

Clinician Update

October 20, 2022

RSV and the Community: An Update from Virtua Health

Like health systems across the region and the country, Virtua is experiencing a surge of children in need of medical care due to respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). [Click here](#) for New Jersey trend data from the CDC.

RSV is a seasonal virus, particularly common among all ages of children. While most people experience symptoms consistent with the common cold, it is the leading cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia among babies (12 months and younger) in the United States, according to the CDC.

The symptoms of RSV often include shortness of breath, a runny nose, decrease in appetite, and a cough which may progress to wheezing. For infants, the symptoms may manifest as irritability, decreased activity and appetite, and pauses while breathing. RSV may bring on a fever, but not always.

In most cases, the symptoms of RSV resolve in a few days and can be treated at home. More advanced cases may require urgent care or, if truly severe, the emergency department.

“What’s concerning to me is how many cases we are seeing this early in the fall. I feel certain that cases will continue to climb into the winter months, which could present capacity challenges for hospitals should flu and COVID numbers also rise,” said Dennis Guest, DO, vice president of clinical operations for emergency medicine

Because there is no vaccine for RSV, simple health-care hygiene measures are the best way to avoid the virus and slow its spread. Dr. Guest asks his fellow clinicians to share the following safety measures with children and their families.

- **Drink Fluids:** Many children who require intervention for RSV are experiencing some form of dehydration. Sick children should be encouraged to drink more fluids than usual, ideally water (young infants should use an electrolyte-containing solution, such as Pedialyte).
- **Get Vaccinated:** A rise in COVID or flu cases would compound the challenges and caseloads caused by RSV. Protecting ourselves with the COVID-19 vaccine/booster (now available to anyone six months and older) and a flu shot is a preventive measure worth taking— particularly with Thanksgiving and other holidays on the horizon.
- **Practice Hand Hygiene:** Children are especially good at spreading germs through shared surfaces. Encourage them to wash their hands frequently throughout the day, or use hand sanitizer when a sink and soap are not nearby.
- **Wear a Mask in Crowded Spaces:** Masking makes a difference, as evidenced by the relatively mild flu seasons of the past two years. Although nearly all public places no longer require masks, wear one if it helps bring peace of mind, particularly in crowded places like airports and supermarkets.
- **Stay Home When Sick:** Be a good neighbor and avoid others when feeling under the weather.
- **Call the Pediatrician:** Virtua’s partner in pediatrics, CHOP, created an [online symptom checker](#) to help parents decide the appropriate need and venue for medical intervention. In most cases, a call to the pediatrician should be the first step. Calls made after hours should provide guidance on how to reach someone for a prompt response.

“The more we can do to inform and advise parents and the community, the better we can shape how the next few months will unfold,” said Dr. Guest.

Marlton, Mount Holly, and Voorhees Medical Staff Meeting

Last night, Virtua Marlton, Mount Holly, and Voorhees hospitals held their annual meeting at the Barry D. Brown Health Education Center in Voorhees. Lots of great information was shared by medical staff presidents, Dr. Alan Shubert and Dr. Jay Mirmanesh, as well as senior Virtua leadership. The program also included announcement of this year’s award recipients:

Virtua North (Virtua Mount Holly Hospital)

- Distinguished Career - Roy D. Carlson, MD
- Physician Recognition - Emilio Mazza, MD
- President’s Award - Tanveer Akhtar, MD

Virtua South (Virtua Voorhees Hospital & Virtua Marlton Hospital)

- Distinguished Career - David A. Obando, MD
- Physician Recognition - Jeffrey R. Levine, MD
- President’s Award - Aland H. Lee, MD & Robert A. Belfer, MD

Congratulations to all the awardees!

On the Road to HRO: Preoccupation with Failure

Last month, we kicked off a new series regarding Virtua’s journey to become a High Reliability Organization (HRO). This month, we are continuing the discussion and want share a story regarding a Virtua provider who was observed prioritizing patient safety over everything else, and demonstrating the HRO principle of being “preoccupied with failure.”

