

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER  
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY MANUAL**

**VOCERA COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM**

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<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>06/14/11</b>	<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>AD115</b>
<b>Cross Referenced:</b>		<b>Origin:</b>	<b>Information Systems/Nursing</b>
<b>Reviewed Date:</b>		<b>Authority:</b>	<b>Chief Nursing Officer</b>
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**I. PURPOSE:**

To provide guidelines for proper use and care of Vocera Communications System.

**II. DEFINITION:**

Vocera Communication System:

1. A wearable voice controlled communications device that operates on a wireless Local Area Network (LAN).
2. Vocera Communications Badge – a wearable voice-activated communications device that operates over a wireless network.
3. DND – Feature - “Do Not Disturb” (DND): appropriate in any situation in which an auditory stimulus might interfere with a procedure or any other like circumstance. If a staff member will be unavailable for an extended period of time, they should alert the charge nurse or supervisor prior to any anticipated DND periods lasting beyond 30 minutes.
4. Hold Feature - “Hold”: appropriate in situations where privacy/confidentiality may be an issue.

**III. POLICY:**

1. The Vocera Communications System provides hands-free, instant voice communication throughout HRMC’s facility. The Vocera system consists of two components: the Vocera System Software, which controls and manages call activity, and the Vocera Communications Badge.
2. The Vocera Communications Badge is to be used primarily for internal communication, business related external communication, and Vocera voice messaging.
3. All staff members using the badge are required to (1) attend the one hour training prior to using the badge; and (2) sign the Vocera User’s Agreement.
4. Staff members assigned a Vocera badge are required to wear the badge at all times while on duty using an approved Vocera lanyard or clip attachment.
5. To request a new user setup, Managers should complete the Vocera sections of the Access Control form and send it to the Service Desk.
6. Students, interns or agency nurses here for several months on a regular basis may, at their manager’s request, be set up with a standard Vocera account and badge. They will be required to attend the next Vocera training session prior to use.
  - a) Students or Interns here very sporadically or for short durations will not wear a badge.
  - b) Agency Nurses that are here only once or very seldom will still be required to wear a badge. Prior to their shift, the Charge Nurse will briefly instruct them regarding a few basic functions (e.g., how to make a call, how to receive a call).
7. To request a user profile to be changed or deleted, the Manager should submit an Access Control form to the Service Desk Ext. 6880.

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8. If a staff member accidentally leaves the premises while wearing the Vocera badge, they must immediately return it to the building. Waiting until the next shift is not feasible. If delayed, notify your supervisor or manager.
9. **Privacy: Vocera users should remain aware at all times that the information shared via the system can be heard at the receiver's end.** Use professional judgment and take reasonable safeguards to minimize the potential for inadvertent or incidental disclosure of patient's protected health information (PHI) to bystanders who may not be authorized to receive such information. Examples of specific safeguards include:
  - a) Paying attention to your surroundings and being aware of bystanders who may overhear your conversation.
  - b) Assuming bystanders may also be present on the *receiver's* end unless the receiver specifically states otherwise.
  - c) Letting the receiver know when you need to transmit patient-specific information, and asking the receiver if they are clear to talk or if they need to move to a private location.
  - d) Asking the caller to hold information until you can move to a more private location – utilize patient room, meeting rooms, offices, etc.
  - e) Lowering your voice/adjust volume controls on the Vocera badge.
  - f) Returning non-essential calls at another time.
  - g) Limiting the information you relay via Vocera to only the necessary items the receiver needs to make appropriate decisions and take appropriate actions within the context of their job.
  - h) Leaving the patient's name out of the conversation whenever feasible, and if you can do so without risking confusion on the part of yourself and the receiver.
  - i) Wearing a headset when appropriate.

**IV PROCEDURE:**

1. Beginning shift activity:
  - a) Sign out their badge on the Daily Vocera Badge Inventory sheet
  - b) Pick up a badge from the designated area
  - c) Obtain a battery from the charging bay
  - d) Place attachment device (lanyard or clip) on the Vocera badge
  - e) Secure the lanyard or clip with the battery
  - f) Wipe the Entire Unit (Infection Control) with PDI Sanicloth Germicidal Disposable Wipes (Order #Q08472) that are damp.
  - g) Put a protective sleeve on the badge.
  - h) Wear the badge six to eight inches from the chin with the silver call button facing out for proper voice recognition.
  - i) Log in & Listen to any existing voice mail messages.
  - j) Add themselves to a group corresponding with their daily assignment.

