

Clinician Update

Thursday, November 19, 2020

Wave 2 COVID-19 Response

Virtua held a special webinar last night to help clinicians navigate the response to Wave 2. The discussion involved the sharing of latest numbers and trends; screening, treatment, and safety protocols; testing options; emotional support resources; and more. Over 300 clinicians attended.

Some of the highlights:

- **Dr. Andy Cohen** discussed trends, including how Camden County now has the highest spot positivity rate in New Jersey. A fundamental difference between Wave 1 versus Wave 2 is that now most cases can be categorized as community exposures, brought on by gatherings of family and friends and relaxed vigilance in safety precautions.
- **Dr. Tarun Kapoor** presented on the latest projections and shared that epidemiologists do not recommend using any model to predict out more than two weeks and that data would need to be frequently recalibrated to get accurate results. As for current models, the estimate for arrival of peak volume or spikes appears to be November 27 to December 2, and January 6 to January 12.
- **Dr. Eric Szejman** discussed screening and treatment, including the importance of monitoring oxygen levels. Many patients are unaware they are being deprived of oxygen and are therefore in much worse health than they realize.
- **Dr. Martin Topiel** shared the latest on evolving therapies, and exposures and quarantining. He reinforced the importance of wearing a mask, not just at work. For persons who are ill, [he](#) stressed the need for isolation.
- **Dr. Sam Weiner** did an overview on testing locations in Voorhees (Barry Brown Health Education Center – HEC) and Moorestown (Virtua Health & Wellness Center), and the role of Virtua Urgent Care in symptomatic testing. He also reinforced the **VMG Clinician Hotline 856-246-4117**. (See next story for more detail on asymptomatic testing.)
- **Dr. Jen Khelil** addressed emotional support options for patients and clinicians, including a [Clinician Support](#) resource for free, comprehensive, confidential counsel staffed by licensed professionals who understand the unique needs of health care employees.

View the [webinar slides here](#).

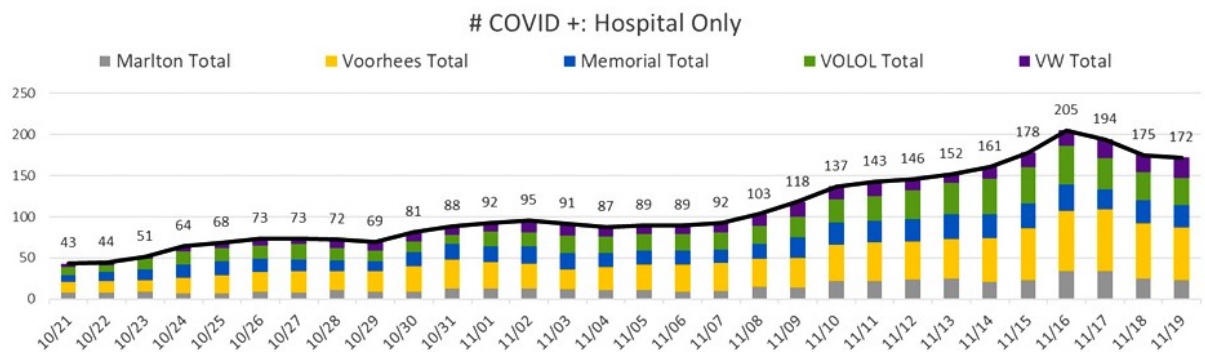
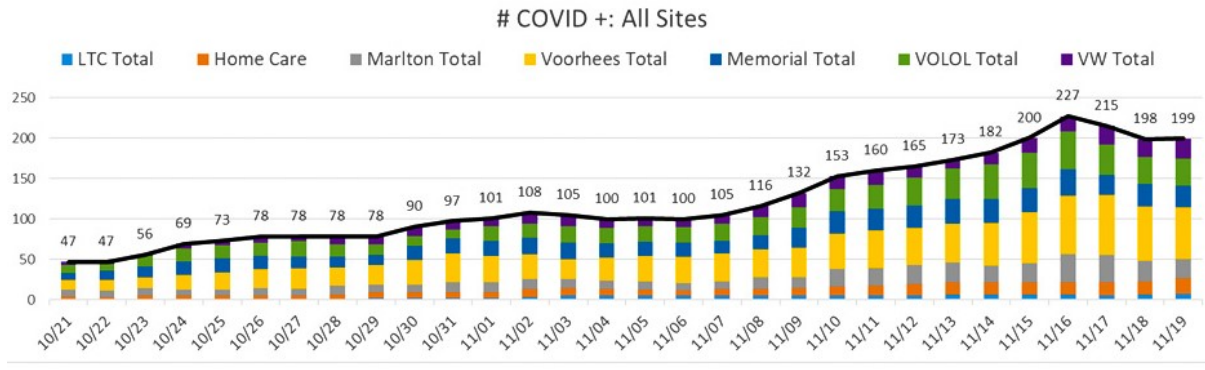
View the [webinar recording here](#).

