

Clinician Update

February 13, 2025



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Rowan-Virtua School of Nursing Breaks Ground

The Rowan-Virtua Rita & Larry Salva School of Nursing and Health Professions has broken ground on a new facility located on Rowan’s West Campus. This new building will allow the school to grow as an incubator for interdisciplinary training, research, and innovation in health care.

“The new Salva School will not only benefit our students and workforce, but also the communities we serve,” said Virtua President and CEO Dennis Pullin. “By training highly skilled and compassionate nurses and allied health professionals, we are addressing a critical healthcare need and improving the quality of life for countless individuals.”

Virtua to Partner with Unite Us to Address Patients’ Health-Related Social Needs

Virtua has formed a strategic partnership with [Unite Us](#), a nationally recognized technology platform for social care transformation. The platform will be integrated within Epic, empowering clinicians and social workers to quickly and simply connect patients to internal and third-party programs and services, such as food and nutrition aid, housing support, mental and behavioral health counseling, and financial assistance. The partnership ensures seamless tracking of referrals and outcomes, enabling personalized care plans with a broad view of quality-of-life concerns.

“We recognize the various factors that shape a person’s health,” said John Matsinger, DO, MBA, Virtua’s executive vice president and chief operating

officer. “In addition to providing the best possible medical care, we demonstrate respect for our patients by connecting them to resources and services that can enhance their quality of life and position them for success.”

Click for more details in the [press release](#) or in [Hospital Management](#).

All In on Excellence 2025: Raising Teamwork for Safety

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the All In on Excellence 2025 Program. This week, we invite you to focus on the invaluable insights provided in the tip, [Everyone Leading Safety at the Local Level: Raising Teamwork for Safety](#), featuring Lisa Ferraro, president of Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes and SVP of Virtua.

April Rucci, director of clinical triage, shared her thoughts on this tip. Here is an excerpt:

“Effective collaboration reduces errors, enhances communication, and fosters a culture of accountability and trust. When we work together, share knowledge, support one another, and maintain clear communication, we create a safer environment for our patients. By prioritizing teamwork, we can prevent mistakes, improve patient outcomes, and strengthen the overall efficiency of our health care system.”

Special Recognition for Virtua’s Heart Failure and Cardiac Rehab Teams

Virtua celebrates Heart Failure Awareness Week (**Feb. 9 to 15**) and National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week (**Feb. 10 to 16**) by recognizing our dedicated teams. These colleagues work tirelessly to improve heart health in South Jersey, focusing on patient education, prevention, and rehabilitation. Their commitment helps those affected by cardiovascular disease regain function and improve their quality of life.

During the awareness weeks, the teams will host educational events at various hospital campuses, offering information, blood pressure screenings, and details about the LVAD program. Click to learn more about Virtua's [heart failure](#) and [cardiopulmonary rehabilitation](#) programs.

New Ad Campaign Highlights Virtua's National Leadership in Robotic-Assisted Surgery

Virtua's highly skilled surgeons operate the world's most advanced surgical robots! Check out our latest commercial, which showcases our commitment to elevating patient care through robotic-assisted surgery. View [The World's Greatest Surgical Robots. In the Most Capable Hands.](#)

LAST CALL: Lunch and Learn on Advancing Heart Function, Feb. 19 at Noon

This upcoming informational session, entitled "Advancing Heart Function, One Pump at a Time," is a great way to celebrate Heart Month and an opportunity to learn the latest in advanced heart failure therapies.

Meet the advanced heart failure and left ventricular assist device (LVAD) team and learn who should be considered for advanced heart failure therapies. Learn how an LVAD functions and experience a day in the life of an LVAD patient.

You are welcome to join in person in the Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Physicians Conference Room where boxed lunches will be provided, or via [Teams](#).

[Here is a printable flyer](#) for the event. For more information, please contact Theresa Rowe-Ruffin, director of Heart Failure Services at [856-952-1056](tel:856-952-1056) or troweruf@virtua.org.

The Power of Participation: Clinical Trials

Clinical trials are the backbone of medical advancement, shaping the future of patient care and treatment efficacy. By participating in clinical research, clinicians not only contribute to the progress of medicine and improve patient outcomes, they also gain professional recognition. Here's why you should become involved in clinical trials:

Advancing Medical Knowledge and Patient Care

As a clinician, your ultimate goal is to provide the best care for your patients. Clinical trials allow you to be at the forefront of medical innovation, bringing novel treatments and therapies to those who need them most. Your participation ensures that new interventions are tested rigorously, leading to improved safety and efficacy standards.

Expanding Treatment Options for Patients

Patients who enroll in clinical trials often gain access to cutting-edge treatments that are not yet widely available. By offering your patients the opportunity to participate, you give them alternative options when standard treatments may not be effective. This can be especially crucial for those with rare or treatment-resistant conditions.

