

Clinician Update

November 2, 2023

Clinicians Honored at Medical Staff Meeting

For the first time, Virtua held **one** meeting for the physicians of all medical staffs and campuses. It took place on Thursday evening, Oct. 26, at the Barry D. Brown Health Education Center (HEC) in Voorhees. Medical staff presidents, Denise Bell, MD, Jay Mirmanesh, MD, MBA and Michael Driscoll, DO, as well as senior Virtua leadership, welcomed the physicians.

“This was the first time in the history of Virtua that all three medical staff were able to attend this event together,” said Christopher Pomrink, DO, VP of Medical Affairs. “It was such a meaningful opportunity to see well over 200 of our physicians together as one group, to look back on our shared year, as well as to preview what is ahead, and especially to take time to connect, share camaraderie, and honor some very special doctors.”

The program included announcement of this year’s award recipients:

North (Virtua Mount Holly Hospital)

- Distinguished Career - Vincent J. Spagnuolo, Jr., MD
- Physician Recognition - Samir K. Doshi, MD
- President’s Award - Monica T. Agar, MD & Michelle L. Salvatore, MD

South (Virtua Voorhees Hospital & Virtua Marlton Hospital)

- Distinguished Career - William F. Muhr, MD
- Physician Recognition - Stephen P. Goldfine, MD
- President’s Award - Charles H. Nolte, DO & Robert E. Post, II, MD

West (Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital & Virtua Willingboro Hospital)

- Distinguished Career - John S. Radomski, MD
- Physician Recognition - Mark G. Sunga, DO
- President’s Award - Thomas R. Nugent, MD

Congratulations to all the awardees!

Oliver Station Is on the Rise in Camden

This week, Virtua Health, in collaboration with The Michaels Organization, helped break ground on a first for South Jersey—a new multipurpose campus that will combine affordable housing with quality medical care. Construction is now underway in Camden for what will become Oliver Station, a bustling community of wellness located less than a mile from Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. The

forthcoming Virtua medical practice will be set among 47 beautiful, welcoming apartments. The site is expected to open in late 2024.

The development will be known as Oliver Station in honor of the Rev. Thomas Clement Oliver, a conductor on the Underground Railroad who briefly lived in Camden. He once presided over the Macedonia African Methodist Episcopal Church, Camden's oldest African-American institution and a refuge for freedom seekers.

The naming also pays homage to the late Lieutenant Gov. Sheila Y. Oliver, who died in August and was a leader in securing state funding for the Camden project.

Learn more at go.virtua.org/oliver-station. See news coverage at [6 ABC noon](#), [6ABC 5 p.m.](#), [NBC 10](#), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), [NJ Biz](#), and [Tapinto.net](#).

Virtua in the News

TeamBirth Care Model Shows Positive Results

An initiative to improve birth outcomes for mothers and babies has shown overwhelmingly positive results after its first year in New Jersey—including at several Virtua facilities. New statewide data on the TeamBirth care model shows that people giving birth under the program felt more involved in decision-making and more informed about their care options, among other improvements. In contrast, poor communication is often a cause of maternal injuries and deaths. Virtua Voorhees Hospital and Virtua's Midwifery Birth & Wellness Center began using TeamBirth in September 2022, while Virtua Mount Holly Hospital launched the program this September. Read in [ROI-NJ](#). Learn more about TeamBirth at Virtua [here](#).

Virtua to Add Chatbot Tool to Increase Mental Health Care Access

Virtua will soon enable its physicians to prescribe a mental health support app to people who are waiting for behavioral health appointments. The innovative tool, called Woebot, can help patients cope with such challenges as anxiety and depression. The program will start as a pilot, rolling out in December at Virtua Primary Care Telehealth as well as Virtua Primary Care - Voorhees at 2225 Evesham Road and Virtua Primary Care - Marlton at Route 70. Read in [ROI-NJ](#) and [Philadelphia Business Journal](#).

Rowan/Virtua Schools Offer Cost-Saving Program for Future Medical Students

Rowan College of South Jersey, Rowan University, and the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine recently introduced a program to help local high school students become doctors—and reduce the physician shortage. The new Pathway to Medicine initiative guarantees acceptance for five high-achieving Cumberland and Gloucester County high school seniors annually into an accelerated, cost-saving pathway to a DO degree close to home at Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine. Read in [Patch](#).

