

Clinician Update

Feb. 4, 2021

Countdown to the Cures Act: Virtua's Release Set for Feb. 23

The date is now set. On Tuesday, Feb. 23, in accordance with the federally mandated 21st Century Cures Act, Virtua plans to begin immediate electronic release of all inpatient and outpatient clinical results to the patient's MyChart account.

The Cures Act will bring major changes in how health information is delivered and shared, giving patients greater access and control through full and immediate access to their record, as well as their ability to share that record for whom they give authorization. We support this policy toward the goal of achieving the best outcomes for our patients.

The Cures Act will require readiness on all our parts. Virtua is working diligently to support our clinicians through this dramatic shift in data management. We will continue to provide updates and are planning future opportunities for education. Remember, we have a [Cures Act resource section](#) available to all Virtua clinicians on [Digital 411](#). In the coming days, we will continue to update content with tip sheets and resource documents. Feel free to direct any questions to VirtuaClinician@virtua.org.

Case Summaries Highlight Virtua's CT Surgery Capabilities

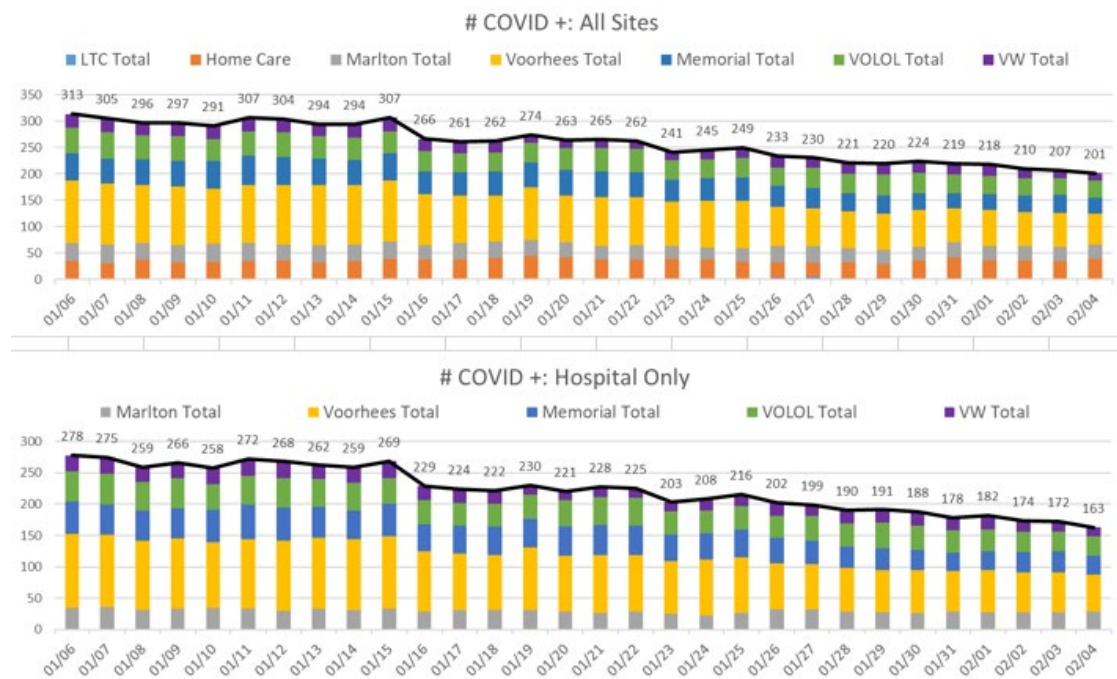
At a recent cardiovascular services summit, council leads shared updates and achievements that demonstrate the comprehensive nature of Virtua's heart program. Each of the sections, including congestive heart failure, clinical cardiology, interventional cardiology, heart rhythm, and structural heart, as well as cardiothoracic surgery, were represented. Case reviews highlighted the expertise of several clinical sections, including the following presented on behalf of the cardiac surgery program by Arthur Martella, MD, Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Virtua:

- Dr. Martella reported on treatment of a 56-year-old woman who has Marfan syndrome, non-ischemic cardiomyopathy, and moderate-to-severe [pectus excavatum](#). Eighteen years earlier, she had undergone replacement of her aortic valve with a mechanical valve, and replacement of the aortic root and ascending aorta, with re-implantation of the coronary arteries into a composite graft (Bentall procedure). She now had type I mitral valve regurgitation with a central jet, and an ejection fraction of only 30 percent. The team considered the patient for the MitraClip procedure, but given her relatively young age, elected to offer a surgical repair. Using a right mini-thoracotomy, peripheral cannulation, and ventricular-fibrillation arrest, the Virtua team corrected the mitral leak with a 40 mm annuloplasty ring and use of sutures to tighten the bottom edge of the valve to reoppose the leaflets (medial commissuroplasty).
- In a second case, the team treated a 63-year-old woman with pulmonary hypertension, COPD, and hyperlipidemia who was now suffering from chest discomfort partly as a result of aortic aneurysm/aorta anatomy type I/type II. The patient accepted recommendation to undergo a repair. The Virtua team performed the surgery with a thoracoabdominal incision and intercostal artery resection — and with use of a left atrial-femoral artery (LA-FA) bypass (in which the native cardiac output from the left ventricle perfuses the upper body, and

the outflow from the LA-FA bypass provides distal perfusion with the assistance of a pump and oxygenator). The surgeons resected her aorta from the subclavian artery to the mesenteric artery. Then, they performed an anastomosis of a Hemashield graft to below the renal arteries with several lumbar arteries included. Postoperatively, they managed the patient with permissive hypertension, spinal drainage, and neurologic checks.

