

Research Department Offers Patients Shot at Cutting-Edge Solutions



Virtua Health’s Research Department offers your patients the opportunity to participate in clinical trials in a number of therapeutic areas. The department combines Lourdes’ experience focusing on cardiac research with Virtua’s broader reach, including COVID-19 therapies and oncology trials through Penn Medicine.

Trial sponsors – device makers, pharmaceuticals, and government – have come to appreciate our ability to provide clean data. Historically, most trials at Virtua were phase 3 or post-market studies. COVID-19 has provided Virtua with the opportunity to start participating in more phase 2 trials to offer more treatment options to our patients. Virtua is currently participating in 138 research projects. Presently, cardiology is actively enrolling individuals in 21 trials.

Research at Virtua is led by Robert Post, MD, MS, chair, department of family medicine, and physician scientist, Virtua Center for Learning; AnneMarie Palatnik, AVP of clinical learning & academic affiliations; Jillian Hoopes, director of research administration; and Donna Palazzo, manager of research. Cardiac trials are guided by Director of Electrophysiology Darius Sholevar, MD.

“Research is at the heart of modern medicine. Without research, we would never know the best modalities to treat disease or the most efficient and cost-effective ways to diagnose various conditions,” said Dr. Post. “Take the COVID-19 pandemic, for example. Thanks to the research done here at Virtua, and at hospitals all over the world, we were able to find the best treatments to treat COVID, study the strategies to prevent it, and most importantly, develop and study the vaccines that have saved countless lives and can finally get us back to normal.”

“While evidence-based medicine is a critical element of conventional care, advances in therapy require investigation of new modalities in new populations. In order to provide the best possible care, we must sometimes push beyond the limits of known data,” said Dr. Sholevar. “At Virtua, the diligent work of the research physicians and coordinators give our patients access to novel therapies that would not otherwise have been available. In order to continue to provide the best possible care to our patients, Virtua Health remains committed to outstanding quality care and ongoing clinical research.”

For more information on cardiac trials, contact Dr. Sholevar at dsholevar@virtua.org.