

## Clinician Update November 30, 2023

### Dates Announced for Holiday Gatherings

As December brings in the cheer of the holiday season, Virtua Health is delighted to host festive gatherings at various locations. This is your invitation to join in the fun! [Here is the detailed schedule](#). We encourage one and all to come together, interact, and enjoy a meal. For those based in locations not listed, you are warmly invited to join the nearest campus event. Let's bridge distances and celebrate as one big Virtua Health family.

We can't wait to see you there and share in the holiday cheer!

### DEADLINE NOTICE:

#### Annual Mandatory Conflict of Interest Disclosure Due Today

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 **today, Thursday, Nov. 30**.

The Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation is available on the home page of Virtua Works under announcements. On Virtua Works, please click "View More Announcements" to complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.

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

### Building Upon the Key Findings of the Latest Community Health Needs Assessment

All South Jersey counties have lower life expectancies than New Jersey as a whole. That is a key finding of the latest Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) finalized in 2022. The impact of the health inequities is most evident among outcomes in key areas: access to care, chronic disease, behavioral health, mental health among youth, and maternal and child health.

The qualitative research identified the following themes as the key elements impacted by the changes brought about by COVID-19 that are driving inequities in health outcomes across Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties:

- Transportation is worse than ever before.
- Health and human services struggle to attract new workers and retain the ones they have.
- Lack of trust in health care is at a new high.
- Workforces should better reflect the population served.

- Unexamined bias and systemic racism directly impact care.
- Isolation has had a profound and lasting impact.
- Fear remains an issue.
- People of all ages crave community but need help connecting.

“The assessment is very valuable for us, and you will see our added attention to the mentioned social determinants in the way we provide our services,” said Virtua Vice President of Clinical Operations Nicole Lamborne, MD, FACOG, who participates on the multi-disciplinary team of Virtua leaders that helps formulate the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for the 2023-2025 period.

Virtua actively participates in the South Jersey Health Collaborative (SJHC), which consists of health systems and health departments within our counties. The assessment takes place every three years through a rigorous and inclusive process in accordance with the Affordable Care Act. It generates robust, shared regional data for collective action on the part of the collaborative to further the commitment to community health and population health management.

[Click here for the CHNA 2022 report.](#)

[Click here for the Community health Improvement Plan \(2023-25\)](#)

[Click here for New Jersey Community Center & Health Resources | Virtua](#)

For questions or more information, contact, Bageshree Cheulkar, senior project manager of Community Based Services, at [bcheulkar@virtua.org](mailto:bcheulkar@virtua.org).

## **Broaching the Subject of Obesity: Identifying and Removing Potential Barriers to Success with Weight Loss**

Clinicians are often challenged with broaching the topic of obesity treatment with their patients. This topic was one of several discussed when Virtua’s bariatric surgery program recently hosted a learning opportunity for interested clinicians. The event, “Successfully Treat Patient Obesity: A Comprehensive Approach,” featured metabolic and 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.

Dr. Hunt, Virtua’s bariatric team psychologist, provided key information on when and how to discuss weight with a patient. “Patients typically feel judged and responsible for their health problems because of their weight. They have likely been told this directly or indirectly by doctors, family, and society, which can create a dilemma for clinicians,” she said. “There is not one right or wrong answer and any exact science to having ‘the weight conversation.’”

Dr. Hunt offered several key points during the presentation as advice for clinicians. “Remember that your patients do not expect that you will have the quick solution to what has in many cases been a long-term or lifetime problem,” she said. “Patients will often need help setting goals that are realistic or incremental.”

She stressed the importance of showing empathy, support, and taking a nonjudgmental stance. “All of this can go a long way with engaging the patient’s alliance with you to problem-solve their weight issue together. This approach will enhance compliance with your suggestions and referrals.”

## Specialized Treatment Options Available for Female Sexual Dysfunction

Pelvic conditions and sexual dysfunction are common problems among women of all ages. Virtua is the only health system in South Jersey providing specialized physical and emotional care for women experiencing pelvic discomfort or concerns related to sexual function. Our experts treat a wide range of conditions, including pelvic and vulvar pain, pain with sex, vulvar dermatological conditions, vulvodynia/vestibulodynia, and more.

“We understand that pelvic pain and sexual dysfunction influence physical and emotional health—fortunately, most cases are treatable,” said Virtua women’s health nurse practitioner Elizabeth Kusturiss, MSN, CRNP, IF. “Our goal is to help our patients eliminate pelvic pain and restore their sexual well-being.”

To learn more about the advanced treatment options available at Virtua, click [here](#).

## New Weapons Screening System Coming to Virtua Berlin

In a move to continue keeping our colleagues, patients, and visitors safe, Virtua is set to install a new weapons screening system at the Virtua Health Emergency Department in Berlin on **Monday, Dec. 8**. This follows the successful installation of the same system at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital and the Virtua Health & Wellness Center – Camden.

