

Clinician Update

November 14, 2024

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Virtua Reaches Organ Transplant Surgery Milestone

For the 4th consecutive year, the Virtua Advanced Transplant & Organ Health team has set a new record for annual transplant volume. To date, the program has successfully completed 120 organ transplants, surpassing last year's total of 114.

"It says so much about the surgical expertise and advanced capabilities of our transplant surgeons and the clinical team," said Janine Vallen, RN, MSN, CCTN, APN-C, AVP of transplant services. "This milestone represents hope, resilience, teamwork, and the gift of new beginnings. We're beyond proud to offer these life-changing procedures to our neighbors in South Jersey."

To learn more about organ transplantation at Virtua, click [here](#).

NJ's Largest Insurer Covers Virtua's Hospital at Home Program

Many more South Jersey residents can now participate in Virtua's Hospital at Home program, thanks to an agreement Virtua recently secured with Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey. Under the new arrangement, Horizon will cover Hospital at Home for its members—who account for about 10% of Virtua patients.

Virtua is among the first nationally to provide Hospital at Home, which enables people to receive hospital-level care in the comfort of their homes. Patients in Virtua's program typically recover more quickly, with fewer complications, than those who receive traditional hospital care.

"In addition to being good for patients, Hospital at Home is also good for Virtua staffing, resource stewardship, and capacity," said Michael Capriotti, SVP of integration and strategic operations. "Our program can care for individuals with moderate, short-term health needs, [allowing] hospital-based staff to focus their time and energy on those who truly need intensive or sustained intervention."

Read in the [Philadelphia Business Journal](#) and [Gloucester City News](#).

Honoring Our Nurse Practitioners

It's National Nurse Practitioner Week, a time set aside to celebrate these exceptional clinicians and the professionalism they provide to patients. At Virtua, hundreds of NPs provide their exceptional skills throughout the organization.

“Nurse practitioners are vital to our continuum of care,” said Sam Weiner, MD, vice president and chief medical officer of Virtua Medical Group. “Their expertise and dedication are evident in the trust our patients place in them, and their service is integral to the quality of care we provide. To all of you, thank you!”

“During this week when we recognize nurse practitioners, I would like to share my gratitude for all that you do for our Virtua community and beyond,” said Catherine Hughes, MSN, MHA, RN, NEA-BC, senior vice president and chief nursing officer of Virtua Health. “Because of you, we have greater access to care and the knowledge we need to improve health. You are vital and valuable members of the care team. Thank you!”

Antibiotic Awareness Week, Nov. 18 to 24

U.S. Antibiotic Awareness Week is an annual observance aimed at raising awareness about the threat of antibiotic resistance and the importance of improving antibiotic prescribing and usage. At Virtua, we take this opportunity to highlight our Antimicrobial Stewardship Program (ASP), which is dedicated to these same principles.

“This week, the ASP emphasizes the significance of appropriate antimicrobial use in preventing antimicrobial resistance,” said Martin Topiel, MD, Virtua’s medical director of infection prevention and control. “This issue poses a global health threat, contributing to an estimated 35,000 deaths annually in the United States and 1.3 million deaths worldwide.”

Jessica L. Mulbah, PharmD, Virtua’s infectious diseases clinical pharmacist, stressed the importance of all colleagues working in unison toward antibiotic awareness. “This year’s theme is ‘Fighting Antimicrobial Resistance Takes All of Us,’” she said. “To help, we offer five initiatives in Virtua’s antimicrobial stewardship and infection prevention to help combat antimicrobial resistance.”:

- Utilization of institutional guidelines
- Reduction of the spread of antimicrobial resistance
- Administration of the shortest effective antibiotic duration
- Use of the narrowest spectrum antibiotic
- Education for patients and caregivers

For more information on all of these, including contact information for any questions, visit the [Antimicrobial Stewardship Webpage](#). Click [here](#) for the Infection Control Manual. For a printable flyer on Virtua’s Antibiotic Awareness Week, click [here](#).

Practicing Excellence: Highlighting the “Best of the Best”

Do you have a favorite Practicing Excellence tip that stands out above the rest? Maybe a tip you’ve quoted in conversation with your team? We want to know which lessons you consider the “best of the

best.” Please email virtuaclinician@virtua.org with the name of your favorite Practicing Excellence video and the reasons you find it impactful. We would be glad to feature you in a future edition of *Clinician Update*.

