

## Clinician Update

### July 13, 2023

#### WE Support – Peer to Peer Support Program

This week, Virtua CEO & President Dennis Pullin shared exciting news with Virtua leadership regarding our ongoing efforts to support and empower our dedicated workforce. He announced a new initiative called “WE Support,” which will establish peer support networks. We will initially launch a pilot of WE Support among our physicians, and our ultimate goal is to expand its reach to include all populations across Virtua.

The primary purpose of WE Support is to provide emotional support to colleagues. Whether the colleague has experienced a traumatic event or is facing overwhelming stress or burnout, this program will pair the individual with a trained peer who can offer empathetic and confidential support through one-on-one sessions.

Stay tuned for more details about the nomination and training process, which will be communicated in the coming weeks. Thank you for your dedication and support as we take these significant strides in prioritizing the well-being of our colleagues.

#### Congratulations to Our Graduates of the Virtua Health Physician Leadership Program

Over the past nine months, 12 physicians have participated in a nomination-based leadership development program designed to challenge existing perspectives and routines while building a leadership network supporting broader strategic impact. Components of the program (facilitated by our partners from the Balance Point Group) included carefully selected self-assessments, individual leadership coaching, executive-delivered sessions in strategy, finance, and communication, as well as customized leadership content. The program culminated on July 10 with individual Strategic Imperative presentations to members of Virtua’s executive and senior leadership teams.

Congratulations to Drs. Sam Wasser, Michelle Salvatore, Parth Modi, Angela Skrzynski, Hafeza Shaikh, Neha Vagadia, Darius Sholevar, Jamaal Shaban, Rick Levine, Monika Smith, Vik Bathula, and Ed Rivera on this significant achievement.

#### Practicing Excellence: As the Journey Continues, Physicians Share Their Thoughts

Thank you for your commitment to Practicing Excellence and the *Patient Experience* journey. This week, we invite you to focus on the invaluable insights provided in the [Week 15 and 16 guides](#). Topics include Listening Well, Practicing Self-Care, and Beyond the Work.

A reminder as we take this journey together, Practicing Excellence offers a wealth of videos in its library. Physicians have been sharing feedback from their favorite tips so far.

Cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Chun (Dan) Choi, MD, vice president for clinical operations for the cardiovascular service line, commented on Overcoming Medical Programming Tip #2: The Power of Gratitude:

“My family had an experience earlier this year that has helped me reset my perspectives. (My wife had viral encephalitis and was in the ICU for a while. She still has very subtle short-term memory gaps, but otherwise well.)

With all the challenges in health care (shortage of staff, burnout), I think it is very helpful to remind ourselves how lucky we are to be able to make tangible improvements in others’ well-being. No doubt, the job of taking care of patients is stressful and tough. But we have all made a conscious decision to devote ourselves in this profession (as nurses, doctors, technicians, administrators). We will always be in need by our society. And our patients and their families will be forever grateful for our help we provide.

I would like all of us at Virtua to remind ourselves that we are here for those who need us, and for each other as we struggle together in this challenging journey.”

Cardiologist Hafeza Shaikh, DO, commented on the Using Teach-Back Tip: Teach-Back Made Simple:

“The statistic in this video is disappointing, suggesting that 40 to 80% of what patients hear is forgotten almost immediately! Using ‘explain, repeat, and fill the gap’ can help us all make sure our patients are absorbing the content and that our explanations and care plans are understood accurately. This can also reduce medical errors and phone calls to clarify directions after discharge. The teach-back tip included in this quick video is a simple way to make sure that our explanations and patient education are well received.”

Emergency medicine physician, Monika Smith, DO, commented on the Burnout Scope Tip: The Art vs. Work of Medicine:

“This video is one of my favorites, and it addresses physician burnout. I love how it helped me differentiate my frustrations between work of medicine and art of medicine. Next time you find yourself frustrated with your work, try to differentiate between art of medicine and work obligations. Art of medicine is a fixed entity, all else around it is modifiable and when optimized, it can make a big difference in your day.”

## [360° Series Interviews Virtua Gastroenterologist](#)

In this week’s installment of Virtua’s 360° series, we get to know Krysta Johns-Keating, MD, of Virtua Gastroenterology. Dr. Johns-Keating is not only a fellowship-trained gastroenterologist with exceptional clinical skills, but she also has a knack for cake decorating. Intriguing, right?

Click to view [Dr. Johns-Keating 360° profile](#), which is posted to Virtua's social channels. We encourage you to share these videos with your friends and colleagues to build awareness for our #BestDoctors.

## ED Physician Is Here for Good at Home and Overseas

Nicole Tyczynska, MD, sat down with President and CEO Dennis Pullin for the *Here for Good: Inside Edition* podcast. As an emergency department physician at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Dr. Tyczynska shared with Dennis that “the beauty of emergency medicine is that you are there for people in their most critical moment, and that you have the power to change their health at that moment.”

She has taken her clinical experience with her to Poland, her parents’ native country, where she serves as vice ambassador to Poland for the American College of Emergency Physicians. For more than a decade, she’s regularly traveled to Poland to assist health care providers in advancing the development of emergency medicine in the region.

In the past year, the war in Ukraine and the influx of refugees into Poland have significantly strained the Polish emergency health care system. Thanks to her colleagues in the ED and pharmacy, she managed to raise \$7,000 for medical supplies—as well as a full suitcase of urgently needed medications—and brought them to Poland in May 2022.

Dr. Tyczynska proudly exclaimed in Polish, “Virtua tutaj na zawsze,” which translates to “Virtua is Here for Good.”

Click to [view the podcast](#). To view all episodes of *Here for Good: Inside Edition*, visit the [Colleague Corner](#).

## Epic Go-Live: We Ask Because We Care

On July 11, Virtua implemented additional Epic functionalities in support of our work to advance health equity and provide personalized, informed care to unique individuals. Specifically, these Epic updates pertain to patient demographics regarding Sex, Gender and Name (SGN) and the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH). The Epic enhancements include:

- The ability to ask for and display a patient’s preferred name, pronouns, and sex assigned at birth.
- Updates to patient wristbands to display a preferred name, if provided, in addition to the legal name.
- Support for the documentation of several factors that impact a patient’s health, including food security, transportation needs, housing stability, and more.

These are just a few of the new Epic upgrades. To learn about these features and earlier initiatives to advance health equity through comprehensive patient data, please visit the [IDEA: Inclusion, Diversity & Equity for All page](#) of the Colleague Corner.

## IN THE NEWS

### **Virtua to be Honored for Empowering Women**

A statewide business magazine has identified Virtua as one of 50 organizations making tangible and innovative efforts to advance women in the workplace and community. *NJBiz* will celebrate the honorees at an August 1 event and in a future issue of the magazine.

“It is time to honor those organizations that invest in, elevate, and support women leaders,” said *NJBiz* publisher and director Suzanne Fischer-Huettner. “Women leaders can only succeed with the support of the organizations they work for and with.”

Selection criteria for this inaugural program included a track record of recruiting, hiring, and promoting women; offering a mentoring program for women; and supporting programs that assist marginalized women, among others. Read the story [here](#).