

Clinician Update February 15, 2024

With your busy schedules in mind, we are experimenting with a way to expedite the delivery of this important clinician messaging to you. **If you are interested in an abbreviated audio version of *Clinician Update*, [click here](#).**

Important Message Regarding Remote Access to Epic and Physician Link

Every clinician who remotely accesses the Virtua network needs to be aware of upcoming changes now taking place. Virtua is transitioning to Microsoft Authenticator as its multi-factor authentication protocol. All users that need to access Virtua applications, including Epic and Physician Link, **MUST** enroll in Microsoft Authenticator. Beginning, **Tuesday, Feb. 20, at 10 a.m.**, colleagues not enrolled in Microsoft Authenticator will **NOT BE ABLE TO ACCESS CITRIX OR EPIC, INCLUDING PHYSICIAN LINK, REMOTELY.**

“The good news is that completing Authenticator enrollment is straightforward,” said Jim Gamble, MD, medical director for informatics at Virtua. “And we have provided resources to help.”

To enroll, [follow the instructions on the tip sheet here](#).

Clinicians can also find a list of support resources, including FAQs and a troubleshooting guide on the tip sheet. Should you need any assistance, do not hesitate to reach out to the IT Service Desk at 856-355-1234 or extension x51234.

Please Note: Once Authenticator is installed and you are enrolled, please be sure to have notifications turned on. **DO NOT** disable notifications or the application will not prompt you properly.

Breaking news! Magnet® Status for Virtua Voorhees Nurses

Congratulations to the nursing staff at Virtua Voorhees Hospital upon the news today of their Magnet® recertification. This means that three Virtua Health hospitals have earned recertification with the highest honor in nursing excellence: Magnet® recognition. Only about 10% of hospitals nationwide have earned this prestigious designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).

Virtua first achieved Magnet status in 2018 when it was a three-hospital system. The certification lasts for four years. Those hospitals—Virtua Marlton, Virtua Mount Holly, and Virtua Voorhees—are now each recertified by the ANCC.

To achieve Magnet status, organizations must pass a rigorous review that requires broad participation by leaders and staff, numerous reports, and extensive documentation. This process also includes on-site visits by the ANCC’s Commission on Magnet Recognition.

Again, congratulations!

Virtua Information Technology to Update Epic

Epic has changed its basic platform technology, moving from Hyperspace to a web-based platform called Hyperdrive. All Epic customers, including Virtua, must transition to the new Hyperdrive platform to take advantage of continued improvements and upgrades in upcoming Epic versions.

In preparation for this change, the Virtua Information Technology team is in the process of updating our current Epic system as well as any impacted applications and/or systems currently integrated with Epic. We are excited about the benefits this transition provides to the organization. It streamlines development, enables advanced capabilities, and allows for intuitive, optimized, and improved workflow efficiencies in new Epic versions.

For most users, we anticipate the impact of this transition will be a new modern look and feel. Workflows and documentation will be completed in much the same manner as they were before.

Virtua also gets to leverage lessons learned from other Epic organizations that have already completed this Hyperdrive transition. The move to Epic Hyperdrive will begin rolling out to various areas and departments throughout March and April. The Epic Hyperdrive transition will be completed no later than the beginning of **May 2024**.

Another Epic Year for MyChart

To wrap up another year of productive partnership, our friends at Epic generated a video that recaps some significant statistics of 2023. For instance, 310,000 appointments were scheduled in MyChart last year, and 130,000 potential adverse drug events were avoided thanks to medication administration safety checks. The video demonstrates the important impact EMRs provide to support us on the journey to high-reliability and to enhance our patient experience.

[Click to learn more in this video.](#)

Update to Masking Protocol at Virtua

Reg Blaber, MD, EVP and chief clinical officer, recently shared the following update regarding masking during patient encounters or when meeting with colleagues in closed spaces (break rooms, meeting rooms, etc.). Please see his message below:

Virtua consistently focuses on following science, using community/state infection data as well as identified best practices in order to make decisions to optimize the safety for our patients and colleagues.

We have seen a steady decrease in the number of patients presenting with upper respiratory infections to our offices, urgent cares, and emergency departments. Thankfully, we have also seen the number of

colleagues calling out with a respiratory illness decrease, reflecting the falling prevalence of these infections throughout New Jersey.

