

Clinician Update

May 18, 2023

[Virtua is First in NJ to Utilize the Latest Mapping Catheter for Cardiac Ablation](#)

This week, electrophysiologists at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital became the first in New Jersey to use the Biosense Webster Optrell multi-electrode mapping catheter. A valuable tool for our specialists, the catheter maps electrical signals in the heart and helps define the location of an arrhythmia.

In the cases performed on Tuesday, the catheters were used to map multiple right atrial tachycardias, and, in one case, ablation of a “figure of eight” right atrial flutter in a patient with prior right atrial ablation.

“The catheter allows for rapid collection of electrograms, as well as wavefront directionality,” said Virtua electrophysiologist Heath Saltzman, MD, FACC, FHRS. “That enables us more efficient mapping in the atria and ventricles of the heart, which is vital in enhancing the success of a procedure.”

This achievement is just the latest for the electrophysiology team, nationally recognized for its excellence in care. In 2020, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital received accreditation from the American College of Cardiology for its electrophysiology laboratory. Since then, the team has continued to widen its capacities.

“We offer the full range of arrhythmia management using the most advanced diagnostic and therapeutic interventions,” said Virtua electrophysiologist Darius Sholevar, MD, FACC, FHRS. “With so many exciting advancements seemingly every day in electrophysiology, we are always looking to implement the most innovative and advanced options for the benefit of our patients.”

[Virtua Health Named a Top 50 Health Care Brand](#)

Virtua has once again emerged as one of the leading health care brands in the United States. Monigle, one of the largest brand and creative experience companies in the nation, conducted a study of more than 25,000 consumers and developed a comprehensive report on health care brands in its 6th annual “Humanizing the Brand Experience.”

Chrisie Scott, Virtua Health senior vice president and chief marketing officer, explains the research empowers organizations to actively engage with consumers around what matters most to them as they navigate the complexities of health care.

“We are constantly interested in what steps we can take to provide the most trusted and personalized care. Choices around health are some of the most personal and important decisions people make as consumers, and we want our brand to simplify as well as instill great confidence in those who select us,” she said.

Over the past three years, Virtua has advanced to 42nd in the United States, ranking 13th nationally based on consumer intent to use and 21st in overall reputation. Virtua is ranked as the leading brand in southern and central New Jersey.

“We are proud that the study recognizes the purposeful journey around our brand that people are wholeheartedly embracing,” said President and CEO Dennis Pullin. “Our message of being ‘Here for Good’ continues to resonate. Our caregivers and colleagues are truly making a difference through the meaningful connections they are creating with members of the community.”

Endoscopy Center of Bucks County Joins Virtua’s Network of Ambulatory Surgery Centers

Virtua’s network of ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) now includes the physicians at Endoscopy Center of Bucks County. “The new addition joins a network of surgery centers in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware,” said Dr. Monte Goldstein, chief medical officer of Virtua ASC Joint Ventures. “Our network ASCs are all state-of-the-art health care facilities that transform the outpatient experience and provide the highest caliber care for diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and surgery.”

Virtua’s ambulatory surgery centers provide a safe and convenient alternative to hospital-based outpatient care with a strong track record of positive patient outcomes and satisfaction. All the facilities are state licensed, nationally accredited and Medicare certified, ensuring adherence to the highest quality and safety standards. *Newsweek* recently recognized 14 Virtua ASCs in the top 26 ASCs in New Jersey.

Click [here](#) to see a map of the ASCs in the Virtua network.

Major Insurer to Implement Prior Authorization Policy

On June 1, UnitedHealthcare, the nation’s largest health insurer by membership, will implement a prior authorization policy for surveillance and diagnostic colonoscopies. The insurance giant is facing a storm of backlash from docs over its decision, which it claims rests on sound science.

But several gastroenterology-related medical societies have argued against the UHC prior authorization policy. This week, the American Gastroenterological Association, the American College of Gastroenterology, and the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy—organizations representing physicians who do colonoscopies—sent a letter asking the insurer to rescind the directive.

For more details on the news coverage, click [here](#) and [here](#).

“Virtua is monitoring this situation,” said Tom Buckley, Virtua senior vice president of revenue cycle & managed care. “Ultimately the public is last to understand the ramifications of these decisions, but we will always help them best navigate what this will mean for them as they seek care.”

Virtua in the News

Three Virtua Leaders Named ‘Health Care Heroes’

Statewide magazine *NJBiz* has recognized three Virtua leaders among its 2023 Health Care Heroes. Dr. Chun (Dan) Choi, VP of cardiovascular clinical operations, was named an Innovation Hero. Kristin Bloom, AVP of Hospital at Home clinical operations, earned a Nurse of the Year award. And Maria Franchio, VP of rehabilitation services, was named a Public Health Hero. Read in [NJBiz](#).

Rise in Throat Cancer Rates Caused by Common Virus

The number of throat cancer cases has jumped in recent years, largely due to human papillomavirus (HPV), a highly prevalent, sexually transmitted disease. Joseph Marascio, MD, a radiation oncologist with the Penn Medicine | Virtua Health Cancer Program, discussed throat cancer risks and the benefits of the HPV vaccine. Read in [NJ.com](#).

Mobile Farmers Market Partners with Collingswood to Expand Food Access

Virtua’s Eat Well Mobile Farmers Market is part of Collingswood’s efforts to fight food insecurity and improve residents’ health. Both markets accept SNAP and EBT benefits, ensuring their fresh, healthy produce is affordable for everyone. Read in the [Courier-Post](#) or [Burlington County Times](#).