Virtua Doctor, Other Experts Answer Questions about Breast Cancer

Lori Timmerman, DO, a breast surgeon with the Penn Medicine | Virtua Health Cancer Program, participated in *SJ Magazine's* annual Breast Cancer Roundtable discussion with six other South Jersey specialists. "The relationship with our patients is very, very personal. And that's a privilege," she remarked. Read [here](#).

Virtua Podiatrist Recommends Best Shoes for Plantar Fasciitis

Self, a national wellness publication, recently asked four doctors to choose the best shoes for people with this painful foot condition. Virtua podiatrist Sukhwinder (Gigee) Bhular, DPM, provided her picks for walking shoes, hiking boots, insoles, and more. Read [here](#).

Rowan/Virtua Doctor Offers Tips to Boost Immune System

Winter generally brings an uptick in colds and other contagious illnesses. But you can help your body fight off these infections with some simple steps—from quitting smoking to eating healthy foods to staying up to date on your flu and COVID vaccinations. Read more about these suggestions and other advice from Rowan Family Medicine clinician Kanad Mukherjee, DO, in [SJ Magazine](#).

Virtua Is "All In" on Excellence

Thank you for being *All In on Excellence*! This week, we begin a new program that will see us through 2023 and into the new year. All colleagues—regardless of role or job location—are watching the same tip each week as part of the *All In* series. We start off with the invaluable insights provided in the first tip of the new series: "I Belong Here: Unintended Signals of Exclusion." Click to [view the tip](#).

The complete [roadmap](#), available on Colleague Corner, also ensures you and your team know exactly what tip we will focus on each week Virtua-wide. Also, a handy, one-page PDF is available for every tip in the *All In on Excellence* series and can be found in the Resource Library of the [Practicing Excellence page on Colleague Corner](#).

All Virtua colleagues have been automatically enrolled in the *All In* program. There is no need to enter a join code. Here are instructions on how to access the program:

- Open the Practicing Excellence app or web page.
- Navigate to the *Progress* menu/tab.
- Select the *Virtua All In on Excellence Program*.

Nov. 15 Deadline for Philly Mag's Top Docs of 2024

If you have a colleague who you'd like to see included in the **2024 Top Doctors issue of *Philadelphia Magazine***, now's your chance to make that happen. The magazine partners with health care researcher Castle Connolly to create a list of top doctors. Nominations are open year-round, but to make the deadline for consideration into the May 2024 Top Doctors issue, Castle Connolly has announced that the **nomination window will close Nov. 15**.

The polling is open to all licensed physicians in the United States, who are able to nominate physicians in any medical specialty and in any part of the country. The poll does not accept self-nominations nor any duplicate nominations of the same physician per calendar year.

Castle Connolly has been reaching out to all licensed MDs and DOs in the area to submit nominations. Physicians who are vetted and selected as Castle Connolly Top Doctors will have a listing on the Castle Connolly website and may be eligible to appear in this special issue of *Philadelphia Magazine*.

- Physicians wishing to nominate someone can register here: nominations.castleconnolly.com
- Each nominating physician will need to use their first and last name, email, hospital, specialty, and ZIP code.
- A nomination code for 2023 and a link to the nomination site will then be automatically emailed.
- Each calendar year, a physician may nominate: 15 in their own specialty, seven in each family medicine/internal medicine/pediatrics, and five in each of the remaining specialties.
- Helpful general info can be found [here](#) and [here](#).
- Nomination submissions via the [portal](#) are due by **Nov. 15**.

Congratulations to the 120-plus physicians from Virtua Medical Group and the Virtua Integrated Network selected for *Philadelphia* magazine's Top Docs list in 2023.

What Patients Are Saying About Our Clinicians

Through their reviews, patients are revealing their confidence in their clinicians. Note the following recent examples and how the patient felt about the experience, and the clinician referenced:

- "He not only gave me guidance, but he also explained to me how he came to his conclusion. He was very patient with me. I was extremely pleased with my visit. So pleased I want and will tell others! Thank you, Dr Paz!" (Efrain Paz, Jr., DO)
- "She is an amazing doctor with the attitude and personality to serve. She is as good as you can ever dream to find in a doctor!" (Sukhwinder Gigeer Bhular, DPM)
- "Great professionalism, personality, and knowledge. My go-to guy!" (Thomas Plut, DO)
- "He was extremely professional. He sat and went over all of my medical history without a rush. Happy to have found a doctor with great bedside manner and professionalism." (Ashok K. Keswani, MD)

