

## Clinician Update

### July 15, 2021

#### **Virtua Health is a Best Place to Work**

Congratulations, colleagues! Virtua Health has been recognized as a Best Place to Work for the 15th time by the *Philadelphia Business Journal*. Thank you for your active participation and providing valuable feedback.

Our Culture of WE is what makes Virtua a Best Place to Work. We share the same values, mission, vision, and purpose—being a trusted health care partner to the members of our community.

WE are Virtua Health. WE are Here for Good. WE are a Best Place to Work!

#### **Latest COVID-19 Fast Facts**

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is creeping upward, and is now 1.16 with a corresponding increase in hospital admissions across the state and in nearby Pennsylvania.
- The state's Vaccination Overview dashboard reports 10,190,399 doses of vaccine have been administered.
- The total number of cases as of 3 p.m. are as follows:
  - Burlington County: 38,537 cases
  - Camden County: 49,386 cases
  - Gloucester County: 26,745 cases
- COVID-associated mortality for Camden, Burlington, and Gloucester counties: 2,656.

#### **Vaccine Update: HEC Reopens for Virtua Colleague COVID-19 Vaccine Campaign**

As COVID-19 surges in 46 states, experts say the vast majority of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths have one thing in common: they are among unvaccinated people.

To help ensure the health and safety of our colleagues, the Barry D. Brown Health Education Center (HEC) has re-opened as a vaccine clinic and will be open **Monday, July 19**, and **Tuesday, July 20** for first doses. Do not delay scheduling an appointment.

All colleagues who are currently listed as unvaccinated in Virtua's records should have received an email on July 8 containing a link to select an appointment at the HEC. Any colleague who did not receive a scheduling email or needs scheduling support can call the Virtua Access Center at **856-325-3744** or email [covidmegasite@virtua.org](mailto:covidmegasite@virtua.org). (Note: Even though the email address includes the word "mega-site," the Access Center team is set up to schedule for the HEC.)

Colleagues can also receive the vaccine at a non-Virtua location if that is more convenient. [The State of New Jersey's COVID-19 Information Hub](#) provides a searchable list of clinics and information on transportation assistance. Any colleague vaccinated outside of Virtua must submit documentation of vaccination to [covidvaccinedocumentation@virtua.org](mailto:covidvaccinedocumentation@virtua.org) if they have not done so already. If there is any issue connecting with this email address, let us know at [VirtuaClinician@virtua.org](mailto:VirtuaClinician@virtua.org).

All colleagues must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 **by Sept. 15, 2021**. For additional details, consult the [Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination policy](#), available on the VINE, and the corresponding [Vaccine FAQs](#). The FAQs have been updated to include the answers to two additional questions: "Can I

schedule my vaccination appointment during work time?” and “Will I be paid if I need to miss work due to side effects after receiving the vaccine?”

Thank you for prioritizing your safety and that of everyone we encounter.

### **COVID-19 Booster Update**

This week there has been significant media coverage regarding the need for COVID-19 booster shots after Pfizer officials requested authorization for a three-shot regimen. It is important to note that Virtua follows CDC recommendations. At the present time, the FDA and CDC are *not* recommending boosters for any of the commercially available vaccines. They continue to spread the message that fully vaccinating the population with first and second doses should remain our focus. We are carefully monitoring the situation, and if the CDC does recommend boosters at some point in the future, we will communicate this to our colleagues.

### **Virtua in the News: Multi-Year Hospital Transformations**

Last week, Virtua shared its exciting vision for the future, including plans for major renovations to Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes and Virtua Mount Holly (Memorial) hospitals. Other priority projects include Virtua Medical Group, ambulatory surgery partnerships, telehealth services, and community outreach programs, to name a few.

Media from across the region covered the announcement of this comprehensive initiative, called “Advancing Well into the Future.” Stories appeared in the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), [Courier-Post](#), and [ROI-NJ](#), among many others. You can also read Virtua’s full press release [here](#).

“The health systems that thrive are the ones that adapt to the dynamic shifts occurring around us while adhering to their core values and mission,” said Dennis W. Pullin, FACHE, president and CEO of Virtua. “As we continue to reimagine all of the ways Virtua can enhance the health and well-being of this community, we’re excited to share our vision and our here-for-good commitment.”

To learn more and watch a short video about Advancing Well into the Future, click [here](#).

### **Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium - Saturday, Sept. 11**

Mark your calendars for the annual Virtua Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium, scheduled to take place on **Saturday, Sept. 11**. This will be the 11th year Virtua Cardiology has held this event to educate primary care practitioners, physicians, NPs, and PAs on news and trends in cardiovascular care. In addition to 5.5 AOA Category 1-A and 5.5 AMA PRA Category 1 credits™, this year the program offers 5.5 nursing contact hours.

The symposium is part of the Rowan series, “Key Essentials for Optimizing Patient Care,” a fully online 5-Block CME Series, and is designed specifically to better prepare primary care providers for the management of their patients. The cardiology section is expected to feature topics on the cardiovascular impact of COVID, cardiovascular health care disparities, congenital heart disease and pediatrics, cardiovascular pre-operative risk assessment, geriatric cardiology, cardiovascular sports clearance after COVID, and EKG interpretation and interaction.

[Click here to register for the cardiology session, or the entire series.](#)

## July is Minority Mental Health Month

Minority Mental Health Month is a nationwide effort developed by Mental Health America to “shed light on the multitude of mental health experiences within BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities and others that face disproportionate inequities due to systemic barriers and historical adversity.”