Professional Growth and Recognition

Involvement in clinical trials provides you with access to ongoing medical education, networking opportunities with leading researchers, and potential authorship in prestigious medical journals. Additionally, being part of groundbreaking research enhances your professional reputation, positioning you as a thought leader in your specialty.

Overcoming Common Barriers to Participation

As for concerns about time constraints or lack of research experience, numerous resources and support systems help mitigate these challenges. Collaborating with research coordinators, leveraging institutional research support, and participating in industry-sponsored trials can help streamline your involvement.

To learn more about taking part in a clinical trial, contact the Virtua Research team at research@virtua.org.

Virtua Sports Surgeon Co-Authors Study on Opioid Prescriptions

Orthopedic surgeons prescribe substantially more opioids than intended. That was the conclusion of a [study](#) published this month in the *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons*. Sean McMillan, DO, sports medicine surgeon at Virtua Reconstructive Orthopedics, coauthored the study.

“The results underscore the need for standardized opioid prescribing practices and the potential of adjunctive treatments in reducing opioid prescribing,” said Dr. McMillan. “Hopefully, these findings will be embraced by surgeons and we can enact changes.”

Health care institutions have sought to standardize opioid prescribing after elective total joint arthroplasty. The purpose of this study was to compare opioid prescriptions at discharge with perceived opioid prescribing patterns and to

determine the relationship between preoperative adjunctive treatments and opioids prescribed at discharge.

Barbara Zambon, BSP Pharm, RPh, BCGP, CCP, Virtua clinical pharmacist, and Anthony Pultrone, MS, Virtua business integration analyst, were instrumental in the study. They helped to create the Surgical Opioid QlikView Dashboard, an institutional database that captures all narcotic prescriptions within the discharge electronic medical record. It was used in identifying the opioid prescriptions.

To read the research article, click [here](#).

Time to Vote in the Best Hospitals Ranking

Each year, *U.S. News and World Report* releases the results of an opinion survey highlighting the nation's "Best Hospitals." A vital component of these scores derives from surveying board-certified physicians who are registered as [Doximity](#) users, the online networking service for medical professionals. So, if you are a registered Doximity member, watch for an email sometime this month or next about the annual member survey. Even if you don't receive the email, you can still vote by logging in to [Doximity](#) with your username and password.

We appreciate your help in recognizing the hard work and dedication our clinicians put into providing the highest level of care. Last year, Virtua hospitals were recognized as "high performing" in several categories by *U.S. News & World Report*.

If you are looking to establish your Doximity profile, just follow the instructions [here](#). Certain profile data is viewable via [USNews.com](#) through its [Doctors tab](#) (within the Health tab) and used by patients to find care, so it is always good to keep your profile up to date.

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:

"Dr. Josephson is a good listener and gives advice with confidence and kindness." **(Tina Josephson, MD)**

"Dr Adriana Davis is very professional, knowledgeable, empathetic, and kind. She gives you her undivided attention. She is such an asset to Virtua. The staff

at the office is absolutely incredible. It's always a pleasure to go to the Willingboro office. Thank you.” **(Adriana Davis, DO)**

“I am 64 years old and have seen many medical professionals in my lifetime. He is, by far, the most knowledgeable and, above all, the most compassionate. He cares deeply about my well-being and I'm sure it's the same for all his patients.” **(Daniel Lynch, PA)**

“I have three of my children seeing clinicians in this practice, and everyone is amazing. From the desk to the providers to the medical assistant, they always greet you with a smile. They're always willing to help. And they're very understanding, listen to you thoroughly, and take time with my kids. So yes, I would definitely recommend this practice to other people. You are all amazing. Thank you.” **(Laurie R. Bruner, MD)**

“Dr. Schaller was excellent. He was kind. He was patient. He answered all my questions. He spoke in a language that was easy to understand. He made me feel comfortable and not embarrassed to talk about personal issues.” **(Richard Schaller, Jr., MD)**

Ballots Due Soon for Jersey Choice Top Doctors

New Jersey Monthly surveys the state's physicians each year to determine its list of “Jersey Choice Top Doctors.” The survey was mailed recently by the magazine’s polling company, K. Dale Associates, to every doctor licensed in the state for at least five years. **Mailed ballots must be postmarked by tomorrow, Feb. 14. Online voting will remain open through Feb. 23.**

Any doctor who did not receive a ballot can contact K. Dale Associates at (973) 310-7567 or kdale@kdaleassociates.com. Or just vote online by using your state license number at <http://topdoctors.point2survey.net>.

The results of the survey will be published in the November 2025 issue of New Jersey Monthly.

[Click here](#) to consult the 2024 list. To learn more about the methodology, [click here](#).

Coming Soon: Epic Winter 2025 Upgrade

Virtua’s IT teams are testing and validating the newest Epic upgrade, which is scheduled to go live in March.

