pregnant and experienced serious complications.

The patient's care team recognized they would need to replace the failed prosthesis in order for her to carry the baby to term and survive the stress of delivery. The risk for both mom and baby was very high.

The Structural Heart and surgical teams contemplated the best plan for the patient. After consultation with the maternal fetal medicine physician and other members of the interdisciplinary team, the teams moved forward with the unique valve replacement procedure. It was a success.

Months later, with multiple experts on hand, the patient delivered a healthy baby boy. Today, both mother and baby are doing well—a testament to the first-class care they received at Virtua.

Virtua Rehab Services Colleagues Are “Souper” Bowl Champions

The Virtua Rehabilitation Services teams recently participated in the 3rd Annual Souper Bowl, in which they collected more than 1,000 canned goods and other nonperishable items for the [Virtua Eat Well Food Farmacy](#) in Camden and Mount Holly.

The Rehabilitation Services team is comprised of acute rehab, acute care rehab, cardiopulmonary rehab, home care rehab, pediatric rehab, and physical therapy and rehabilitation.

Thank you, Virtua Rehabilitation Services colleagues!