Virtua APN Offers Healthy Tips for Taylor Swift Concert-Goers

When the much-anticipated Eras Tour arrived in Philadelphia last weekend, Taylor Swift fans from across the region flocked to the outdoor shows. To help the "Swifties" stay safe and have fun, advanced practice nurse Nicole Pivonka provided practical advice—which can also apply to many other concerts and summer events. Read on [6ABC.com](#) and in [Gloucester City News](#).

Practicing Excellence at Virtua

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to Practicing Excellence and the *Patient Experience* journey. Practicing Excellence serves as a reminder for us all to reflect and take a moment to remember why we chose to be a part of this noble profession. This week, we focus on the [Week 7 and 8 guides](#), which provide valuable tips to view, try, and share with your peers.

To share your best practices, email virtuainfo@virtua.org and they could be featured in an upcoming *Clinician Update*.

To access the weekly guides and additional resources, visit the [Practicing Excellence page](#) on the Colleague Corner.

Where Emergency Care Begins

Each year, [National Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\) Week](#) (May 21 to 27) is hosted by the American College of Emergency Physicians and National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians to recognize the work of EMS clinicians. This year's theme is "Where Emergency Care Begins," recognizing those who engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their lifesaving skills and are at the ready to provide lifesaving care to those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

More than 400 EMS professionals provide emergent and non-emergent services on Virtua's mobile intensive care units, specialty care transport units, basic life support units, wheelchair vans, EMS education center, and communications centers. James Newman, VP of patient logistics said, "We want to say thank you to all of our EMS professionals for answering the calling that is EMS. Our entire team is doing extremely meaningful work. For Good".

Ronald Klebacher, DO, medical director for patient logistics, emphasizes the importance of the profession. He is presenting the keynote address today at the Rowan College of Burlington County's 2023 class of health care graduates, which includes much-needed paramedics.

"As clinicians, EMS staff are highly skilled and trained, and for good reason," said Dr. Klebacher, who started his career as a paramedic. "In so many ways, a patient's survival depends on this profession."

Today's pre-hospital care providers are expected to treat patients more autonomously, requiring increased education and extensive training. That is why Virtua actively recruits and trains EMTs and paramedics, preparing them to provide critical frontline care to our communities.

To learn more about Emergency Services at Virtua, [click here](#).

Healthcare Technology Management Week

This week (May 14 to 20) is Healthcare Technology Management Week, which promotes the awareness of—and appreciation for—the critical work of professionals who manage and maintain technology in health care organizations year round.

"We will always be forging ahead when it comes to the latest in technology," said James Gamble, MD, medical director of informatics at Virtua. "That dedication stems from all our staff's tireless efforts to provide our patients with the best care available."

To provide that best care involves so many talented individuals here at Virtua, including biomedical equipment technicians, clinical engineers, and health care technology managers, who are always dedicated to providing the best in technology to help our clinical staff do what it does best—caring for the patient.

"Thank you for your unwavering commitment to state of the art in health care," said Tom Hediger, corporate director of biomedical engineering. "Know that your dedication is so appreciated."

To learn how Virtua Health has earned “Most Wired” distinction 11 years in a row, [click here](#).

New Mobile Health and Cancer Screening Unit Fueled by Donors

Last month, we unveiled our new Mobile Health and Cancer Screening Unit—the latest addition to Virtua’s growing fleet of community health vehicles.

The planning for this initiative, which has been powered by philanthropy, first began in 2019. Fittingly, the first donation toward this project came from Wendy Hamilton, a grateful patient who wanted to pay it forward after receiving excellent care from our team at Virtua’s Samson Cancer Center. Today, more than \$1.4 million has been given from generous donors, including our caring colleagues, to cover the purchase of the vehicle, equipment, and other operating costs.

We are grateful to our lead philanthropic partner, Aetna Better Health of New Jersey, as well as our founding partners: the Haines Family Foundation, the physicians of Virtua Health Medical Staff South, and Ott’s Restaurants: Medford, Washington Township, and Berlin. Thank you to the many Virtua colleagues who have supported this effort through [Give for Good](#).

Click to [view the video](#). Visit [GiveToVirtua.org](#) to learn more about how we are transforming health care through philanthropy.

IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

Virtua Pride Practice to Host Open House, Marking First Anniversary June 14 Celebration

Virtua Pride Primary Care will hold an open house to mark its first year of caring for the LGBTQ+ community and allies. Colleagues and community members are invited to meet the practice’s friendly staff, tour the welcoming office, receive free health screenings, and enjoy light refreshments.

The event is slated for Wednesday, June 14, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 534 Lippincott Drive in Marlton. Most of the festivities will take place outdoors.

Launched last June, Virtua Pride is one of the region’s few primary care practices designed to meet the specific needs of the LGBTQ+ community, including families and children ages 8 and older.

To learn more about the practice, including its gender-affirming care, please visit [virtua.org/pride](#) or call 856-355-7144.

Upcoming Events

American Cancer Society Bike-A-Thon Bridge to the Beach Sunday, June 11

The American Cancer Society Bike-A-Thon Bridge to the Beach features four starting points and six route options giving you the freedom to ride a short, medium, or long distance. Participants may also go virtual and set your own meaningful miles to complete at your pace. Virtua is a proud supporter of the event. [Click to sign up](#): Use code SPONSOR-20 for \$20 off the registration fee and choose Team Virtua when signing up. Email Andrew Giordano at agiordano@virtua.org for a chance at free registration for this event.

Smoking Cessation Education and Support July 19, 5 to 7 p.m.

If you know patients who might benefit from it, let them know they are welcome to attend an educational support group to learn about the tobacco addiction process and get tools and support to help them quit smoking, including free nicotine patches and discounted acupuncture. Topic discussions include addiction, stress management, and developing a personal plan to quit smoking using resources and support. Click to [view the flyer](#).