

Clinician Update

January 16, 2025

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Dr. Khelil Launches New “All In” Practicing Excellence Journey

As a health system, Virtua colleagues have watched a collective **1 million** Practicing Excellence tips as of **Jan. 15**. And now, we continue our ongoing journey of practicing excellence with a new program: “All In on Excellence 2025.” As the name suggests, all Virtua colleagues will watch the same tip each week, regardless of role or job location.

To learn more about what to anticipate, please view this [kick-off video](#) from Jennifer Khelil, DO, chief clinical officer.

As Dr. Khelil states, this program reinforces that the pursuit of zero harm is integral to everything we do. Patient identification, staff communication, infection prevention—it all comes back to our HRO foundation, and we will use Practicing Excellence to reinforce why it matters and how to act upon it.

Our partners at Practicing Excellence will auto-enroll you into the “All In on Excellence 2025” program. You can find it on the web platform or mobile app under the “Progress” menu. If you do not see the program listed under “My Programs” by Monday, you can self-enroll by selecting “Join Program” and typing in the code *Virtua2025*.

Visit the Practicing Excellence page on the Colleague Corner to preview the program's tips and consult supporting materials. You will also see Practicing Excellence prompts on the HUG pages published on the Colleague Corner.

Virtua’s Continued Focus on the Well-Being of Clinicians

Over the last few years, Virtua has been on an intentional journey to understand the needs around well-being, professional fulfillment, and burnout. As we start a new year, we want to take a moment to provide an update on the clinician-specific work that was done in 2024, what is coming in 2025, and ways that you can get involved.

Well-Being Work in 2024: Last year, we re-administered the Stanford Assessment to keep a pulse on the experiences of our clinicians and were happy to see meaningful improvements in clinician burnout. We also implemented a listening session model for members of our Physician Leadership Program (PLP) and VMG to better understand some of the driving contributors to the experiences of our clinicians. We also launched the VMG Clinician Wellness Committee, which is tasked with helping us implement strategies that improve the clinician experience, starting with primary care.

What’s coming in 2025: We will offer the Stanford Assessment again this spring to gauge the well-being of clinicians, as well as additional opportunities to participate in listening sessions. The medical staff has newly formed a support committee to review the cases of clinicians who may be struggling, while

ensuring they have proper resources and support, and will soon launch a Medical Staff Wellness Committee to proactively address the underlying causes of clinician stress and burnout.

Ways to get involved:

- If you would like more information about being part of the Medical Staff Clinician Wellness Committee, please send an email to Samantha Paul (spaul@virtua.org), manager of credentialing services, by Friday, Jan. 24.
- Have your voice heard so that we may gain insights on your experience as a Virtua clinician when the Stanford Assessment launches again in Q2.
- Reach out to Nicole McNeal (nmcneal@virtua.org), director of well-being, to learn more about the broader well-being work being done across Virtua, how you can participate, and ways to get involved.

Virtua's Refuel Rooms: A Well-Being Resource

Virtua's Refuel Rooms and the Refuel-on-the-Go cart and bag options provide moments for individuals and teams to decompress, relax, and recharge. The rooms offer dimmable lights, reclining seats, sound machines, beverage stations, and a stretching area.

Visit the refuel rooms at the following locations:

- Virtua Mount Holly Hospital, first floor near the pavilion art gallery
- Virtua Willingboro Hospital, first floor next to the conference room
- Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, fourth floor at the end of the left hallway
- Virtua Voorhees Hospital, ground floor lobby B
- Virtua Marlton Hospital, third floor across from the elevator

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:

“Wonderful, caring, knowledgeable, and professional doctor and staff. We are so lucky to be able to go here for our medical care.” **(Leonard A. Powell, DO)**

“I feel I am in very capable hands. Everyone is patient, kind.” **(Jennifer L. Buckingham, APN)**

“He is one of the most professional and knowledgeable doctors I have seen. I respect him greatly and have recommended him to my family and friends.” **(Nathan Holmes, MD)**

“She was amazing. She spent time addressing my concerns and working out a plan for me. Very impressed with her.” **(Stephanie Godbold, PA)**

“He was very respectful, warm, and friendly. He really listened. Thank you and your team for your kindness.” **(Manny Porat, MD)**

Virtua Physician Inspires the Spirit of Service on MLK Day

As we approach Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, we are reminded of one of history’s most influential civil rights leaders. Recognized nationally as a day of service, it’s a time to actively contribute to the community in a manner that reflects Dr. King’s vision of a connected and socially just society.

“It is a ‘day on,’ not a ‘day off,’” said Virtua primary care physician Donee Thomas-Patterson, MD, who will be in Clementon with her Delta Sigma Theta sorority sisters at a service event sponsored by AKA and the South Jersey section of the National Council of Negro Women. “There will be eight different stations of service opportunities at the one location, so I am excited to wrap cutlery for the Cathedral Kitchen in Camden, make fleece blankets for local unhoused people, and whatever is needed of me. I hope all people will seek out some way to serve on MLK Day and take this time to put in their PTO for next year’s MLK Day as well!”