TO NOTE: COVID-19 Testing for Asymptomatic Community Members

Due to universal testing of hospitalized patients and individuals undergoing surgery and the prioritization of testing for patients demonstrating COVID-19 symptoms, **Virtua is unable to test asymptomatic individuals in our community at this time**. Those without symptoms who wish to be tested for COVID-19 should go to a [CVS COVID Testing Site](#) or check out [COVID Testing Sites in NJ](#). Please make sure your teams know to direct callers and members of the community appropriately.

By the Numbers

The following charts reflect the latest figures for Virtua-site cases of COVID-19.



Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is currently at 1.42.
- Locally, in the tri-county area, there have been a total of 1,347 confirmed deaths, as of 1 p.m. today. The state also reports “probable” deaths from COVID-19, with figures shared separately on the [state dashboard](#). For the three counties, probable deaths would account for an additional 104 fatalities.
- The total number of cases are as follows:
 - Burlington County 11,225
 - Camden County 15,830
 - Gloucester County 7,589

Update on Indoor and Outdoor Gatherings from the State of New Jersey

On **Nov. 16**, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy issued new limitations to gatherings, ceremonies, and celebrations.

Indoor Gatherings

- Effective **Tuesday, Nov.17**, general indoor gatherings must be limited to 10 people. All attendees at indoor gatherings must wear face coverings and stay six feet apart.
- Indoor gatherings for weddings, funerals, or memorial services must be limited to 150 people or 25 percent of a room's capacity — whichever number is lower.
- Indoor gatherings for religious and political activities protected under the First Amendment must be limited to 150 people or 25 percent of a room's capacity — whichever number is lower.

- Indoor gatherings for entertainment centers where performances are viewed or given, including movie theaters, performing arts centers, and other concert venues, must be limited to 150 people or 25 percent of a room's capacity — whichever number is lower.

Outdoor Gatherings

- General outdoor gatherings must be limited to 500 people and social distancing must be practiced. Effective **Monday, Nov. 23**, general outdoor gatherings must be limited to 150 people.
- Face coverings are required in indoor public spaces and in outdoor public spaces when social distancing is difficult to maintain.

For the complete details, visit the [New Jersey COVID-19 Information Hub](#).

Visiting Hours Suspended at all Virtua Hospitals – Effective Nov. 19

In our ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of our patients, colleagues, and community, general visitation at all Virtua hospitals will be suspended, effective today — **Thursday, Nov. 19**. Certain limited exceptions are available and are listed on the [Virtua website](#). These exceptions must be approved by a patient's care team.

We ask for your support and assistance in communicating this change to your teams and patients.

Supporting documents, including a flyer, are available on the [Virtua Brand Hub](#). The new visitor guidelines have been posted to Virtua's website [here](#).

Virtua Leadership and Collaboration in COVID Communication Efforts

Virtua leaders have been working together to communicate safe practices in our community:

- The CEOs of nine regional health systems — including Virtua president and CEO Dennis W. Pullin — collaborated on a fact sheet that gives guidance on how our community members can safely enjoy Thanksgiving. The flyer includes risk considerations and an explanation on how to celebrate the holidays safely. Click [here](#) to read the fact sheet.
- Virtua has joined an important collaborative with 100 health systems in a nationwide campaign to encourage people to mask up. Kicking off this morning with the *Today Show* and media such as *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *Washington Post*, Virtua continues to take a leadership role to drive awareness about the science behind saving lives during these challenging times. Take pride in these efforts, supporting your important work and help share the news to #MaskUp. You can also learn more by visiting [everymaskup.com](#) and reading our ad [here](#).