In response to the decreasing incidence of respiratory infections in our community and hospitals, we are relaxing the “strongly encourage masking” policy throughout our patient care areas. This applies to both colleagues and visitors.

Those patients with upper respiratory symptoms and/or a positive test for one of the three viruses should wear a mask at all times, as should their caregivers. Further, we should continue to discourage anyone from visiting patients with active respiratory symptoms to avoid transmission of the virus to loved ones. For all others, masking will be subject to personal preference, but we should always comply with any masking request by our patients.

Thank you very much for your hard work and patience in navigating the “triple-demic” season of respiratory infections caused by Covid-19, Influenza, and RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus). We will continue to monitor the prevalence of these viruses in our community and communicate with you any new information and recommendations as they arise.

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

During American Heart Month, we mark two recognition weeks: Heart Failure Awareness Week (Feb. 11 to 17) and National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week (Feb. 11 to 17). We commend these teams for their dedication to the community.

Heart Failure Awareness Week spotlights the ongoing promotion of heart failure awareness, patient education, and heart failure prevention. Through its inpatient program, five outpatient heart failure centers, and a home care program featuring community-based care managers, Virtua’s clinicians are stepping up to meet the need of South Jersey. The team’s focus is FUNCTION, and not FAILURE.

To learn more about the Heart Failure Program at Virtua, click [here](#).

National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week offers the opportunity to recognize our colleagues who work diligently to reduce the potentially devastating effects of cardiovascular disease. We also thank them for their contribution to the improvement of the health and physical performance of those at risk or are diagnosed with heart disease.

To learn more about cardiopulmonary rehabilitation at Virtua, click [here](#).

Update to Virtua Aetna Insurance Plan

Virtua is pleased to announce that as of **Feb. 1**, all AdvoCare Primary and Specialty Care providers are now part of the Maximum Savings Network of the Virtua medical insurance plans with Aetna. As a result of this change, colleagues and their dependents enrolled in Virtua’s medical insurance plans will see a lower co-pay for services with these providers and those enrolled in the Virtua Whole Health HMO will no longer need a referral for services at AdvoCare Specialty Care offices.

Virtua Is “All In” on Excellence

Thank you for being *All In on Excellence*! We’re happy to report some exciting numbers:

- Almost 13,000 colleagues downloaded the Practicing Excellence app
- 600,000 tips watched
- 14,000 Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits claimed

Congratulations! Let’s keep the momentum going with this week’s tip from “Forward Together” entitled “Communicating When There Are Access Challenges.”

Click to [view the tip](#).

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:

“I know I am good hands with Dawn.” (Dawn Gadon, APN)

“She is an awesome doctor. She is highly skilled in her profession, along with great bedside manner. I was amazed at how she remembered me and our conversation from the prior year. She is really invested in her patients.” (Sherrilynn Parrish, MD)

“Very kind. Explained results clearly.” (Gregory Seltzer, MD)

“He is dedicated to his patients. If he doesn't have the answer, he will work to put you in contact with professionals who may have the answers.” (Thomas Godleski, DO)

“She is kind and compassionate, and her clinical expertise is exceptional.” (Jessica Ruiz, APN)

Virtua in the News

Clinicians Discuss Hospital at Home Program

Candy Luthe, a retired Virtua nurse, was hospitalized for COVID-19 last year. But the 73-year-old completed her hospital stay in her own house through Virtua’s Hospital at Home program. Diego Ortega, MD, the program’s clinical lead, and Karen Goldsmith, RN, program manager, discussed the innovative care model. Read in [70&73](#) or [Tap Into Camden](#).

Virtua Recognized for Outstanding Diabetes and Endocrinology Programs

A prominent industry publication has named Virtua among 36 U.S. health systems with great programs for people with endocrine disorders. Virtua's endocrinology department has 15 physicians who saw

43,314 patients in the past year. The team's certified diabetes educators help people reduce their risk for complications, and several support groups assist patients. Read in [Becker's Hospital Review](#).

