




March 25, 2020

COVID-19 Update for Virtua Affiliated Clinicians

New Video Messages from Virtua Leadership

Video Series for our Community We know there is a lot of anxiety and uncertainty in our community. In an effort to keep the public updated on important conversations around the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Virtua created a series of videos which we have shared on our various social media channels as well as our website.

Please click on the images below to learn more.

Who needs to be tested for COVID-19?	This is how staying at home and social distancing will flatten the curve.	What you need to know about the coronavirus pandemic and how Virtua Health is preparing.
		
Jen Khelil, DO, MBA SVP and Chief Medical Officer	Tarun Kapoor, MD SVP Clinical Integration	

Updated Algorithm Now Posted

On Monday (March 24), we updated the algorithm for the treatment of patients with suspected COVID-19. This replaces the previously posted version from March 16. The differences between the two documents are identified in red and reflect more detail regarding at-risk populations as well as a reduced focus on transmission source. It also includes numbers for all Virtua emergency departments.

Expanded Testing

The United States has experienced a very limited capacity in both testing and processing with a national shortage of testing kits and backlogged results.

Virtua is exploring various possibilities for making tests and test results more readily available. This is a collaborative effort among the region's health care leaders, and we are in regular contact with state and local agencies, as well as other health care organizations, regarding this goal. Whether it is participating with county health departments in public screening sites or sharing important resources and information, it is essential that these efforts be coordinated and well communicated so that care is provided in an orderly fashion, especially for those most in need.

Virtua has operationalized a referral-only drive-up coronavirus testing site. Testing has been prioritized for health care workers, first responders, and high-risk groups with COVID-19 symptoms once they have been screened by a Virtua provider through our Access Center hotline (888-VIRTUA-3).

Telehealth

Virtua's Digital Health team continues to refine its telehealth solution. They have been increasing capacity with a team of COVID-19 telemedicine providers, currently relying on employed physicians. If you have patients you believe would benefit from a COVID telemedicine evaluation, you may direct them to virtua.org/evisits.

Face Shields

In following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, Virtua is having multiple discussions around conservation of face shields. By developing a collection process, we can then run the face shields through a solution made with Hydrogen Peroxide, coupled with multiple wash cycles; we would fully disinfect the shields and distribute them back to staff.

New information comes out about how the virus spreads all the time. We will continue to monitor the CDC guidelines regarding PPE changes and will adjust our protocols and practices accordingly. More to come.

PPE Donations

We have received a number of queries on whether Virtua is accepting donated PPE. Virtua has established a direct email to assist with triaging donations. Please send any questions about PPE donations to COVIDhelp@virtua.org.

Food Access

Virtua's Food Access program remains dedicated to the community during these unprecedented times. In an effort to find safe and efficient solutions to provide produce and staple dry goods to those that need it most, we have made some temporary changes to our Mobile Farmer's Market.

For the time being, we will be repurposing our Mobile Farmers Market into a mobile food pantry, giving away FREE bags of produce and staple non-perishables at our regular market stops, in addition to a new temporary market site at Virtua Mount Holly.

Due to current supply limitations, we are only able to give away bags to the first 50 adults at each location. We will be communicating this to our regular market customers only, as our hope is for people to not leave empty handed. We will be trialing this for the next two weeks and will then re-evaluate.