Access Center Call Volume

Due largely to the sharp rise of COVID-19 cases in our area, the Virtua Access Center team is processing a record-breaking number of calls each day, resulting in longer-than-average wait times. If you have a question for the Access Center staff, remember that you can reach a navigator by live online chat instead of by phone.

To access the live chat, visit [Virtua.org](#) and click on the Live Chat icon at the top of your screen. If you are using a mobile device, look for Live Chat as part of the main menu.

What Patients and Families are Saying...

About Virtua's Ambulatory Surgery Centers

Virtua's care portfolio includes 24 ambulatory surgical centers. These joint-venture practices can be found across the region, including as far north as Ramsey and as far east as Eatontown. These care facilities are transforming the outpatient experience and have developed a strong track record of positive patient outcomes and satisfaction, which is demonstrated in a recent five-star review from Patricia F., a patient of Advanced Surgical Institute in Sewell.

I've been coming to this facility for years. My last procedure was September 22. My experience here has never changed. As always, I was treated with the same calming kindness, professionalism, and respect. I want to thank all of you who helped with my care today, from the front desk, to pre-op, Dr. Shehata, all the staff in the operating room, the recovery nurse, and Michelle, who called the next day to check up on me. Everyone you come in contact with from start to finish is amazing. Advanced Surgical Institute has hired the absolute best people for the jobs they do. If you want the best care, this is the place to go.

About Receiving Safe Care During the Pandemic

With COVID-19 activity on the rise, some people may become hesitant to continue with or seek care. Fortunately, many recent patients have left detailed online reviews that highlight Virtua's response to COVID-19 and the special precautions put in place to keep everyone safe. Such reviews help patients feel more confident in getting the care they need without delay, as seen in this review from Caitlin H., a patient of Virtua Cardiac Rehabilitation – Mount Laurel:

I was very hesitant starting cardiac rehab. I was starting during the COVID-19 crisis, which made me uneasy. My worries were put to rest after my first visit. The nurses are amazing. They immediately made me feel comfortable on all fronts. I actually look forward to going and spending time with all of them — it's the best thing I ever did! The machines and the atmosphere are extremely clean and they do everything to make sure everything is sanitized. I will miss it when I'm done.

From check-in to the recovery room, every aspect of the patient experience is key in achieving patient satisfaction. While some patients can't wait to share their recent experience with an online review, others may need a nudge. We encourage you to discuss Google reviews with patients when appropriate. Their positive feedback may ultimately help to ease the concerns of others.

Join Give for Good, Now Through Dec. 1!

Give for Good, Virtua's colleague giving campaign, celebrates our Culture of WE and invites each colleague to make a philanthropic investment in the Virtua program or service that is most meaningful to them. We are 55 percent to our goal of 1,200 colleague donors by **Tuesday, Dec. 1.**

Click the "Give for Good" button on the VINE or visit [GiveToVirtua.org/Colleagues](https://www.givevirtua.org/colleagues) to learn more, make a gift, and see the impact WE make together.

Channeling the Healing Power of Music

As many of our patients and their caretakers experience uncertainty and isolation during this pandemic, Musicians on Call (MOC) has streamlined its programming to meet the demand of hospital partners like Virtua. MOC has two decades of experience working with the country's top health care facilities to

deliver the healing power of music to patients. It was recently recognized among the top 15 organizations in the world for its use of Zoom in its Virtual Bedside Performance Program.

MOC provides access to music that supports the healing process by improving mood, pain tolerance, and mental outlook, all with a human connection.

MOC's Philadelphia team, supported and directed by local non-commercial, member-supported station [WXPB](#), has been providing monthly sessions that are captured below and accessible anytime. Please feel free to share the links below with your patients and colleagues.

- [November 5 session, featuring local artist David Falcone & guided by Liz Shaw](#)
- [October 7 session with guide Amy Sweeney and pianist Lore Constantine](#)
- [September 10 session with guide Amy Sweeney and artist Dave Falcone](#)