

## Clinician Update

### January 18, 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](#).**

### New Pulmonologists Join Virtua Medical Group

This week, Virtua Medical Group welcomed eight new pulmonologists and a nurse practitioner to the Virtua family. They will be staffed at three locations—Virtua Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine – Cherry Hill, Virtua Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine – Marlton, and Virtua Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine – Willingboro.

“We are very excited for what this means for our community,” said Neha Vagadia, DO, lead pulmonologist. “These clinicians are very familiar names to the Virtua family, having been previously affiliated with VMG. Together, they represent decades of experience with deep roots in our community.”

Please join us in officially welcoming the following providers to our Virtua family: David Baumgarten, MD; Steven Baumgarten, MD; Aaron Crookshank, MD; Michael J. Driscoll, DO; Ira D. Horowitz, MD; Julie Polisiakiewicz, DO; Alan Pope, MD; Ryan Townsend, MD; and Rhonda Sebastian, NP.

For general information on the pulmonary and sleep medicine services at Virtua, [click here](#).

### Associate Vice President for Research Named at Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences of Rowan University

Dianne Langford, PhD, has been named associate vice president in the Virtua Health College of Medicine and Life Sciences of Rowan University. A professor of cell biology and neuroscience in the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine and School of Translational Biomedical Engineering and Sciences, Dr. Langford is an internationally recognized researcher who has made groundbreaking contributions in neuroscience.

“She has fostered the development of research initiatives for medical students, residents, and graduate students,” said Vice President and Chief Academic Officer Thomas A. Cavalieri, DO. “While continuing her current research program in her capacity as associate vice president for research, Dr. Langford will be providing important leadership in the development and implementation of the research plan for the Virtua Health College of Medicine and Life Sciences and Virtua Health.”

## New Center Dedicated to Crohn's & Colitis Care

The Virtua Crohn's & Colitis Center is now open in Moorestown and provides expert care and support for individuals with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. The center's multidisciplinary team is led by IBD fellowship-trained gastroenterologist, Sanket B. Patel, DO, and includes a registered dietician who develops personalized nutrition plans, experienced colorectal surgeons who specialize in minimally invasive techniques, and a dedicated clinical support team to expedite scheduling and care coordination.

"Our goal with this specialized center is to provide all the services in one place to ultimately improve our patients' quality of life," said Dr. Patel. "Our short-term goal is for patients to feel confident about managing their symptoms. Our long-term goal, through medical and nutritional therapy, and surgery if needed, is to promote bowel healing and decrease risk of cancer and complications, allowing patients to get back to their normal lives with confidence."

The Virtua Crohn's & Colitis Center provides access to all these services at the Virtua Health & Wellness Center – Moorestown, 401 Young Ave, Suite 275D. To contact a care coordinator, call 856-291-8680.

## Virtua is "All In" on Excellence

Thank you for being *All In on Excellence*! This week, we continue to consider what it means to be "On Purpose" with the helpful tip "The Power of Simple Rules."

These insights outline clear, concise definitions of the team's core values to set a foundation for strong, meaningful collaboration. The tip emphasizes the vital role of each team member in aligning efforts and establishing a common purpose. 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:

"Easy to talk to. Answered my questions. I have confidence I'm receiving great medical care." (Roman Krol, MD)

"I was a new patient and was very happy I chose her. She was very pleasant, attentive, and thorough with her examination. I was seen in a timely fashion and the office was clean. She addressed my main concern and referred me to another specialist for my issue. I will definitely recommend her." (Monica Agar, MD)

"He is very thorough in his exam and takes the time to listen to what you have to say. Really enjoy going to this office and dealing with the staff." (Richard Paluzzi, MD)

“She is so easy to chat with, especially about such personal and private things. She is patient, empathetic, and obviously extremely knowledgeable in her field. I'm very glad I found her.” (Elizabeth Kusturiss, NP)

“He is heaven sent! This man knows his stuff! He listens to you. Doesn't treat you like a number. His bedside manner is A-1. He has me as a patient for life, or for as long as he is in business.” (Sean McMillan, DO)

## Celebrating CRNAs, Our Trusted Anesthesia Experts on the Frontlines

National CRNA Week is January 21 – 27, a great opportunity to acknowledge certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) for their ongoing commitment to patient safety. At Virtua, there are 115 CRNAs across all our hospital campuses, and we recognize them for providing world class care to our patients.

“It is my honor to salute our talented CRNA colleagues across the Virtua system,” says Alfred Fam, MD, chairman of the Department of Anesthesia for Virtua Memorial and Virtua Willingboro Hospitals. “Thank you for your dedication to quality.”

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

## Exuberan® By Virtua Revitalizes Women in Menopause With Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy

Women in menopause experience life-changing symptoms that can be debilitating. This hormonal shift causes seismic changes in every body system, affecting bone density, concentration, cognitive clarity, energy, heart health, mental health, muscles and joints, sexual function, sleep, and weight.

Virtua has long been a leader in women's health, offering a range of menopause treatment options, including bioidentical hormone replacement therapy (BHRT). “BHRT is unique,” said Nermin Lazarus, DO, lead physician for [Exuberan® by Virtua](#). “It provides a balance of hormones personalized to the patient's exact needs. The testosterone provides increased energy, libido, and mental clarity—and you can't get that from traditional hormone replacement therapy.”

Dr. Lazarus brings over 20 years of primary care experience to the practice, spending the last 10 years exclusively providing primary care to women. She's joined in the practice by nurse practitioner Wyndham Pursley, APN, and OB/GYN Rachel Kramer, MD, who each bring more than 25 years of experience in caring for and meeting the needs of women.

In addition to bioidentical hormone replacement therapy, Exuberan® by Virtua will soon offer Botox and cosmetic laser services, with discounts for Virtua employees.

