

# COVID-19 Clinician Update

## Thursday, May 21

### SOPs for Resumed Surgical Procedures Now Available

As Virtua prepares for the resumption of elective procedures next week, a set of standard operating procedures (SOPs) are being circulated among clinicians. Developed by Virtua's senior leadership team from across all areas of the organization, the SOPs focus on maintaining patient and clinician safety in our COVID-19 environment, including pre-procedure testing, patient self-quarantining, and infection prevent measures for both elective and urgent surgeries.

As we embark on this journey, we understand that some patients may be hesitant, even fearful, of contracting COVID in our facilities and offices. This apprehension is understandable, and we must be compassionate in our communications and actions. The good news is that research shows 86 percent of consumers trust their local health care experts—you—to be their source of coronavirus-related information.

As you discuss the infection prevention measures taken in our hospitals and offices, including masking, social distancing, increased sanitization, contact-less registration and payment, and separate treatment areas for COVID and non-COVID patients, we hope your confidence reduces the fear of your patients, especially those who held off getting necessary treatment due to the pandemic.

For convenience, we have posted the SOPs to [Digital 411](#).

You also can find them individually here:

- [SOP for Inpatient COVID-19 Testing](#)
- [SOP for Virtua Medical Group \(VMG\) Outpatients' Pre-Procedure COVID-19 Testing](#)
- [SOP for Non-Virtua Medical Group \(non-VMG\) Offices](#)
- [SOP for Urgent Outpatient Pre-Procedure COVID-19 Testing](#)

Note, these SOPs are subject to change as conditions warrant, and we hope to simplify them in the future.

### By the Numbers

The following charts reflect the latest figures for statewide and Virtua-site cases of COVID-19 and related response efforts.

# QUICK STATS

Virtua hospitals have successfully discharged **1,145** COVID/PUI inpatients.

Virtua has conducted **16,832** COVID tests.

NEW JERSEY		VIRTUA HEALTH	
New Cases	1,073	Total Cases*	252 (-9)
Total Cases	151,472	Rule Outs/Patients Under Investigation (PUIs)	54 (+14)
New Deaths	96	COVID-19 % of Census	24%
Total Lives Lost	10,843		
Hospital Discharges**	286		

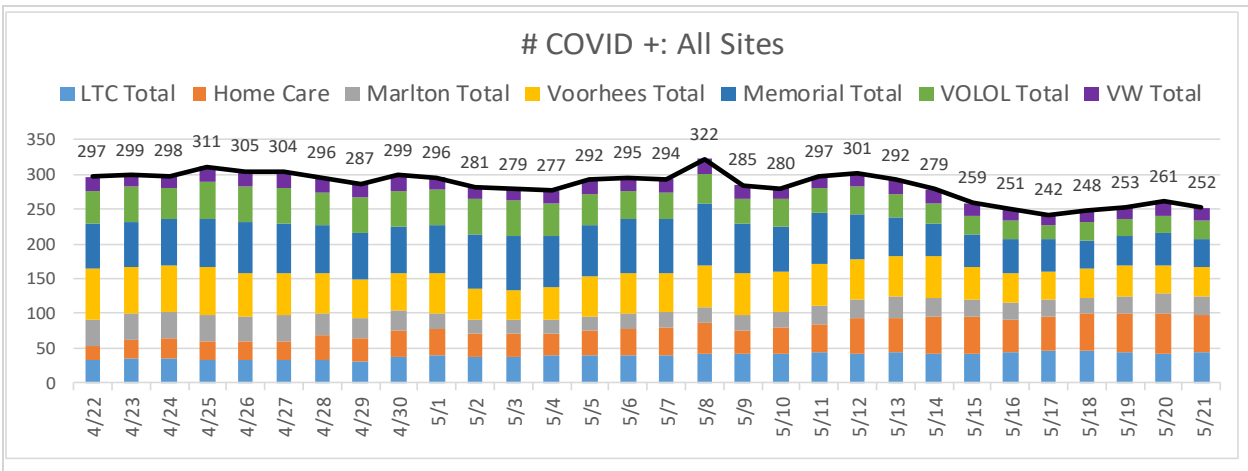
**Data Snapshot**

\* Virtua cases include hospitals, home care and long-term care.