- “I went for my bariatric surgery, and God blessed me with an angel. His name is Dr. Sharma, and he is the best doctor. Thank you, Doc, you changed my life forever.” (Gaurav S. Sharma, MD)

Spreading Stroke Awareness

This past Sunday was World Stroke Day, which makes this time of year always a good opportunity to spread stroke awareness through the community. Globally, one in four adults over the age of 25 will have a stroke in their lifetime. “Yet, most adults in the U.S. don’t know the [F.A.S.T. warning signs of a stroke](#),” said Parth Modi, MD, neurohospitalist. “Stroke is largely preventable, treatable, and beatable. So, awareness of F.A.S.T. truly matters.”

Click [here](#) and [here](#) to follow the patient story of Jesse Randolph, a Cherry Hill resident who suffered a stroke in the middle of the night. Thankfully, his wife quickly recognized the signs and symptoms of stroke and had him taken to Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes where he received advanced care and is back to living his life. He received an emergency thrombectomy and was discharged the next day, without any long-term side effects.

Virtua Neurosciences’ comprehensive, award-winning approach to stroke treatment is fortified by the teamwork of various experts. “We are a team of specially trained doctors, surgeons, nurses, physical therapists, dietitians, pharmacists, and social workers,” said Dr. Modi. “And a testament to this unified dedication are the wonderful patient stories like that of Mr. Randolph we can share.”

To learn more about stroke care at Virtua, go to www.virtua.org/stroke.

Give for Good Has Launched

It’s November, and that means Give for Good, our Virtua-wide colleague giving campaign, has officially launched. We invite you to join the hundreds of Virtua colleagues who are creating a lasting impact through philanthropy. Whether you support the Colleague Care Fund, scholarships for nurses, or another Virtua initiative that is meaningful to you, your gift is so important and appreciated. We are caring colleagues, here for good. In our daily roles and through Give for Good, WE can make a difference for our community and for each other.

“It’s an important way we can enhance the positive impact we make upon our community,” said hospitalist Erik N. DeLue, MD, MBA, CHCQM.

To learn more and 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.

Virtua Pulmonologist Leads Effort to Nourish Local Families

With the season of gratitude just around the corner, we are especially grateful to pulmonologist Eric Szejman, MD, vice president of clinical operations for the Virtua Medical Group, and his family for championing our annual Thanksgiving Turkey and Produce Giveaway. Through this initiative, the [Virtua Eat Well Food Access Programs](#) will ensure that 700 local families can enjoy a Thanksgiving meal together. Click [here](#) to learn more from Dr. Szejman on why this event matters so much.

This group effort nourishes families from under-resourced communities in South Jersey by providing them with a turkey and fresh produce all at no cost. Since 2019, 4,300 turkeys and fresh produce have been distributed to local families.

Generous donors have joined together in funding this initiative. If you'd like to join the Szejman family in helping to feed our community this Thanksgiving, please visit <https://gofund.me/56e6b731>. Your gift of any amount will make a difference for families right here in South Jersey!

Annual Mandatory Conflict of Interest Disclosure Available on Virtua Works

Virtua colleagues who are supervisor-level and above and **all employed health care providers** (physicians, nurse practitioners, anesthesiologists, and physician assistants) are required to complete the annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation by **Thursday, Nov. 30**.

The Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation will be available on the home page of Virtua Works under *Announcements*. Click *View More Announcements* to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation.

Should you have any questions, contact Ryan Peoples, compliance manager (856-355-0729), or Raquel Ravelo, corporate compliance auditor (856-355-0739).

Final Flu Vaccination Reminder

As of Nov. 1, 82% of colleagues have participated in the flu vaccination program. Colleagues should receive their flu shots **by 11:59 p.m. on Nov. 7**. Visit the [Colleague Flu Vaccination Resources](#) Dashboard Card on the Colleague Corner for the schedule and additional details.

Occupational Health Services Update

Effective **Oct. 16**, Virtua colleagues can access occupational health services exclusively at the Virtua Occupational Health – Cherry Hill. Virtua Occupational Health – Moorestown will no longer provide services to colleagues.

