

Clinician Update

July 25, 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](#).**

Health Alert: Listeriosis

Listeriosis is a serious infection caused by eating food contaminated with listeria bacteria. While it can strike anyone, pregnant women, newborns, adults ages 65 and older, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of complications. The recent outbreak linked to deli meats is a reminder to our community to be extra vigilant about food safety. Read more about the CDC's investigation [here](#).

"Our patients can protect themselves from listeria infection by avoiding deli meats altogether, or by heating them to an internal temperature of 160°F before eating," said Virtua OB/GYN Rachel Kramer, MD. "For our pregnant patients, a reminder that listeria can be passed to the baby, even before birth. This can cause premature delivery, serious illness, or even stillbirth."

For more information about foods to avoid during pregnancy, read [Dr. Rachel Kramer's article on the Virtua website](#).

"Beyond our pregnant patients," Dr. Kramer added, "it is always wise to share with the public that it is important to contact a health care provider right away if an individual is experiencing any symptoms of listeria, such as fever, muscle aches, headache, nausea, or vomiting. Early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent serious health problems."

Virtua's Response to Global Tech Outage

On Friday, July 19, Virtua was among the thousands of organizations across the world impacted by the CrowdStrike outage. Some reports estimate that 8.5 million computers crashed during the incident, requiring airlines, banks, health systems, and other industries to enact rapid-response crisis mitigation.

Here at Virtua, our teams took action as soon as the problem arose. A multidisciplinary virtual command center was established and I.T. staff deployed to all of Virtua's major campuses. As our IT division sought and applied technical solutions, other teams ensured patient care and access continued with minimal disruption—all while prioritizing HRO and a safety-first mindset.

"I've always believed that we can accomplish anything as a team at Virtua," said Tom Gordon, SVP and chief information officer. "We proved it in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we proved it

once again last week. During a period of uncertainty, we acted with purpose and speed to support our staff and our patients."

Throughout Friday, Virtua regained access to its digital platforms and restored connectivity to the vast majority of PCs. Still, many colleagues took on additional weekend and evening shifts to support the recovery effort, which remains ongoing.

We also provided updates to area media, including the [Courier-Post](#), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), [6 ABC](#) and [Fox29](#).

"Everyone looked for ways to be of service and to be helpful," Tom said. "I am so proud and grateful to work among such remarkable people."

Virtua Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine Expands Services in Atlantic County

Virtua Pulmonology & Sleep Medicine has opened its first [location in Atlantic County](#) at 2 Sindoni Lane, Suite D, in Hammonton.

"We are meeting the growing need of the community," said Eric Szejman, MD, vice president of clinical operations for VMG. "Hammonton is a multi-disciplinary practice, specializing in pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine."

The services provided are the same as those provided at the other Virtua pulmonary locations – Cherry Hill, Marlton at Route 70, Marlton at Route 73, Bordentown, Moorestown, Willingboro and Washington Township. "We evaluate, diagnose, and treat disorders of the lungs and sleep, including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), breathing difficulties, sleep disorders and acute pulmonary problems such as pneumonia," said Dr. Szejman.

Virtua Honored by American Heart Association

The cardiologists, hospitalists and nurses at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital have been honored by the American Heart Association for the fourth consecutive year for achieving the following recognition in the Get With The Guidelines®-Heart Failure program:

Get With The Guidelines®-Heart Failure Gold Plus

Target: Heart Failure Honor Roll

Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll

Research Trial Share

Virtua Research would like to share one of our trials for your consideration. A brief synopsis with the eligibility criteria is listed below. Physician colleagues are vital to the success of the research program even when they are not participating as an investigator.

Librexia AF / Principal Investigator: Nasser Chaudhry, MD

A Phase 3, Randomized, Double-Blind, Double-Dummy, Parallel Group, Active-Controlled Study to Evaluate the Efficacy and Safety of Milvexian, an Oral Factor XIa Inhibitor, Versus Apixaban (Eliquis) in Participants with Atrial Fibrillation

Selection of Study Population

The study population will include a broad spectrum of patients with AF at high risk for thromboembolic events and bleeding. As apixaban will be the comparator, only those exclusions for bleeding risk mandated by the apixaban label will be listed in the proposed study protocol. Participants with moderate and high levels of risk, such as the elderly or those with diabetes mellitus, will be included. The study AF participants, enrolled according to the CHA2DS2-VASc scoring scheme, include some with established vascular disease, evidenced by CVD, PAD, CAD, or a recent ACS/PCI. The study allows concomitant antiplatelet therapy consistent with current guidelines and local standards of care.

