

## Clinician Update

### October 31, 2024

Listen to an abbreviated [audio version](#) of this issue.

### Voting Day Approaches

After months of campaigning, the 2024 General Election is now less than a week away. In your busy schedules as clinicians, we hope you take time to vote, whether through early-voting options or in-person. As a reminder, please consult the [Voter Resource Page](#) on the Colleague Corner for information about early in-person voting and other information. To check your registration status, locate your polling place, and find other non-partisan resources, visit [New Jersey Votes](#). For more information and the list of early-voting locations by county, visit [vote.nj.gov](http://vote.nj.gov).

To read about the slightly different processes in Pennsylvania and Delaware, visit [vote.pa](http://vote.pa) and the [Delaware elections website](#).

### Using AI to Power Our Information Gathering

Artificial intelligence (AI) has arrived at the Virtua Health Sciences Library. The Discover Box is generated by TDNet AI and it enables you to search as if you were conducting a Google search. Just type words, phrases, a sentence, or a question in the Discover Box. Most of the time, TDNet AI will summarize the first several citations for you and then as you review the citations generated, other search suggestions will be offered. Watch for the Virtua button to get the full text of the paper.

“With the massive amount of health information available online, clinical staff can turn to the specialized services of medical librarians now more than ever,” said gynecologic oncologist Michelle Bilbao, DO. “Our education never stops, and we are always seeking to learn.”

Medical librarians Helen-Ann Brown Epstein at Virtua Marlton, Virtua Mount Holly, and Virtua Voorhees, and Sophia Kim at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes School of Nursing, and Virtua Willingboro, are always ready to research your requests.

“Their support is of vital importance for patient care and our trainees,” said Dana Supe, MD, VP/CMO of Virtua Mount Holly and Virtua Willingboro Hospitals. “October is National Medical Librarians Month, and I would like to recognize our librarians and their generous support.”

Contact Sophia Kim at VOLOL at [skim2@virtua.org](mailto:skim2@virtua.org) and Helen-Ann Brown Epstein at [hepstein@virtua.org](mailto:hepstein@virtua.org).

## Virtua Sports Medicine Surgeon Leverages Study Data During Fluid Shortage

As reported [here in ORTHOWORLD](#), Sean McMillan, DO, sports medicine surgeon at Virtua Reconstructive Orthopedics, and a team of surgeons and researchers just completed a study that found the use of needle arthroscopes for visualization during a partial meniscectomy led to a nearly fivefold reduction in arthroscopic fluid compared to procedures that use traditional arthroscopes. The data has been helpful as health systems face a nationwide shortage of arthroscopic and intravenous solutions caused by the closing of a Baxter facility affected by flooding from Hurricane Helene.

Fortunately, Virtua does not source our solutions from Baxter, and therefore we presently have stable supplies. That said, as reported in [last week's Clinician Update](#), Virtua has implemented conservation strategies to help us manage our solution supplies during this nationwide shortage.

“We’ve been on a stringent protocol to be judicious with the amount of fluid we use,” said Dr. McMillan. “Our study is timely and shows a way that we can maximize our supplies to benefit our hospitals and surgery centers. Because we’re not wasting extra fluid, we can perform more surgeries and help more people.”

The randomized study of 68 patients was accepted by *Surgical Technology International* and is expected to be published in the coming month.

## Virtua's Digestive Health Strategy Featured in Case Study

Health care consultancy firm Sg2 recently published a [case study](#) on the strategic development of [Virtua's Digestive Health program](#). Virtua utilizes Sg2 intelligence and analytics to anticipate trends and gain insights into local market dynamics. As a result of extensive strategic planning, Virtua has optimized digestive health services and established two new subspecialty clinics: the [Virtua Crohn's & Colitis Center](#) and another dedicated to treating GERD and esophageal motility. Congratulations to the team for this recognition.

To learn more about the study and its findings, click [here](#).

## Findings From Internal Audit of CME Programs

Virtua has been auditing current programs that are categorized as Regular Scheduled Series to ensure these programs are compliant with current policies as well as following the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education integrity standards. Some preliminary findings have uncovered a gap in knowledge regarding these standards, which are designed to ensure CE:

- Serves the needs of patients and the public
- Presents learners with only accurate, balanced, scientifically justified recommendations
- Assures learners can trust accredited CE

- Creates a clear and unbridgeable separation between accredited continuing education and marketing and sales

Preliminary findings also have identified violations of Standard 2 of the ACCME Integrity Standards, which prevents commercial bias and marketing. Promoting a new service cannot be part of a CE activity and *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* may not be awarded. Faculty may not actively promote or sell products or services that serve their professional or financial interests during accredited education. To help ensure that we abide by these standards, our CE Department is requesting your assistance. If you want to market a service, this must be done outside the CE activity and there must be a clear separation from the CE activity and discussion about a new service. You can accomplish this in several different ways:

- Forgo awarding CEs for that session. Withhold the CE link so learners cannot complete surveys to obtain their certificate.
- Be awarded only partial credit for that session. For example, if your activity is awarded 1.0 credits, mention at the beginning of the session that this session will only be worth 0.5 credits and remind your learners that when they complete the survey, to please select 0.5 credits. Additionally, faculty need to make clear to the learners that the CE session is over before discussing any new services.