These case studies are part of a new, periodic series where we share important case studies to educate clinicians on the breadth and depth of services now available at Virtua Health. For immediate consultation with the CT Surgery team, call the **Virtua Transfer Center at 856-757-3284**.

Virtua COVID-19 Census



Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is currently at 0.94.
- Locally, in the tri-county area, there have been a total of 2,096 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 142 fatalities.
- The total number of cases are as follows:
 - Burlington County 28,414
 - Camden County 36,871
 - Gloucester County 19,427

Advocating for the COVID-19 Vaccine

As members of a health care community in the middle of a pandemic, we have an additional responsibility to role model safe behaviors and to serve as a source of factual information for patients and members of the community.

Clinicians, in particular, as trusted professionals, can be critical in helping to improve confidence in making the decision to be vaccinated.

If asked by a patient, should I be vaccinated?

Virtua Health highly recommends that individuals who meet the CDC’s requirements get the COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to them. Both of the current vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna rely on MRNA technology that has been studied since 1990. To date, safety profiles appear excellent.

For people in high-risk categories, infectious disease experts affirm that getting the disease appears to be more dangerous than any potential side effects to getting the vaccine. If you have questions or concerns about whether vaccination is right for you, I would urge you to discuss them with your physician.

If asked if you have been vaccinated and you haven’t been.

I have not received my vaccine yet, but I am diligent about all of our safety protocols, including proper use of personal protective equipment to avoid getting or spreading the virus.

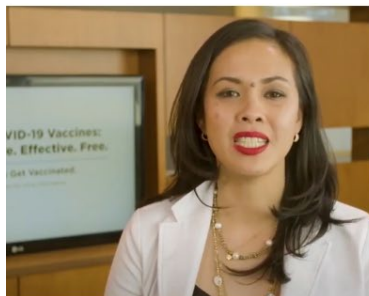
Changes to COVID-19 Testing Schedule in Moorestown

Effective **Monday, Feb. 22**, the Virtua Health & Wellness Center – Moorestown will no longer offer COVID-19 testing after 12 p.m. due to consistently slower volumes. The new hours of operation beginning **Feb. 22** are **Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 8 a.m. 12 p.m.** Testing is unavailable on Tuesday and Wednesday. Virtua will continue to offer walk-up and drive-up services and accommodate Burlington County residents who have COVID-19 symptoms. The COVID Scheduling Center will contact all patients who are scheduled after 12 p.m. and reschedule their appointments to the morning hours.

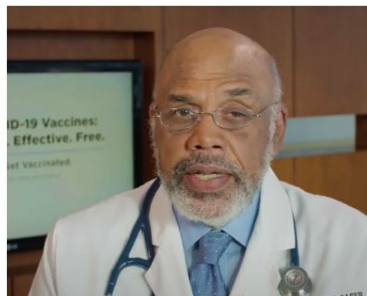
Thank you for your continued support and flexibility.

Videos Help Drive Messaging for Health Care Workers on Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines

Adapted From Vax Matters, a New Jersey Department of Health Newsletter



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Videos from doctors and nurses speaking to their peers and patients on the issues of vaccine safety and hesitancy are a key part of the state's vaccine public awareness campaign.

Janine Llamzon, RN, director of nursing at St. Joseph's University Medical Center, recorded her video in English and Tagalog. "It is important for us in the health care community to get the vaccine," she says in the [video](#). "Why? Because it is our responsibility to our patients."

James Pruden, MD, medical director at St. Joseph's University Medical Center, explains that he barely survived COVID-19. "Yes, we must continue to practice safety precautions like distancing and wearing masks, but the vaccine has brought us more hope than we have known for months. Get valid information from reliable resources and get the vaccine. We can do this together."

Amesika Nyaku, MD, infectious disease specialist with Rutgers Health, addresses concerns within communities of color about the COVID-19 vaccines. "We are here, we are fighting for you, to help stop the disproportionate burden that our communities are suffering because of the pandemic," Dr. Nyaku says in the [video](#).

The videos have been featured on social media and on closed-circuit television in physician and hospital offices, and shared with related stakeholder groups. Many are also featured on the [NJDOH YouTube channel](#).

We Invite You to Wear Red Tomorrow, Feb. 5

On **Friday, Feb. 5** — National Wear Red Day — we invite all Virtua colleagues to recognize Heart Month by wearing your favorite shade of red.

We invite you to post a team photo, like the snapshots below, on the [Virtua Colleague Facebook page](#). Photos may also be featured in *By Design* and Virtua's other social media pages.

Virtua has a large number of online resources on heart health. Visit [virtua.org](#) and check out the following articles to share in your practice:

- [What Heart and Stroke Patients Should Know About COVID-19 Vaccines:](#) Experts have a simple answer for heart and stroke patients questioning whether they need a COVID-19 vaccination. The answer is yes.
- [Eat Smart for Your Heart:](#) You have the power to prevent heart disease and improve your overall health by making better choices about the food you eat. Here are six easy ways to eat smart for your heart.
- [Heart Disease is Very Much a Woman's Disease:](#) Heart disease is gender-blind, affecting women and men at equal rates. Yet, while it's the leading cause of death for both sexes in the U.S., the reasons why women get it — and what they experience — may be very different from men.

From routine examinations to managing chronic conditions, Virtua has specialists for every stage in life and every type of heart condition. Appointments may be scheduled via Open Scheduling as well as through [MyChart](#).

Additionally, National Organ Donor Day is observed on **Friday, Feb. 14**. Organ donation, as well as blood, platelet, and tissue donations, can save lives. Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital is the only provider of

liver, kidney, and pancreas transplants in South Jersey, and Virtua works closely with our local organ procurement organization and families in this lifesaving effort.

Consider helping the American Red Cross maintain a sufficient blood supply. Blood drives take place throughout the year at various Virtua locations. To learn more, click [here](#).