Dr. Thomas-Patterson is also an associate member of the South Jersey chapter of Jack and Jill of America, which this past weekend honored Dr. King by teaching 70 children the importance of community service. They made care packages for local homeless shelters—Home of the Braves Veteran Center in Camden and the Eleanor Corbett shelter in Gloucester—and Brookdale Senior Living in Voorhees.

This year’s theme from the [King Center](#) is: *Mission Possible: Protecting Freedom, Justice, and Democracy in the Spirit of Nonviolence*³⁶⁵. Find local volunteer opportunities [here](#).

Newsweek Names Virtua Among Its Greatest Workplaces for Diversity

Newsweek and its research partner Plant-A Insights Group have selected Virtua for its 2025 list of “America’s Greatest Workplaces for Diversity.” The evaluation process combines public data, insights from HR professionals, and the results of anonymous employee surveying. [Research suggests](#) nearly 80% of U.S. workers believe it’s important for companies to foster an inclusive culture, and that diversity plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining employees. A few months ago, *Modern Healthcare* also named Virtua as one of eight [Diversity Leader organizations](#). Read in [Newsweek](#).

More of Virtua in the News

Dr. Khelil Promoted to Chief Clinical Officer

As reported in [last week’s Clinician Update](#), Jennifer Khelil, DO, has been named executive vice president and chief clinical officer of Virtua Health. Now, local and industry media are highlighting her and the wealth of experience she brings to her new role, including the past 12 years with Virtua. An empathetic leader, she is dedicated to quality and creating outstanding patient experiences, noted President and CEO Dennis Pullin. Read in [New Jersey Business Magazine](#) and [Becker’s Hospital Review](#).

Stomach Bug, Respiratory Viruses Rising in Area

South Jersey is experiencing a “quademic” of four viral illnesses—flu, COVID-19, RSV, and norovirus—according to Martin Topiel, MD, chief infection control officer. “Cases of these four viral illnesses are all increasing right now,” said Dr. Topiel. Read in [The Courier-Post](#).

New Study Examines Health Risks from Candles

Pulmonologist Matthew Gordon, MD, discussed recent research on the health impacts of burning candles in homes. For example, many types of candles release particulate matter and toxic chemicals, which can cause respiratory problems and increased cancer risk, among other health consequences. He discussed what to avoid and safer alternatives. Watch on [Fox 29](#).

Celebrating CRNAs, Our Trusted Anesthesia Experts on the Frontlines

National CRNA Week is **Jan. 21 to 27**, a great opportunity to acknowledge certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) for their ongoing commitment to patient safety. At Virtua, there are 125 CRNAs across all our hospital campuses, and we recognize them for providing world-class care to our patients.

To learn more about National CRNA Week, [click here](#) for the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) website.

Dr. Rossi Shares Importance of Upcoming CME Event on Liver Disease and Transplantation

The Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine will host a CME session entitled “[Liver Disease and Transplantation](#)” on Tuesday, Jan. 28, from 12:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. in the Physician Conference Room at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. The live activity is designated for *3.75 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*. The speakers include Simona Rossi, MD; Ashraf Malek, MD; and Ely Sebastian, MD.

The target audience for this activity is physicians, physician assistants, advanced nurse practitioners, medical residents, medical fellows, and nurses.

“We all know that liver failure is a serious condition that affects millions of Americans, and can lead to liver cancer if left untreated,” said Dr. Rossi. “While this is a worthwhile opportunity to recognize liver transplantation as a treatment option for patients with liver failure, it is also a chance to gain valuable knowledge on other acute hepatologic issues like alcoholic hepatitis and hepatorenal syndrome, and much more.”

CME: Quarterly Weight Management Grand Rounds, Jan. 29

The CME session Quarterly Weight Management Grand Rounds will help participants define obesity as a chronic disease, review the medical risks associated with obesity, and discuss treatment options for

obesity. The virtual event will take place on **Wednesday, Jan. 29**, from 7 to 8 a.m., and will feature speaker Susan Varevice-McAndrew, DO, of the Virtua Complete Weight Management Program and diplomat of the American Board of Obesity Medicine. For more information, click [here](#) for a printable flyer. To join the event, click [here](#).

LAST CALL: Clinician Feedback Sought for Improving Social Determinants of Health

The South Jersey Health Collaborative (SJHC), of which Virtua is a member, is asking for your feedback in this 15-minute [Key Stakeholder Survey](#). The goal is to learn more about strengths, barriers, and opportunities for improving health and social determinants of health across South Jersey. Your responses will help SJHC identify resources, strengths, and opportunities for collaboration and collective action. All responses are anonymous.

The data collected will be an important component of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) conducted by the South Jersey Health Collaborative. All the data gathered from this survey and other methods will be available for free on the websites of each SJHC member in 2025. **The survey will be open for participation through Jan. 17, 2025.**

Click [here](#) for the survey and thank you for your time and participation.

IDEA: Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

The festive season continues! From [Mahayana](#), the Buddhist New Year celebrated on **Jan. 14**, to marking the end of winter harvest from **Jan. 14 to 17**, there are a [variety of festivals in India](#). Happy Mahayana, Makar Sankranti, Pongal, Lohri, Uttarayan, and Bihu to those who are celebrating this week.