Important Epic Upgrade Dates:

The Epic Training and Epic Playground environments will be upgraded with the new Epic version on Tuesday, Feb. 25 and will be available for use on Wednesday, Feb. 26.

The RedZone/Transparent Lockdown period begins Friday, March 7 at 3 p.m. During this period, Epic begins upgrading our system/environments in the background. The process will not impact end-users. However, during this timeframe, Epic changes (i.e., practice acquisitions, go-lives, departmental moves, and system implementations integrated with Epic) are restricted until after the upgrade event is completed on Thursday, March 13 at 4 a.m.

The Epic Upgrade event downtime will begin **Wednesday, March 12 at 11 p.m. and last until Thursday, March 13 at 4 a.m.** During this time, Virtua's Epic users will be restricted from the production environment. Epic Level 2 READ-ONLY access will be available.

Click to view the [Epic Downtime \(BCA - Business Continuity Access\) resource page](#). Please note: If you attempt to log into Epic during this downtime, you may see an error message.

Virtua Continues to Enhance Staff Safety

Virtua is further ensuring colleague safety by introducing the Strongline Staff Safety System at the Virtua Health & Wellness Centers in Berlin and Camden, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes, and Virtua Marlton. The system is already in place at Virtua Mount Holly, Virtua Willingboro, and Virtua Voorhees.

This innovative technology provides staff members in select units with special badges that can be discreetly worn alongside their Virtua ID badges. In situations where a staff member feels unsafe, a simple double-press of the Strongline badge sends an immediate alert to the security team and nearby colleagues. The alert provides the individual's identity and their precise real-time location, enabling a swift and strategic response.

Virtua in the News

Virtua Willingboro Earns Highest Reputation Score in U.S.

As reported in last week's [Clinician Update](#), Virtua Willingboro Hospital has achieved the highest reputation score of any acute care U.S. hospital in 2024, according to the ranking firm Reputation. The hospital earned a score of 881 out

of a possible 1,000. Other Virtua entities also earned high reputation scores, including Virtua Marlton Hospital, 22 outpatient rehab services locations, 15 labs, and 12 joint-venture ambulatory surgery centers. Twelve clinicians also achieved reputation scores of 800 or more, many for the first time. Read in [Gloucester City News](#).

Flu Surge Is Filling Hospitals

A spike in New Jersey's influenza activity is causing "one of the worst [flu] seasons in years," according to 6 ABC.

"We're being inundated with patients needing to be hospitalized for influenza," said Martin Topiel, MD, Virtua's chief infection control officer. He advised everyone who's not yet vaccinated to get a flu shot to protect themselves and those around them. Watch on [6 ABC](#) and [Good Morning America](#).

Virtua Leaders Among Top CEO-CFO Duos in Health Care

A prominent industry publication has named Dennis Pullin, president and CEO, and Bob Segin, EVP and CFO, to its list of "30 highly successful CEO-CFO duos." Their leadership has resulted in transformative growth and secured New Jersey's first "AA-" credit rating for a health system, the story noted. Other achievements include Virtua's extensive partnership with Rowan University, the creation of South Jersey's first proton therapy center, and the expansion of ambulatory surgery centers to 42. The duo has also led innovative community investments, including the Oliver Station affordable housing and medical complex, and a second mobile pediatric unit, increasing services to 10,000 visits annually. Read in [Becker's Hospital Review](#).

Virtua to Participate in National Alzheimer's Fellowship Program

As reported in last week's [Clinician Update](#), Virtua is among 10 U.S. health systems selected to participate in the Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative Healthcare System Preparedness U.S. Fellowship Program. The project is led by the Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative (DAC), a pioneering worldwide initiative seeking to cure Alzheimer's disease and improve brain health. Read in [Gloucester City News](#).

Virtua Hospitals Celebrate the Super Bowl

All five Virtua hospitals shared their Super Bowl excitement last week, with Eagles-themed pep rallies and special menu items in their cafeterias. 6 ABC captured the fun at Virtua Mount Holly Hospital, led by colleagues Katelynn

Hewitt as MC and Jeanette Conrad-Mckee in a mini Eagles mascot costume. Watch [here](#).

Super Bowl Baby Delights Eagles-Loving Family

Little Jack Joseph Carr arrived at Virtua Voorhees Hospital Sunday afternoon, just in time for his family of Eagles superfans. Delivered at 4:12 p.m., baby Jack gave dad Phil Carr time to get ready and watch the Super Bowl. Father and son also share a special tradition, as Phil celebrated his 30th birthday the day the Eagles won the Super Bowl in 2018. See the family, including mom Alyssa Carr, on [CBS 3](#).

IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

This week, we focus on local programs in honor of Black History Month, such as The Beloved Project. This community organization, servicing the Burlington and Willingboro areas, offers referrals for housing, re-entry assistance, food distribution, and community and mentorship resources. Learn more about [The Beloved Project](#).



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