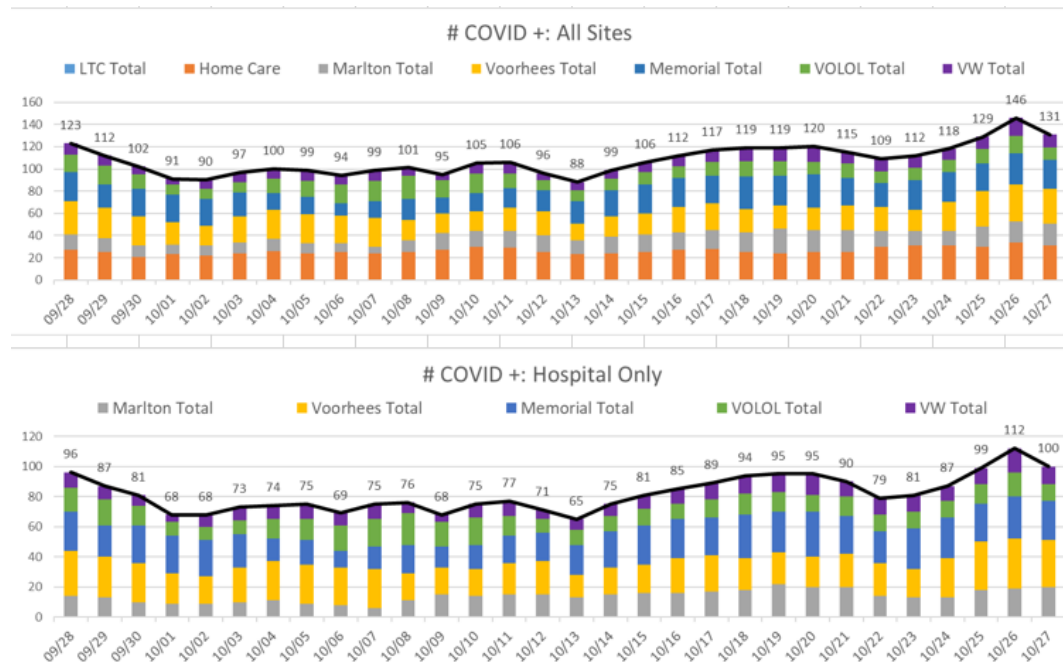
Preoccupation with failure is demonstrated when an individual is aware of, and thinking about, the potential for failure. It is recognizing that new threats emerge regularly from situations that no one imagined could/would occur. It is actively thinking about what could go wrong, and being alert to small signs of potential problems. It is maintaining a heightened sense of vigilance for the next possible failure, versus allowing for complacency due to the absence of errors or accidents. It is recognizing that near-misses are opportunities to learn about systems issues and potential improvements, rather than as evidence of safety.

Recently, one of our emergency department medical directors brought to our attention that they are repeatedly having to remove single-use stainless steel instruments from their floor stock. These instruments have been inadvertently reprocessed in Central Sterile Processing. If you have never had the opportunity to see these instruments, it is very hard to tell that they are single-use (disposable/recycled). They look and feel like other stainless instruments. The only difference in appearance is that they are marked “Pakistan,” and they do not have a model number with associated instructions for use on indicate how to reprocess. They cannot be reprocessed because they are not made with the same amount of metal, and therefore, there is no guarantee that they can withstand the heat of steam sterilization.

By being preoccupied with failure and subsequently reporting the information to administrative support, Virtua was able to pull the existing single-use instruments from the floor stock. They followed up with the Central Sterile Processing team to ensure a practice change and ensured that the single-use instruments were not being reprocessed and made available for use.

We thank this Virtua clinician for being preoccupied with failure and preventing potential harm to our patients. You were the last barrier of defense that prevented an unintended error from reaching a patient.

COVID-19 Census



Latest COVID-19 Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey was reported today as 0.99.
- The total number of cases reported as of 3 p.m. today:
 - Atlantic County 66,230
 - Burlington County: 105,595 cases
 - Camden County: 127,993 cases
 - Gloucester County: 65,391 cases
- COVID-associated mortality for Camden, Burlington, Gloucester, and Atlantic counties: 4,904.
- The state’s Vaccination Overview dashboard reported 19,305,027 doses of vaccine have been administered.

Monkeypox Stats

As of today, the number of probable and confirmed cases of monkeypox cases in New Jersey: **745**.

Mobile ECMO Team Earns WE Award

Virtua is honored to present the WE Award for Inclusive Teamwork to the Mobile ECMO Team at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. This team consists of Dr. Gene Hirose, Dr. John Yang, Brianna Kornicki, John Lanzidelle, Mark Petracci, Heather Rios, Bryan Schmerler, Brian Schwartz, and Abigail Stroud. Here is an excerpt from the nomination, submitted by Lannae Ewing, AVP of patient care services.

Under Dr. Gene Hirose and Dr. John Yang's leadership, Virtua created the Mobile Extra-corporeal (ECMO) Team in 2021. ECMO is an external life support machine for those with a life-threatening illness that stops their heart or lungs from working properly. Through a multi-disciplinary collaboration, the ECMO team introduced this therapy in all five hospitals. In 2021, 32 patients at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes were placed on ECMO and another 19 received the treatment at Virtua hospitals in Voorhees, Marlton, Willingboro, and Mount Holly. We anticipate continued growth of the Mobile ECMO program, serving the needs of patients who need this life-saving treatment throughout South Jersey.

