

Clinician Update

September 9, 2021

NJHA Report: Unvaccinated Six Times More Likely to be Hospitalized

This week, the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA) announced that unvaccinated individuals are nearly six times more likely to be hospitalized with severe COVID illness than vaccinated individuals, according to an analysis of statewide COVID-19 cases in August.

On July 2, New Jersey marked an all-pandemic low of 267 hospitalized COVID patients. That number has climbed with the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant, and has reached more than 1,100 patients as of today.

“The data confirms once again: Vaccination is the strongest weapon we have to protect against serious COVID illness and hospitalization,” said NJHA President and CEO Cathy Bennett. “Our state is experiencing a new influx of COVID patients, but this increase is different than our earlier surges—because now we know that many of these hospitalizations are preventable simply by getting the safe and effective COVID vaccine.”

To read the complete announcement from the NJHA, please click [here](#).

Virtua Patient Shares COVID Story, Urges Vaccination

Last week, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* spoke with a former Virtua Health patient about her harrowing COVID-19 experience while pregnant. The South Jersey resident—who requested to be anonymous—contracted COVID in early May, and one week later was on a ventilator.

After a months-long ordeal, including an airlift to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, emergency cesarean, hemorrhage, lung embolism, and ongoing rehabilitation, the woman said, “Physically, every day is an improvement. But mentally, I’ll never be ‘recovered’ from this.” She now encourages everyone, particularly pregnant women, to get vaccinated—a message endorsed by the CDC, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Society for Maternal and Fetal Medicine, and Virtua’s own Dr. Nicole Lamborne, vice president of clinical operations for women’s services.

To read Dr. Lamborne’s advice and the complete article, please click [here](#).

Milestone in COVID Care: Virtua Treats 1,000th Patient with Monoclonal Antibodies

Last week, Virtua reached a new landmark in the fight against COVID-19: it has treated 1,000 people with monoclonal antibodies, a leading-edge therapy.

The treatment helps high-risk patients with mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19, enabling them to avoid hospitalization, or worse, in most cases and speed their recovery.

“This is a wonderful milestone in caring for our most vulnerable neighbors,” said Dr. Martin Topiel, chief of infectious diseases. “Battling this pandemic requires a multi-pronged approach, and this is one of several ways Virtua is helping our community survive this dangerous virus.”

Last December, Virtua became one of the first in the region to offer the life-saving treatment. In recent

weeks—with the Delta surge—the team has been treating about 14 to 18 people per day, seven days a week.

The therapy, given by IV infusion, is for patients who are not yet hospitalized. It's available to a broad age group, depending on a person's risk factors. For example, those age 65 or older are eligible, as well as people who are 55 or older with certain chronic conditions, including kidney disease, diabetes, immunosuppressive disease, or receiving immunosuppressive treatment. People of any age can qualify if they have a BMI of 25 or higher, or if they are pregnant.

For more information, visit [Monoclonal Antibody Treatment at Virtua](#) or call **888-847-8823**.

Virtual COVID-19 Support Groups

Virtua and its partner Carebridge continue to assist colleagues—including our clinicians—and the community with staying resilient with ongoing challenges, particularly as we emotionally navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic.

We invite you to view the following virtual support groups for health care workers via Carebridge:

Stress Check-Ins

- [Thursday, Sept. 16](#)
- [Monday, Sept. 20](#)
- [Wednesday, Sept. 29](#)

Grief and Loss Check-Ins

- [Friday, Sept. 10](#) (tomorrow)
- [Tuesday, Sept. 14](#)
- [Wednesday, Sept. 22](#)
- [Tuesday, Sept. 28](#)

For current pandemic information, including webinars, recordings, and articles, visit myliferesource.com and click on the COVID-19 Resource Center. Carebridge confidential services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call **800-437-0911** or email clientservice@carebridge.com.

Additionally, Virtua offers a virtual support group for South Jersey residents who have recovered from or are currently experiencing COVID-19.