If you have a patient that meets these criteria, please contact us and we will have our research coordinator review their eligibility with you. If your patient is enrolled, we will keep you updated on their progress.

We are always available to discuss our current trials. We can be reached at research@virtua.org. Thank you for your continued support.

Rowan Researcher Awarded Grant for Pioneering Robotic-Surgery System

A Rowan University researcher is developing the first robotic-surgery system designed to align fractured long bones, such as the thigh bone (femur). These bones often don't heal properly due to misalignment—causing pain, difficulty walking, and other long-term problems.

Mohammad Abedin-Nasab, Ph.D., and his research team have won a \$1.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to further develop the system—named Robossis—and bring it to market.

The research “could have a huge impact in reducing malalignment, reoperation and even mortality for patients with femur fractures, a large and growing population,” according to the NIH reviewers. More than 430,000 femur fractures occur annually nationwide, and that figure is expected to rise due to an aging population, Abedin-Nasab said.

“Up to 28% of all long-bone fractures don't heal correctly, as it's difficult for surgeons to align the separated segments of these bones,” explained Abedin-Nasab, who has been working on Robossis for ten years.

To learn more, [click here](#).

Advancing the Patient Experience

We're in Week 16 of the 26-week Advanced Patient Experience Program. Click to view the [Week 16 Guide](#), packed with resources and discussion prompts. As we continue our Practicing Excellence journey, we thank you for your ongoing commitment to the Advanced Patient Experience Program.

What Patients Are Saying About Our Clinicians

Confidence in care is a common reference among our clinician reviews. Please note the following recent examples and how the patient felt about the experience, and the clinician referenced:

"He is an excellent doctor. He took a lot of time with me answering all my questions and he covered everything about getting a procedure or not getting a procedure. I would definitely go back to him and I would definitely refer him. Thank you." (Keith P. Meslin, MD)

"He has been my family doctor for many years. He is compassionate, caring, knowledgeable and professional. He is the best doctor I have ever experienced, and I appreciate him very much." (Robert E. Hudrick, DO)

"She always takes her time with you and doesn't rush through your appointment. Everyone in this office shines." (Kim McNichol, APN)

"I love him. He doesn't send you for any MRI or X-ray if not needed. Gives proper time and listens to you very well and never rushes you out." (Eric Requa, DO)

"She was incredible. She made me feel heard and offered the best possible treatment options and was so kind." (Wendy S. Cook, DO)

Here for Good: Inside Edition Features Dr. Sherrilynn H. Parrish

A good doctor is someone who listens. A good doctor will never judge. A good doctor leads with compassion. And at the end of the day, a good doctor loves what they do and loves connecting with their community.

In this episode of "Here for Good: Inside Edition," Virtua President and CEO Dennis Pullin chats with Sherrilynn Parrish, MD, Virtua OB/GYN. From how she discovered her passion for obstetrics to their shared enthusiasm for golf, see how Dr. Parrish is here for good for our neighbors in South Jersey.

Click to [watch the video](#).

This Year Online! 14th Annual Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium, Sept. 7

Join us for this year's Cardiology for Primary Care, the first in the Key Essentials for Optimizing Patient Care five-block CME series presented by the Rowan-Virtua College of Osteopathic Medicine and offering up to 5 AOA CATEGORY 1-A / 5 AMA PRA Category 1 credits™.

The event will take place virtually on:

Saturday, September 7, 2024, 7:30 AM – 1:00 PM

This year's agenda include the following topics and speakers:

- **Prescribe with Precision: Better Cardiovascular Outcomes using the updated BEER's Criteria** - Kevin Overbeck, DO
- **Lipids: An Overview and Update on Diagnosis and Management** - Tania Maheshwari, DO
- **Aortic Stenosis** - Teresa Sousa, MSN, FNP-BC

- **Diagnosis and Management of Hypertension** - Christopher Mercogliano, DO
- **Innovations & Guidelines on Hypertension** - Kintur Sanghvi, MD
- **EKG Lecture for Primary Care** - Ramneet Wadehra, DO
- **Immunotherapy Adverse Events & Management** - Shayma Kazmi, MD
- **PE Management and PERT Team in 2024** - Luai Tabaza, MD
- **Current State of Coronary Artery Calcium Scoring (CACS) and Coronary Computed Tomography Angiography (CCTA)** - Michael Gannon, MD

The registration fee for the individual program: Cardiology for Primary Care is \$149. To register for this event, or for the full series, visit: go.rowan.edu/cme. Go [here to review the full brochure and for more details](#).