Congratulations ECMO team!

Virtua Thinks Pink

Throughout October, a number of Virtua buildings are aglow in pink each night, drawing attention to breast cancer and the importance of routine mammograms. CBS 3 recently shared videos of these displays at Virtua Mount Holly and Virtua Voorhees hospitals. Watch [here](#).

We invite you to show your support for Breast Cancer Awareness Month by wearing pink and submitting a solo selfie or team photo to hellogood@virtua.org. Your photo(s) could be included in a photo slideshow on the Colleague Corner portal or on the [Virtua Colleague Facebook page](#).

From the Hello Good Mailbox

Brenda O'Brien, practice manager of the Virtua Medical Group Hospitalist Group, shared the following letter from a patient's family member regarding the great care her mother received from hospitalist Dr. Manoj Jain.

Dr. Jain treated my mother, and his genuine care and interest in her health was evident. He showed great attention to detail in understanding her underlying conditions. His kindness and gentleness helped to alleviate the anxiety she was feeling. I asked many questions, and Dr. Jain always had time to answer them all. If all doctors were like Dr. Jain...what a great world this would be.

Brenda says, "Knowing that my team is recognized for taking such wonderful care of our patients makes me very proud to work at Virtua. Thank you, Dr. Jain!"

See the good? Share the good! Email hellogood@virtua.org with stories, letters, and cards about fellow colleagues who are spreading the good in our campuses and the community. They may be featured in an upcoming edition of Clinician Update.

WE Thrive at the AHA Heart Walk

On Oct. 22, Virtua walkers came out in full force to walk for the American Heart Association's 2022 Southern New Jersey Fall Heart Walk. In addition to being the event's main sponsor, we had 312 walkers across 26 teams who raised an impressive \$22,751. Not only was Virtua named the Top Company, our

very own Karen Murray, clinical data quality administrator and captain of the VMG Coding Heart Walk Team, was named the event's Top Fundraiser.

WE applaud the donors and walkers for "stepping up" for heart health and overall well-being; Dr. Reg Blaber for serving as this year's event chair; and Amber Maculewicz, administrative assistant of the Early Intervention Program, for singing the national anthem to kick off the Heart Walk. Thank you!

Virtua in the News

Virtua Voorhees Named a Top-10 Maternity Hospital in State — Virtua Voorhees Hospital is one of New Jersey's 10 best hospitals for maternity care, according to a new report from The Leapfrog Group and *Money* magazine. Criteria for the designation includes an A or B grade on Leapfrog's spring 2022 Hospital Safety Grade assessment, as well as multiple benchmarks specific to maternity care. Read in [NJBiz](#).

16 Virtua-Affiliated Ambulatory Surgery Centers Among Nation's Best — A record-setting number of ASCs affiliated with Virtua made *Newsweek's* top ASCs list for 2023. Virtua is a partner in 14 of the 30 New Jersey ASCs recognized. Four rank in the state's top five, including both first- and second-place centers. The other two Virtua-affiliated ACSs named are in Pennsylvania and Delaware. Read on [Virtua.org](#), [Newsweek](#) and [Becker's ASC Review](#).

Virtua CEO Named a Top Diversity Leader, Health Care Influencer — Virtua President and CEO Dennis W. Pullin recently earned two prestigious distinctions. National magazine *Modern Healthcare* named him to its 2022 list of the 25 Top Diversity Leaders in Healthcare. And business magazine *ROI-NJ* placed Pullin in the number-three spot on its list of New Jersey's top 2022 Health Care Influencers. Consult the full lists on [Modern Healthcare](#) and [ROI-NJ](#). See Dennis' *Modern Healthcare* write-up [here](#) and his *ROI-NJ* listing [here](#).

Experts Discuss Drug for Preventing Preterm Birth — The FDA says the drug Makena does not work, and the drugmaker has pushed back, enlisting support of Black women, who are at higher risk of delivering premature babies. Dr. Shailen Shah, maternal-fetal medicine specialist at Virtua, is among several area experts offering insights about the medication in this [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) story.

Final Call: Compliance Deadlines

Colleagues, this is the final week for you to complete the following mandatory programs and training:

- **Oct. 31:** Annual Compliance Training
- **Nov. 1:** Flu vaccination
- **Nov. 1:** Fit Testing (for Virtua colleagues who have been assigned a respirator)

Compliance Training

Currently, **90%** of colleagues have completed the web-based education through the [Virtua Learning System \(VLS\)](#) under My Transcript. The deadline for training to be completed by existing colleagues is **Monday, Oct. 31**. New hires to the organization must complete this training within two weeks of hire.

- Familiarize yourself with this [grid](#) to identify which modules are required by job role.
- For technical issues, visit the [Information Services Customer Portal](#) on the VINE.
- For questions regarding the "All Colleagues" module, email WE-U@virtua.org.