Robotic Surgery Benefits Patients, Health Systems

Virtua's Jennifer Smith, MSN, ACNS-BC, CPHQ, published an article explaining the advantages of investing in robotic surgery technology. Smith, director of service line performance for Virtua's musculoskeletal and neurosciences services lines, has helped guide the successful growth of Virtua's robotic orthopedic surgery services. Read in [Healthcare Business Review](#).

Virtua Advocates for Gun Safety, Enhances Security

Virtua has joined a nationwide initiative to help parents protect their children from gun violence, called "It Doesn't Kill to Ask." In addition, Virtua has installed advanced weapons-screening technology at its campuses. The story includes remarks from Michael Filart, DO, a Virtua emergency medicine physician, and Greg Pease, AVP of security and outpatient services. Read in [Tap Into Camden](#).

Health Sciences Library: A Resource at the Ready

The Health Sciences Library website on the Colleague Corner has been redesigned to streamline and optimize your exploration of up-to-date and evidence-based medical and nursing information. For those who have access to Colleague Corner, scroll to the bottom of the homepage and select *Health Sciences Library* under *Quick Links*.

Features include access to a discover box, info basket, databases and platforms, and an author repository. Click to [view the guide](#) to easily navigate through the Health Sciences Library.

If you do not have access to the Colleague Corner, just send your information requests directly to a librarian. [Sophia Kim](#) covers Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes and Virtua Willingboro hospitals. [Helen-Ann Brown Epstein](#) covers Virtua Marlton, Virtua Mount Holly, and Virtua Voorhees hospitals. If you are in an outside hospital location, don't hesitate to send your information requests to Helen-Ann Brown Epstein.

GLP-1 Medications to be Discussed at Educational Event Hosted by Virtua, Feb. 26

Much discourse has been taking place in the media and amongst the public over a class of type 2 diabetes drugs known as GLP-1 medications. Commonly called glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP-1) agonists, the Food and Drug Administration has approved formulations of GLP-1 medications for type 2 diabetes and chronic weight management. Virtua Medical Director of Endocrinology Jean Davidson, DO, will be virtually discussing this topic in depth at a non-accredited educational event on Feb. 26.

"This is a great opportunity for an in-depth look at the mechanism of action, titration, and the prior authorizations process of these drugs," said Dr. Davidson. "All clinicians are welcome."

To participate, just [click here on Teams](#) on Feb. 26 at 11:30 a.m.

Virtua Bioethics Symposium to Take Place Feb. 29

Virtua's inaugural Bioethics Symposium, an interprofessional educational activity, will take place Thursday, Feb. 29 virtually from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The agenda will focus on difficult care decision making, the difference between Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) and advance directives, the challenges the LGBTQ+ community faces when seeking medical care, and how to identify moral distress in yourself and colleagues so our caretakers can take better care of themselves. Topics will also delve into the Medical Aid and Dying Act and some of the ethical concerns related to artificial intelligence.

For a full agenda, as well as details on accreditation and registration, [click this flyer](#).

Advocating for the Health and Wellness of Veterans

In this episode of "Here for Good: Inside Edition," Dennis Pullin sits down with Nelson Vasquez, a Virtua network engineer and member of our WE Serve Colleague Community. Here, Nelson talks about how he came to Virtua and how our WE Serve team is dedicated to supporting the health and wellness of fellow veterans, active military members, and their families.

Listen on your preferred podcast platform or [view the whole episode](#).

IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

This week, as part of our Black History Month spotlight, we highlight a local nonprofit organization from South Jersey, [Roots to Prevention](#). With a mission dedicated to enhancing the health of families in Camden by simplifying access to growing, eating, and selling fruits and vegetables, this Black-owned organization adopts a solution-oriented strategy.

Since 2021, [Virtua's Eat Well Program](#) has been collaborating with Roots to Prevention, contributing to the effort to tackle the social determinants of health and promote the mutual objectives of facilitating healthier eating and living habits. [Discover their latest cookbook and participate in the family cooking challenge](#).

Additionally, the Christian season of Lent began yesterday on Ash Wednesday. During Lent, the spiritual preparation before Easter, many Christians observe a period of fasting, repentance, and spiritual discipline. The purpose of the Lenten season is to set aside time for reflection on Jesus Christ—to consider his suffering and his sacrifice, his life, death, burial, and resurrection.