\*\*Hospital COVID/PUI discharges in NJ based on prior 24 hours.

Source: Department of Health New Jersey COVID-19 Dashboard

*COVID+ graphs now display most recent 30 days, rather than trending back to first patient in March.*



Locally, in the tri-county area, there have been a total of 668 deaths, as of 1 p.m. on May 21. The total number of cases are as follows:

- Burlington County 4,097
- Camden County 5,818

- Gloucester County 2,002

## **Behavioral Health Services Across System Meeting Essential Needs**

This month is Mental Health Awareness Month, and it comes at a time when the need for resources is at an all-time high as the community deals with feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation.

Behavioral health services are offered throughout the Virtua network, including [inpatient psychiatric services at the Memorial and Willingboro hospitals](#). [Outpatient services](#) for children and adolescents and their families are available at our [CASTLE](#) programs with locations on our Berlin and Camden Health & Wellness campuses. Select VMG primary care practices have mental health clinicians embedded as part of the integrated treatment team. Virtua's [Medication Assisted Treatment](#) program, also located on the Berlin campus, provides services for individuals seeking treatment for opiate and alcohol use disorders. Additionally, our VPP affiliate, the [Center for Family Guidance](#) (CFG), has three outpatient offices, located in Marlton, West Deptford, and Westampton.

All of Virtua's affiliated providers have responded to the COVID-19 crisis by converting the majority of services to telemedicine and telephonic care and offer a variety of behavioral health care providers, including psychiatrists, advance practice nurses, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors, and even licensed marriage and family therapists. Many insurances are accepted, including Medicare, Aetna, Horizon, and Cigna, with new providers now covering services, and with better access, that were not covered before.

## **No VPP/LSHN Webinar Tonight**

Please note that there is no VPP/LHN webinar for tonight. The next webinar is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, and will focus on service reactivation. Skype details will be sent via Outlook invite.

## **2020 Healthcare Training Graduations and Awards**

This time of year is typically one for graduations and award ceremonies, but we can all agree that this year is definitely not typical. Nonetheless, the training of new clinicians is more important than ever before. We are proud that Virtua has the opportunity to be a teaching site for medical students, and this year two of our physicians were presented with awards for their outstanding contributions to training the next generation of clinicians.

- Dr. Michelle Salvatore received Drexel University's 2020 Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award. Dr. Salvatore is a VMG laborist, who serves as our liaison for clinical OBGYN education at Virtua Memorial Hospital.

- Virtua cardiologist Dr. Peter Bulik received the Golden Apple Award for teaching excellence at this year's Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine commencement ceremony.

Congratulations to the Class of 2020 and to those who helped them get there!

## Virtua Physicians in the News

Virtua clinicians are offering their expertise and perspective on the COVID-19 pandemic through interviews in the following media outlets:

- **Innovation in Action:** 6abc spoke to Dr. Adam Glasofer of the Virtua Innovation Center about Plexiglas intubation boxes in use at all Virtua hospitals thanks, in part, to a grandfather-grandson team from West Berlin. [Watch here.](#)
- **The Dangers of Medical Distancing:** The *Philadelphia Business Journal* reports that people are delaying medical care for serious health concerns due to fear of exposure to the coronavirus. The story quotes Virtua's Dr. Reginald Blaber, Dr. Ibrahim Moussa, and Dr. Sam Weiner. [Read here.](#)
- **Five Facts about Women's Health:** Virtua gastroenterologist Dr. Krysta Johns-Keating debunks the myth that, "If you have digestive issues, it must be a gluten allergy." [Read her expert advice here.](#)

## NIH Announces COVID-19 Pregnancy Study

The National Institutes of Health will conduct a multipronged study to understand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic during and after pregnancy. Researchers will analyze the medical records of up to 21,000 women to evaluate whether changes to health care delivery that were implemented as a result of the pandemic have led to higher rates of pregnancy-related complications and cesarean delivery. They also will seek to establish the risk of pregnant women with COVID-19 infection transmitting the virus to their fetus. The study also will track more than 1,500 pregnant women confirmed with COVID-19 infection, monitoring their health for six weeks after childbirth.