- For questions regarding the “All Clinical” modules, email CLT@virtua.org.
- All modules are available on the [VINE/VLS](#).
- The “All Colleague” module is required for all colleagues and has been auto-loaded; view the “My Transcript” section in the VLS.
- A certificate of completion can be viewed and printed from the VLS.
- A record of completed modules will be uploaded to Virtua Works.
- For more information, visit [Compliance Training](#) on the VINE.

Flu Vaccination Program

To date, **8,830** colleagues have received their flu vaccinations. We thank you for your participation in Virtua’s mandatory Flu Vaccination Program. All colleagues should receive their flu shots by 11:59 p.m. on **Tuesday, Nov. 1**. We ask that you encourage fellow colleagues to click on the [Colleague Flu Information button](#) on the VINE for additional information. Questions are welcome. Email flu@virtua.org or call 856-761-3900, option 2.

Fit Testing

In accordance with the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard 29 CFR 1910.134, all Virtua colleagues who have been assigned a respirator must be in compliance with annual Fit Testing. Click the [Annual Fit Testing button](#) on the VINE to view the calendar for specific dates, times, and locations. **Note:** Colleagues who were newly assigned a respirator in 2022 and successfully completed Fit Testing in 2022 are **not** required to participate in Fit Testing again in 2022. The deadline for 2022 Fit Testing is **Monday, Oct. 31**.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation

Virtua colleagues, who are supervisor level and above, and all employed health care providers (physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) are required to complete the annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation by **Monday, Oct. 31**. Currently, **53%** have completed the annual Conflict of Interest. 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).

****Please note that supervisors and managers are now required to complete a Conflict of Interest disclosure form.**

Give for Good Kicks Off Next Week!

Virtua Health’s annual colleague giving campaign, Give for Good, kicks off on Tuesday, Nov. 1. Why does it play such an important role at Virtua? Because it provides a special way for colleagues to do great things for our community—and for one another—through philanthropy!

Convenient payroll deduction and personal time off (PTO) donation options are available. Gifts of every size have a lasting impact and are greatly appreciated.

We are caring colleagues, Here for Good, and here for each other. WE make a difference! Make a gift and learn more at GiveToVirtua.org/Colleagues. Questions are welcome. Call the Office of Philanthropy at 856-355-0830 or email gratitude@virtua.org.

Global Diversity Awareness Month Celebrations—Week 4

As Global Diversity Awareness month comes to a close, we thank you for joining us at our events throughout the month and sending eCards to celebrate inclusion and diversity at Virtua.

On Tuesday, more than 65 colleagues attended the virtual event, “Just How Do You Include Self-Care in Health Care?!” Hosted by the Black and African American Community and VirtuAsia, the event featured guest speaker Dr. Erika Dawkins. She led an animated conversation about compassion fatigue and shared practices and strategies for prioritizing self-care in health care.

Additionally, on Oct. 24, VirtuAsia celebrated Diwali, the Festival of Lights, which symbolizes the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Colleagues posted well wishes on the [Virtua Colleague Facebook page](#) and sent eCards from the WE Applaud platform.

Virtua’s New Colleague Community is Looking for Founding Members!

Inclusion is about two distinct sets of experiences or states. The first is a sense of belonging and the second is a feeling that one’s uniqueness is valued and integrated. Our Colleague Communities are integral for creating this sense of belonging and leveraging our uniqueness to create a brighter future for all. We are excited to announce that our Colleague Communities are continuing to grow!

We are looking for individuals who would like to become part of the core committee to elevate those from the **Hispanic and/or Latin American Communities (i.e. Latino/a/x/e)**!

Click to [join as a founding member](#). We are excited to introduce this new community to our Virtua colleagues!

Flag and Flower Challenge

Nov. 9, 10 a.m.

The WE Serve Colleague Community invites colleagues to honor veterans at Lake View Memorial Park in Cinnaminson by placing a flag and flower on the graves of veterans.

This movement began in 2015 when 10-year-old Preston Sharp of Redding, CA, visited his grandfather’s grave at his hometown’s cemetery. He noticed the lack of flags or flowers on the graves to honor local veterans and immediately started raising money for flags and flowers, sparking the Flag and Flower Challenge. The challenge moved from Redding to the entire country! To date, Preston has organized the placement of more than 300,000 flags and red carnations on veterans’ headstones. Here in New Jersey, we invite you to Lake View Memorial Park to clean headstones, replace weathered flags and flowers, and express gratitude to those who have served our country.

Click to [view the flyer](#). We look forward to seeing you there!

Thank you to our colleagues and Colleague Communities for recognizing Global Diversity Awareness Month and celebrating our colleagues’ backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.