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2. End shift activity:
  - a) Listen to any final voice mail messages and log out.
  - b) Remove the protective cover and place it in the designated location.
  - c) Disassemble the badge
  - d) Place the badge in the designated location
  - e) Place the battery in the charger
  - f) Take the lanyard or clip and store it in location where it can be located and used when next the Vocera device must be worn.
  - g) Return badge to their department immediately if they accidentally leave the facility wearing the Vocera Badge.
  - h) Sign in the badge on the Daily Vocera Badge Inventory sheet before leaving
3. Use of Lanyard or clip
  - a) A Lanyard or Clip will be issued to all staff. Staff will be responsible for replacement cost if lost.
  - b) Lanyards or clips that are damaged or wear out from daily use will be replaced at no cost to staff.
  - c) Staff should keep their lanyards and clips clean.
4. A headset may be provided to any staff members with sound work-related justifications. Staff members will be responsible for cleaning and maintaining their personal headset and/or earpieces.
5. The system is to be used for hospital communications only – any other use is prohibited.

**Vocera Messaging:**

1. Vocera voice messages should be responded to as soon as possible. At a minimum, staff should check voice mail at the beginning and end of each shift and at least every two to three hours when on duty.
2. Verbal Orders may not be left on Vocera voicemail
3. Emergent messages may not be left on Vocera voicemail.
4. Protected Health Information should not be left on Vocera voicemail for another Vocera user.
5. Staff should take into account that Vocera voicemail is not always the best way to leave a message – especially since some staff may not wear the badges that often, and others may not check for messages more than once or twice a shift.
6. Messages should be deleted once the message is no longer needed, and all messages will be deleted automatically by the system two weeks after receipt.
7. Check your surroundings before playing back voicemail to ensure privacy.

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**Professional Conduct:**

1. Inappropriate, vulgar or malicious nicknames shall not be used when creating Vocera call names.
2. Signing in as another individual or calling/messaging as another individual is prohibited.
3. Intentional destruction or abuse of the Vocera system or functionality is prohibited.

**Care & Maintenance of Vocera Equipment:**

1. Badges are shared devices and should be treated with care.
2. **Failure to return the Vocera Equipment, or damage to any Vocera equipment because of inappropriate use, will result in charges being deducted from the staff member's next pay period check.** (NOTE: Prices subject to change each calendar year. These prices are approximate for 2011).
  - a. Your first lanyard or clip, and earpiece as needed, will be provided by the hospital.
  - b. Badge: full replacement cost of \$400
  - c. Standard Lanyard: \$8.00
  - d. Universal or Pocket Clip: \$5.00
  - e. Protective Sleeve: \$10.00
  - f. Extended Life Battery: \$50.00
3. Badges should be cleaned using the wipes provided at each charging station.
4. **DO NOT IMMERGE THE BADGE IN LIQUID** as this will permanently damage the badge.
5. If a staff member discovers they have accidentally left the premises while wearing the Vocera badge, they must **immediately return it to the building**. Because we share devices, waiting until the next shift is not acceptable. If it will be a few hours before you can get back, please notify your supervisor.
6. A fully depleted battery takes 90 minutes to charge.

**Reporting Badges Not Functioning:**

1. Immediately report problems with Vocera badges and communications to the Service desk Ext. 6880 and your Department Manager.
2. Questions about the use of the badge may be directed to any Super User, Vocera Trainer, or the Vocera Systems Administrator
3. Questions or concerns may also be sent to [hrmcvocera@hrmcnj.org](mailto:hrmcvocera@hrmcnj.org)

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**Vocera Downtime Procedures:**

1. Planned outages can occur when system maintenance or upgrades are required. Users will be notified well in advance of the outage.
2. Unplanned outages can occur due to network or system problems.
  - a. An overhead announcement will be made.
  - b. If an announcement has not been made and the Vocera Genie does not respond, or you are unable to make a call, notify the service desk, Ext. 6880.

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**Vocera Communications User's Agreement**

This document is to be completed and signed at the end of your Vocera Training Class.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the following terms and conditions:

- I have attended a Vocera Training Class.
- I have read and understand the Vocera Communications System Policy & Procedure.
- I understand that this equipment has been purchased for hospital use and I agree to follow the guidelines for use.
- I understand that failure to adhere to the above expectations and policy provisions may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.
- For direct patient-care staff, I agree to have a badge on at all times during my shift.
- I agree to abide by all HIPAA regulations and standards while using the Vocera Communications System.
- I understand that HRMC owns all Vocera Equipment and Accessories. I have been issued either a Lanyard or Clip for my personal use. Lost or damaged equipment, other than normal wear and tear, will be replaced at my expense.

**(NOTE:** Prices subject to change each calendar year. These prices are approximate for 2011).

- a. Your first lanyard or clip, and earpiece as needed, will be provided by the hospital.
- b. Badge: full replacement cost of \$400
- c. Standard Lanyard: \$8.00
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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

