

Communication Etiquette

Vocera Collaboration Suite is the preferred inpatient clinical communications tool at NM. It offers instant, HIPAA-compliant, two-way messaging between providers and the care team. Messages and images are discoverable. Communications via Vocera should be courteous and professional.

General Reminders

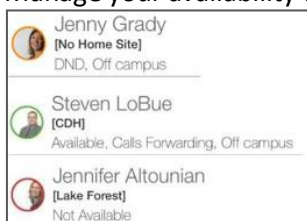
- Join NMMOBILE Wi-Fi network and set Location Services to “always” for Vocera to work properly.
- Use Vocera to send HIPAA secure texts, make calls and attach patient information and images.
- To avoid errors, a text should only include information about one patient at a time.
- Reference or attach patient information and room number to clarify which patient you’re discussing.
- Do not call or text someone who is unavailable (a red circle around their profile picture) or who is on do not disturb (orange circle). Available contacts have a green circle.



- Texting is preferred. Call for time-sensitive needs only. However, each unit should follow existing communications workflows.
- Do not place an urgent call unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- To reach a physician or APP after-hours or for urgent issues, follow your location’s on-call procedures.
- If you need a response back within a specific timeframe, include that information in the initial message.
- Avoid extraneous replies or pleasantries after clinical information is exchanged, like “thanks,” or “got it” to avoid extra texts for the recipient to review. The sender will see a read receipt.
- Vocera texts facilitate routine notifications (such as bed assigned or test completed), but should not be used to place orders. The Joint Commission prohibits the use of secure text messaging to receive or place orders. Place orders in Epic only.

Tips for Physicians and APPs Who Use Personal Devices


Manage your availability to avoid unwanted contact:



- Set yourself to do not disturb (orange circle) to silence calls and/or text notifications. Texts will still come through.

- Set up call forwarding for two important reasons:
 - It is NM best practice to set up call-forwarding to your cell phone and check “When I am Offline” to make sure you don’t miss any calls while you are on-shift but not on NMMOBILE Wi-Fi.
 - Forward calls to your colleague for the next shift, or to another number when you cannot take calls, such as during a procedure.
 - Turn off call forwarding and log out of Vocera at the end of your shift. This is the only way to make sure you are not contacted in Vocera. A red circle will appear around your profile picture to indicate that you are not available.
 - Call or message hospital nursing or ancillary staff through Vocera only.
- Remember to assign yourself to your patients within Epic.
- Do not text orders to staff. Orders must be entered directly into Epic, per The Joint Commission. Haiku is available to enter orders on your mobile device.
- Use Vocera to communicate with staff instead of direct-dialing them. Direct dial numbers do not follow the unit’s call workflow and will not be forwarded to the next available number in the call chain.

Tips for Staff Who Use Shared iPhones or Vocera Badges

- It is acceptable to send a text to request a routine patient care order, but not to receive one. When you text a physician about a patient care order, it is important to clearly request that the physician place the order in Epic. For example, type “Can you place an Epic order for...” or “I will look for the order in Epic.”
- At the start of your shift, assign yourself to your patients within Epic and the nurse call staff assignment.
- Do not use the broadcast feature (speaker phone).
- Do not use Safari to browse the Internet.
- When composing texts, keep in mind SBAR approach to be clear and concise. An SBAR template is available in Vocera to organize your communication. (Click the  icon to compose a message, then search SBAR in templates).



- Encourage patients to use the call light to request assistance from nursing. The call light will route the alert through the unit’s call escalation pathway to ensure a quick response.
- Whiteboards
 - Nurses will put their phone number on the board.
 - PCTs will write their names on the board. Encourage patients to use the call light to contact them.

Use Key Functions

Urgent calling

- Urgent calls break through other calls when the recipient is on-campus (they do not break through when the recipient is off-campus). Urgent calls should only be used for life-threatening situations.
- The recipient can accept or decline the call.
- Continue to follow your hospital's procedures for emergency codes.

Do Not Disturb

Do Not Disturb functionality is available for use under your profile.

- Examples of when to use do not disturb:
 - Breaks.
 - Bedside or sterile procedures.
 - Sensitive conversations with the patient or family members.
- If you use a shared iPhone and you set do not disturb, do not hand-off your phone to someone else. The phone is password-protected and cannot be shared once you have signed into it for your shift.

Message Escalation

If a message is viewed but does not have a timely response, use the following escalation path:

- Verify that the message has been viewed. If it has, call the clinician directly.
- If no response with the follow-up call, the primary nurse should contact the designated leader on unit. Once the leader has been contacted, add them to the message.
 - If it's after hours and there is no leader on, contact the house supervisor. Once contacted, add them to the message.
- If no response, the designated leader on unit should contact the house supervisor. The house supervisor will reach out to the clinician. The designated leader should add the house supervisor to the message.
 - If the house supervisor was the designated leader, they should go directly to the next step.
- If no response, the house supervisor should contact the director of the appropriate clinical area and/or the chief nurse executive. The director or CNE will reach out to the clinician.
- If no response, the director and/or CNE will facilitate consultation with the department chair or medical staff president until an effective action or patient care intervention is achieved.

Vocera Resources

Find tip sheets, videos and other support materials in the following locations:

- On **NM Interactive**: NMI Home > Departments > Information Services > **Vocera**
- On **Physician Forum**: Physician Forum Home > **Vocera Resources**
- In the **Content section in Vocera**: Go to navigation bar at the bottom > More > Content
- If you need help, call MyNM Service Center at **312.926.4357**