We encourage everyone to complete the Advanced Patient Experience Program if you haven’t done so already. Click to [view the guide](#). For additional details about what is required, visit the [Practicing Excellence page](#) or email virtuainfo@virtua.org.

What Patients Are Saying About Our Clinicians

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

“He is a very professional, caring, understanding doctor. I trust him the utmost and I really appreciate his care. He is such a professional and is such an expert with what he does.” **(Ibrahim A. Moussa, DO)**

“I find everyone at this practice to be totally knowledgeable and caring for the patient. Dr. Janora has been my doctor for 13 years. I have complete faith and trust in her. She is also a wonderful teacher to her students.” **(Deanna M. Janora, MD)**

“He was amazing. He spent time reviewing my medical records going back to 2002 when I was first diagnosed. He explained everything so I understood what he was talking about. I could not have received better care.” **(Gregory Seltzer, MD)**

“I have never had better treatment from a doctor in my life. The staff, including the people that answered the phone, went above and beyond to assist me.” **(Eleana M. Kriebel, PA)**

“He was very patient and kind. He listened to me and explained the options I had to treat my Crohn's disease. When given a difficult and life-altering diagnosis, it helps tremendously to have such a caring doctor be your caregiver.” **(Sanket B. Patel, DO)**

Virtua Enhances Staff Safety With New Technology

Virtua is further ensuring colleague safety by introducing the Strongline Staff Safety System. This innovative technology provides staff members in select units with special badges that can be discreetly worn alongside their Virtua ID badges. In situations where a staff member feels unsafe, a simple double-press of the Strongline badge sends an immediate alert to the security team and nearby colleagues. The alert provides the individual's identity and their precise real-time location, enabling a swift and strategic response.

The Strongline system is currently being piloted in the following units of Virtua Mount Holly Hospital:

- Emergency Department
- Pediatric Emergency Department
- Behavioral Health Unit

In the months ahead, the pilot will expand to include additional emergency departments and behavioral health units.

Reviewing ACCME Integrity Standards

Standard 3: Identifying Relevant Financial Relationships

On *Clinician Update*, we've been sharing the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education. [The five standards](#) are designed to ensure that CME activities are developed and delivered in a manner that is ethical, transparent, and free from commercial bias. This week we highlight Standard 3.

Standard 3 discusses how accredited providers are responsible for identifying relevant financial relationships between individuals in control of educational content and ineligible companies and managing these to ensure no commercial bias is introduced into education. Accredited providers must collect information, exclude owners or employees of ineligible companies, identify relevant financial relationships, mitigate relevant financial relationships, and disclose all relevant financial relationships to learners.

Click [here](#) on Digital 411 for further elaboration on Standard 3, as well as all five standards provided by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education. If you have any questions, please contact cme-cne@virtua.org.

Navigating Advances in Alzheimer's Disease

Nov. 20, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The FDA granted traditional approval to the amyloid beta-directed antibody lecanemab for the treatment of mild dementia. With the goal of helping specialists maintain an understanding of the evidence supporting new and emerging treatments, PeerView, chaired by James E. Galvin, MD, MPH, has prepared a discussion on the use of biomarkers to aid in early and accurate diagnosis and how to integrate therapies into practice. Click to [view the flyer and register](#).

More of Virtua in the News

Virtua Oncology Program Earns National Recognition

A prominent industry publication has named Virtua one of "100 hospitals and health systems with great oncology programs."

The Penn Medicine | Virtua Health Cancer Program "has established itself as a premier cancer care provider that offers advanced treatments, including a state-of-the-art Proton Therapy Center and the use of Cytalux to illuminate lung cancer cells for improved surgical outcomes," the magazine stated.

It also cited Virtua's extensive patient support, innovative technologies such as GI Genius for better colon polyp detection, and dramatically increased screenings through the Mobile Health and Cancer Screening Unit, as well as multiple initiatives to improve health equity. Read in [Becker's Hospital Review](#).

Virtua Repeats Prestigious Most Wired Recognition

For the second year in a row, the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives has named Virtua a "Level 10" Most Wired health system—the highest possible honor. Only 26 health systems nationwide attained this recognition level. This is Virtua's 13th consecutive year on the Most Wired list. Read in [ROI-NJ](#).