If you have any questions, please contact [cme-cne@virtua.org](mailto:cme-cne@virtua.org).

## Reminder: Complete the Practicing Excellence Experience Program

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](mailto: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 was the absolutely best doctor I have ever seen in my life. He cared. He had a great bedside manner. He was personable and it was a great visit. I'm glad I met him.” (Nishi K. Pandey, DO)

“He is a very smart person, and an amazing doctor who I've been seeing for over 20 years now. Always makes you feel like he is not only your doctor, but also your friend. So glad I found him! (Dennis Piccone, DO)

“Dr. Lee is a fantastic doctor. He's extremely thorough and on top of his game.” (Paul P. Lee, MD)

“Every single professional treats me with genuine warmth, a great sense of humor, and friendship. They are all competent, centered, and thorough in their clinical and administrative implementation. Each and every staff member shows compassion and empathy for and establishes a relationship with me. They

patiently answer all my questions. I feel safe, heard, loved, and cared for by Dr. Duca and her entire staff from the minute I walk in until the minute I leave.” (Maria Duca, MD)

“I felt heard.” (Anastasia V. Guerrini, PA)

## Deadline for *Philly Mag's* Top Docs of 2025 – Nov. 8

If you have a colleague who you'd like to see included in the **2025 Top Doctors issue of *Philadelphia Magazine***, there's a short time left to make that happen. The magazine partners with health care researcher Castle Connolly to create a list of top doctors. Nominations are open year-long, but to make the deadline for consideration into the May 2025 Top Doctors issue, Castle Connolly has announced that the **nomination window will close Friday, Nov. 8.**

The polling is open to all licensed physicians in America. You can 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.

- 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](#).
- Physicians wishing to nominate someone can register here: <https://providers.castleconnolly.com/login>

Congratulations to the 100-plus Virtua-affiliated physicians selected for *Philadelphia Magazine's* Top Docs list in 2024, listed [here](#).

## Virtua in the News

### Famed Chef Spotlights Superfoods in Virtua Video Series

Iron Chef and James Beard Award-winner Jose Garces has launched a new series of short videos highlighting the nutritional benefits and preparation possibilities of four “superfoods.” Co-produced by Virtua, the bite-size culinary clips can be found on Chef Garces's social media channels, including [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).

“I've had the good fortune to get to know Chef Garces and see first-hand how dedicated he is to advancing communities of wellness,” said Virtua President and CEO Dennis Pullin. Dennis [interviewed Garces](#) last year on his “Here for Good” podcast. Garces also appreciates Virtua's commitment to healthful eating.

Read in [The Trentonian](#), [Metro Philadelphia](#), and [Philadelphia Business Journal](#).

## **Virtua Among “Most Wired” Health Systems Nationwide**

Virtua has been recognized among the 26 “Most Wired” hospitals and health systems nationwide by the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives. *Becker’s Hospital Review* reports that Most Wired organizations “have adopted and deployed information technology to improve patient safety and health outcomes.” They also have “displayed the highest and most innovative uses of technology.” Click to [view the complete list](#) from *Becker’s Hospital Review*.

## **Virtua Featured in Coverage of Mental-Health Chatbots**

Sam Weiner, MD, chief medical officer of VMG, cautioned against using ChatGPT and other generative AI chatbots for therapy, due to the potential for harmful responses. As a safer alternative, Virtua offers patients a mental health support tool called Woebot. This AI-powered app “has been shown to improve depression and anxiety, as a supplement to conventional therapy—particularly late at night when human therapists aren’t available.” Read in [The Washington Post](#). Additionally, Woebot Health executive Trina Histon, PhD, discussed how the app is used at systems like Virtua. Listen to the [Becker’s Podcast](#).

## **Dennis Pullin Named Among N.J.’s Top 25 Health Care Influencers**

A statewide business publication has again named Virtua President and CEO Dennis W. Pullin, FACHE, to its annual list of New Jersey’s most influential health care leaders. “Pullin is continually recognized around the state and around the country as being a thought leader in health care and a leader that anyone in any sector should emulate,” the story states. Read in [ROI-NJ](#).