Peer Supporter Trainings Begin Soon

We invite you to [join](#) WE Support as a peer supporter. We still seek peer supporters from the following roles: physician, clinician, nurse, and patient logistics professional for the first round of training that will take place on **Nov. 15**.

Training will help volunteer peer supporters recognize common stress indicators and identify where individuals fall on the stress continuum. Participants will also learn actionable strategies and coping skills to support colleague well-being and mental and emotional health. Finally, peer supporters will be educated on available resources through Virtua and community resources to support colleague well-being. Once trained, these peer supporters will help to foster an environment where sharing and seeking support for our struggles is welcomed and encouraged at Virtua.

To learn more about WE Support and the peer supporter nomination process, visit the [WE Support page](#) or email [Caitlyn Van Wagner](mailto:Caitlyn.Van.Wagner@virtua.org).

Successfully Treat Patient Obesity: A Comprehensive Approach, Nov. 18

Virtua's bariatric surgery program has planned a learning opportunity for interested clinicians on **Saturday, Nov. 18** at the Barry Brown Health Education Center in Voorhees. The event is entitled "[Successfully Treat Patient Obesity: A Comprehensive Approach](#)" and will feature metabolic & bariatric experts Samuel Wasser, MD, FACS, FASMBS; Emeka Acholonu, MD, FACS, FASMBS; Gaurav Sharma, MD, FACS, FASMBS; Srikanth Parsi, MD, FACS; and Michelle Hunt, Psy.D, LCADC.

To register for this event, please go to the Virtua Learning System (VLS) on the Colleague Corner and search for "Successfully Treat Patient Obesity." Click [here](#) for a flyer which includes the accreditation statement. CME is available for VMG and VIN clinicians who attend. For further information please contact Lisa Shaw, director of digestive health, at lshaw@virtua.org or 856-355-0877.

More Upcoming Events to Share

Virtua Clinicians Talk Up Feeling Fabulous over 60, Nov. 16

Spread the word on **Feeling Fabulous Over 60**, the next Real Talk! Women's Health Chat in this popular series that features live conversations discussing what matters most to women. In this upcoming episode, Virtua cardiologist Maria Duca, MD, and Virtua women's primary care physician Liesl Miles, MD, will break down everything one needs to know about feeling best at any age, from screenings to diet, nutrition, and more. The online event will take place on Thursday, Nov. 16 at 7 p.m.

[Register here for this free event.](#)

As for the previous Real Talk! Women's Health Chat held in October, **Breaking The Silence: 3 Hidden Health Issues Women Often Face Alone**, feel free to share [this recording](#) of Virtua minimally invasive

GYN surgeons Geoffrey Bowers, MD and Minda Green, MD revealing how and when to talk to a GYN provider.

Help Spread the Word – Camp Oasis Is Set for Nov. 19

Presented by the Penn Medicine | Virtua Health Cancer Program, [Camp Oasis](#) is a free, spirit-lifting one-day getaway camp for children who have a parent or loved one battling cancer. Registration is now open for the winter session on **Sunday, Nov. 19** at the NL Aquatic Center in Voorhees. Help spread the word by sharing the [Camp Oasis Brochure and Registration Form](#) with your teams and patients or community members who may be interested in participating. If you have any questions about Camp Oasis, please contact Jackie Miller at jmiller2@virtua.org or 609-724-8480.

Here for Good; Here for our Colleagues

Since early June, we have given you an insider's perspective on the captivating stories of your fellow clinicians and colleagues through the *Here for Good: Inside Edition* podcast. We now celebrate 14 editions of *Inside Edition*! Click to view this [compelling video compilation](#) of all these episodes which have shined a spotlight on our colleagues' remarkable accomplishments, as well as their passions beyond the workplace.

To catch up on full episodes, visit the [Colleague Corner](#).

IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All

November is [National Native American Heritage Month](#), also referred to as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. First declared in 1916, it is a time to celebrate and learn about the various histories, traditions, and contributions of each passing generation.

We also honor National Family Caregivers Month, initiated in 1994 by the Caregiver Action Network (National Family Caregivers Association). This year's theme is *Caregivers Connect*. Click to [learn tips](#) about caregiving and stories about providing care to aging parents, loved ones with disabilities, and more.

Turning Back the Clock

It's time for the clock to "fall" back! Daylight Saving Time ends on **Sunday morning, Nov. 5 at 2 a.m.** So, push your clocks back one hour and enjoy the extra 60 minutes!