For questions about the series, email at cme@rowan.edu.

Virtua in the News

Virtua Pulmonologist Addresses the Rise in COVID Across Region

Amid summer fun, COVID-19 has reached a “moderate” level in New Jersey, according to recent reports. Jonathan Galli, MD, Virtua's director of advanced lung disease, offered reasons for the increase. For example, immunity falls over time, and family vacations can spread the illness, he noted. Watch on [6 ABC](#).

Rowan-Virtua Researchers Publish Article on New Addiction Findings

Two Rowan-Virtua scientists recently authored an article for an international news website. Drs. Jessica Loweth and Daniel Manvich wrote about important new discoveries related to opioid use disorders, including their own research findings.

Such breakthroughs could eventually help doctors reduce patients' risk of opioid addiction, they explained in [The Conversation](#).

The authors are assistant professors of cell biology and neuroscience at the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences at Rowan University.

Virtua DTO Chief Helps Identify Top A.I. Tools in Health Care

An industry publication asked Tarun Kapoor, MD, and several other experts "to share the AI tools making the biggest impact at their hospitals." As Virtua's chief digital transformation officer, he discussed two innovations offered at Virtua: Woebot and GI Genius.

Woebot is an app that gives mental-health support to patients, especially at times when providers are unavailable. GI Genius is an AI-enhanced system that helps identify suspicious lesions during colonoscopy.

Read in [Medscape](#).

Virtua Honored for Best Practices in Employee Recognition

Virtua has earned four international awards for its workforce recognition programs. Recognition Professionals International (RPI) presented Virtua with its RPI Best Practice Standards® Awards at the Incentive Marketing Association's (IMA) annual summit in New Orleans.

Virtua was honored for achieving RPI Best Practice Standards in the categories of Recognition Strategy, Communication Plan, Recognition Training, and Recognition Events & Celebrations.

RPI's standards are based on findings from academic literature, professional conferences, and successful recognition programs, according to the group, which is part of IMA.

"RPI recognized Virtua for both our formal recognition programs and our everyday, informal appreciation of our colleagues," said Angela McNichol, director of talent and engagement at Virtua. "These awards are important validation that Virtua is a leader in demonstrating respect and gratitude for our colleagues across the health system."

Read at the [Incentive Marketing Association](#) website.

Opportunity for Your Patients Looking to Quit Smoking

Smoking Cessation Education and Support

Sept. 23, 5 to 7 p.m. at 200 Bowman Drive, Suite E132 Voorhees, NJ, 08043

Smoking cessation programs have been proven to help people "kick" the habit. Topics will include the addiction process, stress management, and developing a personal plan to quit smoking using the resources and support available. This is a free program run by a trained tobacco specialist. Registration is required. Click to [register](#) or call 888-847-8823.

IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

Join “*Perspectives on Coming Out*” Event as a Panelist

The OUT at Virtua Colleague Community is seeking panelists for “*Perspectives on Coming Out*” in honor of National Coming Out Day. The event will take place on **Oct. 11**. This engaging panel will include discussions exploring various perspectives related to the coming out journey to help foster understanding, support, and awareness within and beyond the LGBTQ+ community. Panel members can include members of the LGBTQ+ community, parents of LGBTQ+ youth/adults, children of LGBTQ+ parents, and allies/advocates.

If you are interested in participating as a panelist, and would like further details, please send the following information to OUT@virtua.org:

1. Name
2. Role at Virtua
3. Affiliation/Role (i.e., LGBTQ+ community member, parent, ally, etc.)

Virtua in Paris

While we may not always root for the same sports teams, we are certainly rooting for Team USA! You can expect to see Virtua Health commercials throughout the Olympics, starting with opening ceremonies tomorrow. Look for us on NBC and Telemundo broadcasts as well as Connected TV and digital channels like E!, USA and Peacock. Another great place to be proud to see our Here for Good messaging.

While in the Olympics spirit, our social media team would like to showcase any colleague or department that is celebrating the 2024 Summer Games in a major way. For instance, if your family hosts watch parties with everyone decked out in Team USA apparel, we want to see it! We are passing the Olympic torch your way and asking you to send photos and stories to virtuainfo@virtua.org by **Monday, July 29**.