To learn more about Exuberan® by Virtua, click [here](#). To refer patients, please call 856-325-5601.

## Virtua in the News

### Virtua Is First in State to Offer Innovative Treatment for High Blood Pressure

[As reported in Clinician Update last week](#), Virtua has started providing a new procedure that addresses uncontrolled high blood pressure. Medtronic's minimally invasive Symplicity Spyral™ renal denervation system uses radiofrequency energy to treat overactive nerves on the outer surface of the kidney arteries. Clinically proven to reduce high blood pressure, the procedure offers new hope to people who've been unsuccessful with other approaches. Kintur Sanghvi, MD, interventional cardiologist, performed the state's first Symplicity procedure at Virtua Mount Holly Hospital last week. Read in [ROI-NJ](#) and listen on [KYW Newsradio](#).

### How to Stay Safe from Storm-Related Health Issues

Ice, snow, flooding, and power outages often lead to a surge in injuries and other health problems. Nicole Tyczynska, MD, an emergency medicine physician at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, provided tips on staying healthy through the latest storms. Watch on [CBS 3](#).

### Rowan Receives \$1 Million to Create Healing Arts Center

James E. George, MD, a member of the Rowan University Foundation Board of Directors, has donated \$1 million to establish the George Family Center for Healing Arts at Rowan University. The planned center will also collaborate with the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine to bring art therapy into communities and health care facilities. Read in [NJ.com](#).

### Virtua Installs AI-Based Security Screening

New, state-of-the-art technology is helping to keep weapons out of Virtua facilities. The touchless screening system, called Evolv, uses artificial intelligence (AI) and replaces traditional metal detectors. Greg Pease, Virtua's AVP of security and outpatient services, discussed Evolv's benefits. Jackie Fish, nursing director, said the system has made patients and staff feel safer. Read in [The Sun Newspapers](#).

## Last Call: Identifying Patients for Advanced Heart Failure Therapy Friday, Jan. 19

Join Tolulope Agunbiade, MD, director of Virtua's Advanced Heart Failure Program, and Chun W. Choi, MD, vice president of clinical operations for Virtua's Cardiovascular Service Line, for an informational session on advanced heart failure therapies.

Providers will gain an understand of:

- Who should be considered for advanced heart failure therapies
- How a left ventricular assist device (LVAD) functions

- How an LVAD is implanted and the postoperative care required
- A day in the life of an LVAD patient

When and Where:

**Friday, Jan. 19** at 12 p.m. ([Teams](#) or in-person)

Physicians Conference Room

1600 Haddon Ave, Camden, NJ 08103

Click to [view the flyer](#).

[Click here to join the meeting](#) (Jan. 19 at 12 p.m.)

For more information, contact Theresa Rowe-Ruffin, director of Heart Failure Services, at [troweruf@virtua.org](mailto:troweruf@virtua.org) or 856-886-6468.

## Terry Scott Earns 'The Golden Crown' in Sterile Processing

When it comes to keeping our instruments sterile, Terry Scott, director of Central Sterile Supply, is practically royalty.

In this episode of "Here for Good: Inside Edition," President and CEO Dennis Pullin and Terry chat about the importance of sterile processing, his impressive career at Virtua, and the process of earning "The Golden Crown," a highly coveted distinction in his field.

Click to [view the video](#).

## Reminder: Proper Access to Patient Medical Records and an Introduction to Protenus

Virtua is committed to protecting the privacy and security of our patients' information, including patients who are also employees of Virtua Health. The following is being shared with our colleagues:

### Proper Access to Patient Records

As a reminder, Virtua Health workforce members must only access a patient's medical record for work-related reasons, such as to provide treatment, collect payment, or carry out health care operations. Colleagues are not permitted to access the medical record of a family member, friend, colleague, or any other individual without a work-related reason, even if the individual asks them to do so. Accessing patient information without a work-related reason is a violation of Virtua Health policies and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Below are some examples of inappropriate access to patient medical records:

- Accessing the medical record of a colleague in Epic out of curiosity/concern to see why they were admitted to the hospital
- Accessing the medical record of an ex-spouse to obtain their current contact information
- Accessing the medical record of a family member, colleague, or friend to obtain their hospital room number

Additionally, it is a violation of Virtua Health policies for colleagues to access their own medical record via Epic or any other Virtua Health system. Colleagues must utilize the same methods as Virtua Health patients to access their medical records, which includes MyChart or submitting a request to HIM or their physician practice directly.

Please see Virtua Health's "[Safeguarding Protected Health Information \("PHI"\) and Other Confidential Data](#)" and "[Confidentiality](#)" policies.

Any suspected instances of inappropriate access to patient records should be reported immediately to Virtua Health's Privacy Office for investigation via phone at 856-355-6620 or email [privacyofficer@virtua.org](mailto:privacyofficer@virtua.org).

### **Introduction to Protenus**

Beginning in February 2024, Virtua Health's Privacy Office will use Protenus to proactively monitor user access to patient medical records. Protenus is a privacy monitoring tool to assist the Privacy Office in detecting inappropriate access to our electronic medical record systems, including Epic.

Please contact Virtua Health's Privacy Office via phone at 856-355-6620 or email [privacyofficer@virtua.org](mailto:privacyofficer@virtua.org) with any questions.

### **IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All**

Various cultures express gratitude for a bountiful harvest. Happy Makar Sankranti, Pongal, Lohri, Uttarayan and Bihu to those who celebrated this week. Click [here](#) for more information.

Additionally, [Bodhi Day](#) is recognized on Jan. 18 and celebrated by Buddhists around the world. Bodhi Day commemorates the moment that Gautama Buddha reached enlightenment after 50 days of meditation. Happy Bodhi Day to those celebrating!