The new metal detectors are equipped with advanced sensors, cameras, and artificial intelligence, supporting security personnel in the detection and screening of firearms and other weapons. This state-of-the-art technology effectively distinguishes between items of concern and common personal belongings such as keys and phones, doing so in real time.

Importantly, the screening equipment is designed to be discreet and efficient, ensuring that foot traffic flows smoothly. Visitors will not be required to empty their pockets or undergo a separate bag check, significantly streamlining the entry process. The system is capable of screening as many as 4,000 people per hour.

## Virtua in the News

### Virtua Expert Warns of Virus Surges During Holidays

Cases of flu and RSV are already rising, and COVID-19 could spike in the coming weeks, according to Martin Topiel, MD, Virtua’s chief of infection prevention. He urges everyone to take precautions, such as

frequent handwashing, masking when appropriate, and keeping up-to-date with vaccines. Watch on [CBS 3](#).

### **Virtua CEO and CFO a Winning Combination**

A prominent industry publication has named two Virtua leaders to its list of “highly successful CEO/CFO duos.” The honorees are President and CEO Dennis W. Pullin and Bob Segin, EVP and chief financial officer. The article shared:

“Thanks to their shared values, complementary skills, and aligned visions for Virtua Health's future, Mr. Pullin and Mr. Segin have been a high achieving duo since Mr. Pullin joined the organization in 2017. Mr. Pullin brings to his role a wealth of knowledge and leadership experience from his service at several other health systems. By contrast, Mr. Segin has been developing an expertise in finance with Virtua for 40 years. During their working relationship, the duo has enabled Virtua's 2019 acquisition of Lourdes Health System, fostered a partnership with Rowan University to create the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Health Sciences, expanded the system's joint venture ambulatory surgery center portfolio, and much more. The two credit their successful partnership to flexibility and entrepreneurship, with both taking on responsibilities outside the scope of their traditional roles. For instance, Mr. Segin has looked at new business opportunities, worked on patient satisfaction, and other tasks not generally associated with the CFO position.”

Read the complete article in [Becker's Hospital Review](#).

### **Virtua Gives Out 1,200 Free Turkeys, Fresh Produce**

NBC 10 Philadelphia covered Virtua's annual turkey and produce giveaway in Camden last week. Virtua held similar events in Willingboro and, for the first time, in Atlantic City. Watch on [NBC 10](#).

### **Rowan-Virtua Café Supports Young People with Disabilities**

The Together Café at the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine creates training and job opportunities for youth with developmental disabilities. The eatery is a collaboration between the medical school, the Rowan-Virtua Regional Integrated Special Needs Center, and other partners. Read in [Patch](#).

### **Virtua Is “All In” on Excellence**

Thank you for being *All In on Excellence*! This week, we begin the second chapter of our *All In* program. With your team or on your own, view the first tip of the series: “Everyone Matters: Making it Safe” Click to [view the tip](#).

We invite colleagues to share their reflections on tips 3 and 4 of "I Belong Here." All participants who respond will get a chance to win two tickets to **Mariah Carey Christmas** at the Wells Fargo Center on **Wednesday, Dec. 13** at 7:30 p.m. (two lucky winners will be chosen at random).

Here's how to enter:

1. Watch the Practicing Excellence tips “We Have a Future Together” and “Collaborating Across Teams” and consider how the content pertains to your role and experiences at Virtua.
2. Send your response [virtuainfo@virtua.org](mailto:virtuainfo@virtua.org) or [Grace Roche via Teams](#). Limit one entry per colleague.

The reflection questions are:

- “We Have a Future Together”: What makes you feel proud of your team, its members, and their accomplishments? What actions or behaviors give you the feeling of belonging?
- “Collaborating Across Teams”: Recall a situation that required the skill and efforts of several different teams and specialties to resolve successfully. How did you acknowledge appreciation to your teammates for their efforts?

Thank you to the colleagues who have responded to the reflection questions so far.

Entries are due by 11:59 p.m. on **Friday, Dec. 1**. Winners will be chosen on **Monday, Dec. 4**.

## 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:

- “Sincere and caring physician. Puts his patients first. He tells you the way it is. Trustable, knowledgeable doctor.” (John Nolan, DO)
- “One of the best health care providers I've ever been treated by. He truly cares for his patients. Never rushed, takes his time to listen and finds the best solution and treatment for you. Very down to earth and will make sure you understand. Utmost respect.” (Daniel Lynch, PA)
- “She believed me, and my pain, and took her valuable time to listen and address every little concern I had. Dr. Buhler is the only podiatrist I will ever go to again.” (Sukhwinder Gigeer Bhular, DPM)
- “Wonderful doctor who LISTENS to you! Some of the best care I have ever received!” (Minda A. Green, MD)
- “He is a very caring, compassionate doctor. He spends as much time as needed with you, no rushing you through your appointment. If more doctors were like him, it would be a pleasure to go to the doctor! I would give 20 stars if I could!” (Hisham ElGenaidi, MD)

## Pickleball With a Virtua Doctor – Are You Game?

Virtua cardiologist Howard M. Weinberg, DO, recently led the inaugural Pickleball With a Virtua Doctor event held at the Players Courtyard Pickleball Club in Moorestown, NJ. Organized to share the heart-healthy benefits of pickleball and to teach the fundamentals of the game with community members, attendees enjoyed a wonderful evening of heart-healthy exercise and making new friends.