## **Virtua Executive Recognized Among Top Nursing Officers**

A leading industry publication has recognized Virtua’s Catherine Hughes, MSN, RN, among the country’s “Chief Nursing Officers to Know.” The SVP and chief nursing executive oversees nursing operations across Virtua. Catherine played a crucial role in integrating nursing operations after Virtua’s 2019 acquisition of Lourdes Health System. A Virtua colleague for two decades, she was instrumental in the organization’s pandemic response, and recently helped secure Magnet redesignation for three Virtua hospitals, among other achievements. Read in [Becker’s Hospital Review](#).

## **Virtua VP Highlights Orthopedics Training Programs**

Kathleen Gillespie, VP of orthopedics and neurosciences, shares the benefits of creating fellowship and residency programs in orthopedics. For example, these programs can enhance the quality of care, encourage innovation, and prepare future specialists in the field. Listen to this [Becker’s Healthcare Podcast](#).

## **Dry Weather Can Trigger Breathing Problems**

The ongoing stretch of arid air has affected people with asthma, COPD, and other respiratory issues. Pulmonologist Heather Giannini, MD, discussed the impact on patients and what people can do to protect themselves. Patient-care coordinator Michelle Shaw and her son Bryce, who both have breathing issues, shared how they’re coping with the dry conditions. Watch on [CBS 3](#).

## **New Study Finds Standing for Long Periods Can Be Unhealthy**

Research has consistently shown that sitting for long periods is harmful to people's health. Now, a new study shows that standing for long spans also has negative health consequences. Kevin Curl, MD, cardiologist and director of cardiac rehab, discussed these findings and offered advice on how to incorporate periods of movement throughout each day. Read in [PhillyVoice](#).

## **Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation Extended to Nov. 8**

Currently, 73% of eligible Virtua colleagues who are **supervisor level and above and all employed health care providers** (physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) have completed the annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Attestation. The Attestation is available on the home page of Virtua Works under *Announcements*.

Click to view the [updated Conflict of Interest policy](#). Should you have any questions, contact Raquel Ravelo, corporate compliance auditor, at 856-355-0739.

## **Give for Good Campaign Launches Tomorrow**

Virtua Health's annual colleague giving campaign, [Give for Good](#), launches **Nov. 1**, bringing 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 donation goes directly to the designation selected. 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](mailto:gratitude@virtua.org). As always, thank you for your consideration and kind support.

## **Upcoming Calendar**

### **CME: Liver Disease and Transplantation, Nov. 13**

The Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine will host a CME session entitled [Liver Disease and Transplantation](#) on **Wednesday, Nov. 13, from 12 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.** at the Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Rehab Solarium, 1600 Haddon Ave., Camden. The live activity is designated for *3.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*

Target audience: physicians, physician assistants, advanced nurse practitioners, medical residents, medical fellows, and nurses.

To register, go to The Virtua Learning System (VLS) and search: Liver Disease and Transplantation. For more information, click [here](#).

## **Help Your Patients Kick the Smoking Habit**

Virtua offers two smoking cessation programs designed to get patients the information and tools they need to quit smoking for good. Each program is run by tobacco treatment specialists and tailored to work on their terms.

### **Individual Counseling Sessions**

Most insurance plans cover eight individual counseling visits throughout the year with no out-of-pocket costs. Attendees benefit from close monitoring during their journey.

### **Small-Group Education and Support Sessions**

Our small-group education and support sessions are free and don't require insurance. Patients may [Register for the next class](#) on **Tuesday, Nov. 19**, from 5 to 7 p.m., at the Virtua Health & Wellness Center — Voorhees, 200 Bowman Drive, Suite E132.

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

November is [National Veterans and Military Families Month](#). Created in 1996 by the Armed Services YMCA and the U.S. government, this observance recognizes the collective service and sacrifices made by veterans and their families. To learn more about or to join Virtua's WE Serve Colleague Community, contact [WeServeColleagueCommunity@virtua.org](mailto:WeServeColleagueCommunity@virtua.org).

It is also [National Family Caregivers Month](#), created in 1994, this recognition highlights the more than 53 million caregivers, people of varying ages, taking care of loved ones, from older adults to people with disabilities.

Finally, November is [National Native American Heritage Month](#), declared in 1916, celebrating the diverse traditions of Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and other island communities. To learn more about the history of colonialism, Indigenous ways of knowing, and settler-Indigenous relations, click [Native Land Digital](#).