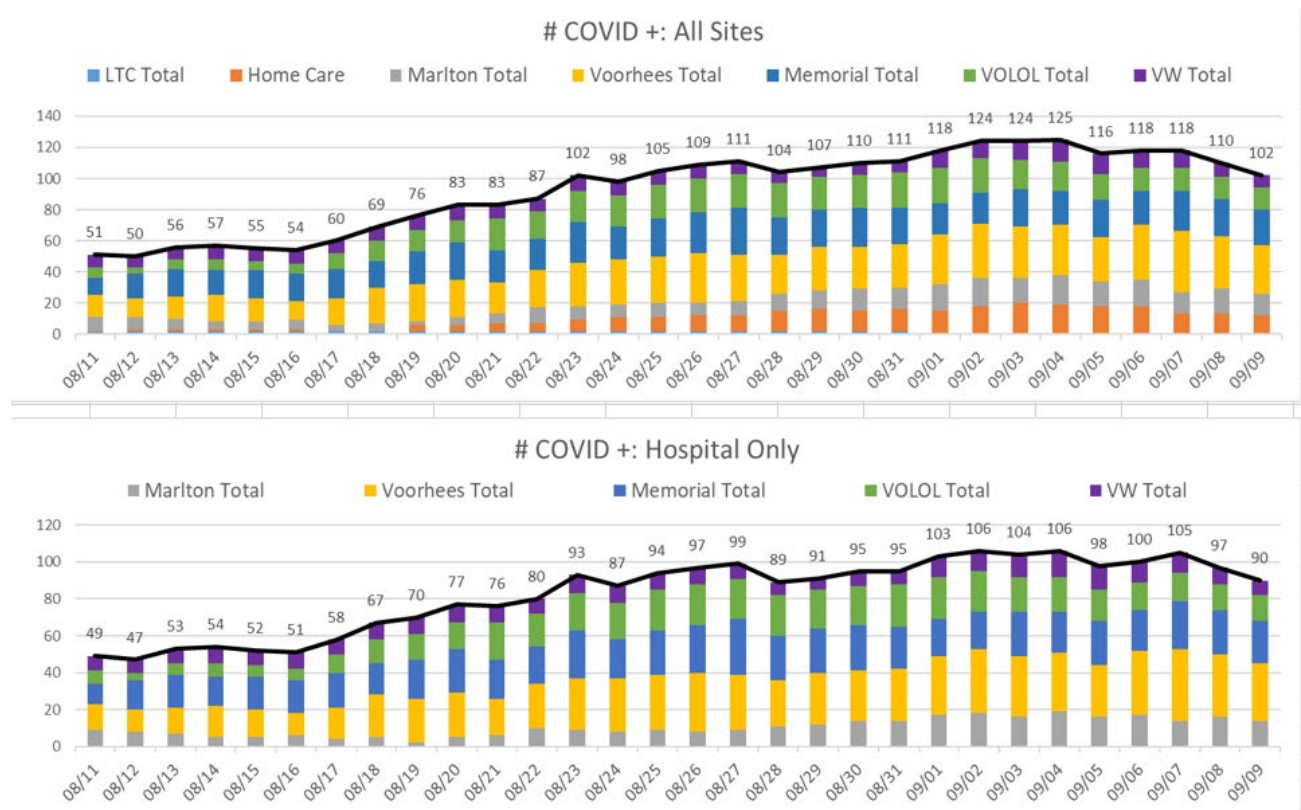
Dates: Sept. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, and Dec. 13

Time: 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

If you, a patient or a loved one is facing ongoing physical and emotional challenges caused by COVID-19 and would be interested in group support, please register by emailing ACSupport@virtua.org.

A Zoom link will be sent upon registration.

COVID-19 Census



Latest COVID-19 Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is now 1.02.
- The total number of cases as of 3 p.m. are as follows:
 - Burlington County: 42,094 cases
 - Camden County: 53,529 cases
 - Gloucester County: 29,241 cases
- COVID-associated mortality for Camden, Burlington, and Gloucester counties: 2,722.
- The state's Vaccination Overview dashboard reports 11,272,945 doses of vaccine have been administered. Today's *New York Times* reports 53% of all Americans have been fully vaccinated; 82% persons over age 65 are fully vaccinated.
- The New Jersey Department of Health is offering a weekly email update on all things related to COVID-19. To subscribe, visit: [NJ COVID-19 Updates \(govdelivery.com\)](https://www.nj.gov/health/communicable-diseases/covid-19/)

Top Docs Polling

"If you were ill, who would you go to?" That was the guiding question asked of physicians for the "Top Docs" issue of *SJ Magazine*. The results are now in and are published in its September 2021 issue, its biggest issue of the year, and [shared here](#). Congratulations to Virtua's Top Docs!

Looking ahead, November will offer the opportunity to vote for "Top Docs for Kids," to be featured in the magazine's March issue.

Additionally, polling is now open for *Philadelphia Magazine's* "Top Docs" issue. The magazine partners with health care researcher Castle Connolly to create a list of top doctors rated by physicians, who can vote [here](#) any time of the year, but each round closes in January. It is open to all licensed physicians in

America who are able to nominate physicians in any medical specialty and in any part of the country. That issue will release in the spring, but to view the current list of Virtua physicians who have made the most recent list, [click here](#).

This Saturday: Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium

Last call for Virtua’s Cardiology for Primary Care Symposium, a virtual event held in conjunction with Rowan School of Medicine. The annual conference takes place on **Saturday, Sept. 11** from 7:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. Virtual doors open at 6:30 a.m. for vendor exhibits and networking. The event is open to primary care practitioners, physicians, NPs, PAs, and nurses on seeking to learn the latest news and trends in cardiovascular care. In addition to 5.5 AOA Category 1-A and 5.5 AMA PRA Category 1 credits™, this year, the program offers 5.5 nursing contact hours. **Clinicians**, [click here](#) to register for Key Essentials: Cardiology for Primary Care CME – Fall 2021. **Nurses**, [click here](#) to register for CEUs.