Groups and agencies, including the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), have made resources available to help providers and communities raise awareness of the historical experiences, cultural differences, and social disparities that impact access to care for individuals in need.

[Resources from the ACA](#) include digital social media graphics, self-care tips, and a toolkit that includes messaging, education, and other resources. [NIMH offers information in Spanish](#) on mental health disorders and related topics for patients and their families, health professionals, and the public. Here are some examples of how health care experiences can vary due to race and ethnicity:

- Nearly one out of two [Asian Americans](#) will have difficulty accessing mental health treatment due to language barriers, according to a report from the Office of the Surgeon General.
- Cultural beliefs related to stigma and privacy, particularly in Latinx and Hispanic communities, make it less likely that members of minority communities will seek appropriate and timely mental health services.
- Black and African American providers, who are known to give more appropriate and effective care to Black and African American help-seekers, make up a very small portion of the behavioral health provider workforce. Because of this factor and more, Black and African-American people are more likely to experience chronic and persistent, rather than episodic, mental health conditions.

While information like this feels daunting, recognizing and discussing obstacles in health equity is the first step to advancing change. Please consult the resources listed above to learn more.

## Changes to Virtua VPN

Virtua is upgrading its virtual private network, also known as a VPN, beginning **Monday, July 19**. The new network – named Palo Alto, or Palo, for short – offers several enhanced security features, better and more reliable connectivity, and faster speeds. It should also provide a more seamless experience when using Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Cisco Jabber, and other applications.

Virtua’s technology teams and select “test users” throughout the health system have used the Palo product for more than a month, and now it is time to provide it to all colleagues and replace the Citrix SSL VPN we currently use today.

### What you need to know:

- The Palo VPN Client (Global Protect) will be installed on your Virtua devices by or before July 19. If it is not auto-installed, you can install it manually using the Windows Software Center.
- Citrix VPN and Palo VPN can coexist, however, only one VPN will be able to authenticate your device at a given time. In short, you can connect either through Citrix VPN or Palo VPN for the next few weeks.
- Citrix VPN will be decommissioned on **Aug. 13, 2021**, so please make the switch as soon as possible.

- There are **no changes to Citrix Workspace** <https://citrix.virtua.org/Citrix/XenDesktopWeb/>
- If you're using a RAP Device, there is no impact to you as you're already on the Virtua Network and don't need to authenticate via VPN. However, we recommend installing Palo for the rare occasion in which you would authenticate via VPN.
- Please ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of Zoom by navigating here: [Download Center - Zoom](#)
- Log-on instructions: Please follow the log-on instructions starting July 19 to connect to Palo VPN:
- [Customer Knowledge - Palo Alto Global Protect VPN - Quick Start Guide \(service-now.com\)](#)

Need Additional Help?

Please reach out to [IT Service Desk](#) if you have additional questions or need assistance when connecting to Palo VPN.

### **One Day Remains to Provide KLAS Arch Collaborative Feedback**

Clinicians and other care providers have one day left to provide feedback as part of the [KLAS Arch Collaborative](#) survey. Responses to the survey are due back tomorrow, **Friday, July 16**. The results of your input will aid Virtua in its journey of improving patient safety, providing higher quality care, and reducing unnecessary care delivery costs through more effective workflows.

Thank you again to all those that took the time to provide their valuable feedback. If you did not receive the survey or have any questions, please send an email to [VirtuaClinician@virtua.org](mailto:VirtuaClinician@virtua.org).

### **WE Applaud our Colleagues for Demonstrating our Guiding Principles**

Dr. Andrew Cohen, VP Clinical Operations, recognized Gina Pimentel, Director Care Coordination, and the Virtua Remote Patient Monitoring team, which includes: Maryellen Mullee, Jacquelyn Zagone, Melanie Hones, Adrienne Foy, Christina Andreoli, Teresa Lord, Martha Huff, Janice Ortega, Linda McGovern, Stephanie Campbell, Petrina Kamaray, Alyssa Finn, Faridah Jones, Maya David, Helen Hennessey, and Ericka Poletti for demonstrating Purposeful Leadership.

These colleagues are responsible for guiding patients in the immediate post-discharge period after being hospitalized at Virtua. In this Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM) program, patients with specific diagnoses are provided with user-friendly technology that allows providers to monitor their progress from afar. This approach has demonstrated a proven reduction in readmission and length of stay.

Dr. Cohen wrote:

*"I'm so proud of this team. Thank you for stepping up to the plate and taking such great care of our enrolled patients. A 33% readmission rate reduction for COVID, a 44% readmission rate reduction for CABG, and 100% for CT surgical valves!*

*"Bravo! Keep up the great work. I am looking forward to seeing what you can do with COPD and CHF!"*

Way to go, team! This is an example of Purposeful Leadership as the team's commitment to the patient and patient outcome is creating value and is driving organizational excellence as noted by their readmission rate data.

### **Virtua Colleagues Demonstrate Here for Good Spirit**

A moment of recognition for Virtua's own Mike Beringer and Bob Gardner. Both colleagues are currently deployed with New Jersey Task Force 1 (NJ-TF1) to assist with the emergency response to the recent building collapse in Florida. NJ-TF1 is one of 28 federal FEMA Urban Search and Rescue teams in the country.

Virtua assistant vice president James Newman says, "We are extraordinarily proud of the work of Mike and Bob, as well as the rest of the team, for representing Virtua and New Jersey by helping so many impacted families in Florida."