Virtua Honors Dr. James George as Humanitarian of the Year at Annual Gala

On Saturday, Nov. 2, Virtua's trustees, leaders, clinicians, and generous donors gathered at the [Virtua Health Gala](#) in Atlantic City for an inspiring evening celebrating our collective impact. Funds raised at the gala benefit Virtua's Eat Well food access programs.

During the program, President and CEO Dennis W. Pullin, FACHE, presented James E. George, MD, JD, FACEP, with Virtua's Humanitarian of the Year Award. Dr. George, a pioneer in emergency medicine and founder of TeamHealth, is also highly regarded as an abstract artist and philanthropic supporter of the healing arts. Over the years, he has funded art rooms at Virtua's behavioral health programs for children (CASTLE) in Camden and Berlin. Dr. George's passion for the healing arts began after he experienced the positive impact it had on his own rehabilitation following a life-altering brain and spinal cord injury.

[Watch Dr. George's Story](#)

"I have known Dr. George for decades and am continually impressed by his fortitude and compassion," said James Dwyer, DO, vice chair of the Virtua Health Board of Trustees. "His contributions to our community, as both a medical professional and a philanthropist, leave a legacy that spans generations."

Additionally, Iron Chef and James Beard Award-winner Chef Jose Garces was presented with a distinguished service award for his leadership and advocacy in building healthier communities through food access and education.

Read more in the press release [here](#).

Give for Good Campaign: Thank You for Your Kind Support

Virtua Health's annual colleague giving campaign, [Give for Good](#), which launched on Nov. 1, brings us all the opportunity to make a difference for each other and our patients through philanthropy. Gifts of all sizes matter, and 100% of each dollar goes directly to the designation selected. Nearly 800 colleagues have already participated in Give for Good this year. Your gifts make a tremendous difference for our patients, the community we serve, and each other. To learn more about the many options and to make your gift, visit [GiveToVirtua.org/Colleagues](#). If you have any questions, please contact the Office of

Philanthropy at 856-355-0830 or gratitude@virtua.org. As always, thank you for your consideration and kind support.

Holiday Gatherings Announced

As December brings in the cheer of the holiday season, Virtua is excited to invite you to our Holiday Gatherings. Join us for a joyful celebration—check out the [detailed schedule](#) and save the dates. We look forward to everyone coming together to connect, share, and enjoy a festive meal. Feel free to attend the gathering at the campus closest to you. Let's come together as one big Virtua family and make the season memorable.

Community Events to Share

Pickleball With a Virtua Doctor

Nov. 24, 1 to 5 p.m.

Players Courtyard Pickleball Club, Moorestown

Join Marc I. Harwood, MD, of Virtua Reconstructive Orthopedics, for pickleball and an information session on how to avoid sports injury. Dr. Harwood will answer questions about sports medicine and orthopedics. There will also be a pickleball instructor to help anyone looking to learn the sport or improve their game. Attendees are encouraged to wear loose-fitting clothing and sneakers appropriate for pickleball. This is a free event, and registration is required. To learn more, click this [flyer](#). Space is limited. To register click [here](#).

Shop With a Virtua Doctor

Dec. 11, 5:30 p.m.

ShopRite of Williamstown

Join Virtua cardiologist Joshua Crasner, DO, and registered dietitian Claire Rudden, RDN, for an evening of heart health information and grocery shopping tips. Attendees will learn how to select the healthiest food options during this holiday season and get answers from our specialists about maintaining a heart-healthy diet. Space is limited, so please register with your name, email address and phone number today.

Click to [view the flyer](#). To RSVP for the event or learn more information, email virtuaclinician@virtua.org.

IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

[Transgender Awareness Week](#) takes place **Nov. 13 to 19**, dedicated to raising awareness and visibility of transgender people, culminating in Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) on **Nov. 20**, memorializing transgender people lost to anti-trans violence. The month of November is also dedicated to celebrating and standing up for transgender, non-binary, and/or gender-diverse individuals.

Nov. 17 is **National ERG Day**. Virtua's Colleague Communities are Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) that promote inclusion and belonging, allyship, and opportunities to engaging with colleagues of diverse backgrounds. Over 90% of companies across the country have ERGs, and these safe spaces play an integral role in ensuring an inclusive and respectful workplace environment. Virtua is proud to offer eight Colleague Communities. To learn more or join a colleague community, visit the [IDEA page](#) .

Nov. 19 is [International Men's Day](#), highlighting experiences and challenges faced by men and boys, the importance of positive male role models, and improving gender relations.