Good for You

If you were down at the beach this weekend, you may have seen our colorful banner flying overhead. It said “Hello Good” and it directed folks to our Careers section of our website to join our team — an amazing team, I might add, focused on creating so much good in South Jersey!



Virtua’s brand position is about being here for good, about making good things happen for others. The source of that good is our people, or more specifically, you. You, as a colleague of Virtua, make good

things happen by how you show up each day, how you play your part, and how you make others feel. Whether you are a healer, a supporter, a person who connects others to what they need, or a person who works behind the scenes to ensure things go smoothly, you are a doer of good and nothing works as well as when all of us work well together.

Given the last 18 months and the transitional period we face with the pandemic still very much a part of our daily lives, it is clear that we need ways to refresh our energy, calm our anxieties, and find all the good possible. We need ways to reconnect to purpose and reminders of our shared humanity.

We need to welcome good with open arms.

Finding good is an intentional practice that can leave us feeling inspired and energized. So, *Hello Good* is a rallying cry for all of us to pause, look for, and see more good! Good in each other as colleagues. Good in the care and services we provide. Good in the accomplishments we achieve together. Good in our commitment to our community.

Hopefully the more we look for good, the more we'll see it. The more we see it, the more we will want to share it proudly. And the more we share it, the more others will want to be a part of it.

In the days and weeks to come, this idea of acknowledging good will become clearer. We are also going to have some fun with it, because the truth is, we all need a little more levity in our lives.

Are you up for a good challenge...literally? Let's "Fall" back into this season with our lens set to "good" and see what it shows us.

--Chrisie Scott, SVP and Chief Marketing Officer

A Grant for Good: Making a Lasting Impact for Bilingual Learners

Virtua is grateful to the PNC Foundation, which through its "Grow Up Great" program has made a generous grant to create an Early Childhood Bilingual Literacy Program within Virtua's pediatric rehabilitative services.

This grant will allow Virtua to partner with seven Camden child development centers whose young students are dual-language learners (Spanish-English) living in monolingual (Spanish) homes, providing language and literacy development training for educators, parents, and other caregivers. Libraries will be set up to include bilingual books. Additionally, through a series of Toddler Time sessions, children will practice language and literacy skills in a social setting.

Many thanks and *muchas gracias*, PNC Foundation, for giving us this grant for good. Visit virtua.org/gratitude to learn more about how we invite our community to make a lasting impact through philanthropy.

Sharing the Good News

- **A Greater Sense of Purpose** — South Jersey clinicians, including three Virtua staff members, discussed how their pandemic experiences have changed them. Cardiologist Dr. Troy Randle and nurses Steven Webster and Grace McClelland spoke of both challenges and benefits—such as gaining a fresh perspective on their priorities, and feeling strong appreciation for their

colleagues. Grace says, “The people you work with really make the difference.” View this *Courier-Post* story [here](#).

- **Virtua Performs 1,000th TAVR** — In case you missed it in our Aug. 19th issue of *Clinician Update*, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital has reached an important milestone—the hospital's renowned heart team recently performed its 1,000th transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR). The story was picked up by the media. Read the *ROI-NJ* story [here](#).
- **Virtua Named a Top Workplace in State and Region** — Two prestigious publications recently recognized Virtua as an outstanding place to work! *Forbes* honored our organization as a “Best Employer” for the second year in a row; read [here](#). And the [Philadelphia Business Journal](#) included Virtua among its “Best Places to Work” for the 15th time based on input from colleagues across the organization. Congratulations to all!

Five Stars for Virtua Mount Holly (Memorial) Hospital

A five-star review is always a Hello Good moment! It brings us joy when hear from our patients—both local and those visiting the area.

Today we share a five-star review from Phillip B., a grateful patient from Virtua Mount Holly Hospital:

“I was visiting the area for work and ended up needing surgery. I came to Virtua not having any expectations, as this was the closest hospital to me at the time. I was pleasantly surprised on how well they took care of me. Dr. Gregg Baranski and his team took good care of me, and I had a successful surgery. He followed up with me every day while I was on the recovery floor.

“I had some amazing nurses and I would like to give a shout out to Lauren and Mike on the 4th floor. They were extremely professional and had a great bedside manner. They made my visit memorable and attended to my needs. Thank you!”

First impressions are important, as they last well beyond the initial moment. We appreciate when patients take the time to share their first Virtua experience with a Google review.

If you’re looking to bring together the power of gratitude and the human connection we provide, please consider joining [The Lasting Impact Project](#).