Are you or someone you know interested in pickleball? Would you like to participate in joining us in a match? If so, we want to hear from you! Please email Casandra Williams at [cwilli27@virtua.org](mailto:cwilli27@virtua.org) for more information about our next event.

## From the Hello Good Mailbox

Jennifer Logan, practice manager, shared her appreciation to Crystal O’Neal, office assistant, and Jameah Robinson, medical assistant, who demonstrated an amazing act of kindness. She wrote:

“A 17-year-old boy and his 25-year-old sister arrived at Virtua Urgent Care – Washington Township on the day before Thanksgiving. While checking them in, Crystal and Jameah asked about their Thanksgiving plans. The siblings said they didn’t have plans as their mother was in the hospital.

“Crystal and Jameah instantly made a few phone calls to family members, and they were able to offer an entire meal that included turkey, chicken, stuffing, sides, desserts, and drinks for the siblings’ family. Crystal and Jameah even delivered the feast after working 12-hour shifts.

“This act of kindness does not surprise me because our team is amazing and always goes above and beyond. I am truly grateful to work with grateful, caring, and kind-hearted people.”

## “A Gem of a Human Being” Joins Dennis Pullin on *Here for Good: Inside Edition*

Alyssa Brown is a nurse at Virtua Mount Holly Hospital who provides care to patients in the stroke and med-surg unit. A family member of one of her patients described Alyssa as “a gem of a human being.” The individual also said: “In my 27 years of working in health care, I can’t think of a nurse who is more focused and dedicated than Alyssa.” What’s interesting is that Alyssa is a young adult with only one year of nursing experience—demonstrating that we can learn a great deal from the next generation.

View the [latest edition of Inside Edition](#) and get to know Alyssa Brown.

## Upcoming Events

### Quarterly Cardiology Grand Rounds

**Mark Your Calendar for Dec. 20, 7 to 8 a.m.**

Please join us for the next Virtua Cardiology Grand Rounds. Our guest will be Rupal O’Quinn, MD, MHCI, FACC, director, cardio-oncology, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center and associate professor of clinical

medicine (cardiovascular medicine). This session will cover the importance of cardio-oncology and cancer therapy related to cardiac dysfunction; diagnosis and management of cancer therapy-related cardiac dysfunction; and recognition of common cardiovascular side effects occurring from newer cancer therapies and optimal management of these toxicities. The target audience is physicians and the interprofessional teams. To register for this online event, click [here](#). To learn more, click to [view the flyer](#).

### **Join to Stuff the Truck**

As we conclude a week of gratitude, we invite you to join the Gen V Colleague Community in spreading holiday cheer through acts of generosity. We encourage you to consider contributing items to the Virtua Food Farmacy and Colleague Market.

Join us on **Thursday, Dec. 21**, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Be Well Bistro located at 303 Lippincott Drive, Marlton, for a delightful evening of "Stuff the Truck" with donated items, and enjoy light refreshments. To participate, [click to register](#).

For those who would like to participate remotely, click on the [Amazon wish list](#) and send items directly to the Eat Well distribution center. Your support, whether in person or from afar, will make a significant impact this holiday season.

### **Women of Virtua to Hold 2023 Year-End Meet & Greet Tuesday, Dec. 5, 5 to 7 p.m. Be Well Bistro, 303 Lippincott Drive, Marlton**

In follow up to their *Professional Empowerment* and *Financial Success* events, the Women of Virtua welcomes all colleagues to join this occasion. They will provide time for networking and have a leader share their leadership journey. Additionally, they will collect food for the Virtua Health Food Farmacy. Please bring non-perishable food item(s). Click to [view the list](#). Click to [view the flyer](#).

### **IDEA – Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity for All**

Tomorrow, we recognize World AIDS Day, initiated as an observance in 1998. This year's theme is: "World AIDS Day 35: Remember and Commit," as we support those living with HIV and AIDS and remember those who lost their lives. Click for [resources, events, and stats](#).

We also recognize International Day of Persons with Disabilities on **Thursday, Dec. 7**. With more than 1.3 billion people around the world experiencing disabilities, the ongoing need to ensure equity and inclusion continues. Click to [learn more](#).