



## CLINICAL POLICY

### Cellular Phones, Portable RF Transmitters, and Cameras

**A. EFFECTIVE DATE :**

June 21, 2021

**B. PURPOSE :**

To provide for a safe environment in patient care areas by avoiding interference problems between radio frequency transmitting devices and patient care equipment and to protect patient privacy and confidentiality in accordance with HIPAA Privacy and Security requirements.

**C. POLICY :**

Due to possible interference between patient care equipment and the use of cellular phones and radio frequency transmitters, John Dempsey Hospital limits the use of cellular phones and radio frequency transmitters in patient care areas.

1. Cellphones are not allowed in patient areas in NICU.
2. In other areas than NICU, cellular phones may be used in all areas of the hospital provided the user maintains a distance of more than 3 feet or an average adult arm's length from any operating medical device.
3. In other areas than NICU, at the discretion of the unit manager or caregiver, if the usage of a cellular phone is deemed to distract caregivers, distract a patient's roommate, or create an unsafe or unpleasant atmosphere, the caregiver may insist that the cellular phone be turned off.
4. Radio frequency transmitters including CB radios, walkie talkies, police, paramedic, maintenance, and other similar hand-held, portable transmitters are restricted from use in all patient care areas. Radio frequency transmitters, used by hospital personnel, may be left "on" to receive messages but should not be keyed or used to transmit, when entering patient care areas.

**D.** In emergency situations only, emergency response personnel who must use a radio frequency transmitter in a patient care area, should maintain a distance of 10 feet from any patient care equipment when transmitting.

**E.** Wireless telephones (not cellular phones) that are low-power, localized to a given area, and supplied by the Telecommunications Department, may be used in patient care areas, following approval by both the Telecommunications and the Clinical Engineering Departments. Visual, audio, or recording of patient data recorded through any medium is covered under Health Center policy 2014-03

**F. SCOPE :**

None

**G. DEFINITIONS :**

None

**H. MATERIAL(S) NEEDED :**

None

**I. PROCEDURE :**

All employees are responsible for helping to enforce this policy. Employees who notice the presence of cellular phones in patient care areas should inform the owner that these devices must not be used NICU or in other patient areas within 3 feet or an average adult arm's length of any operating medical device.

Employees who notice the presence of CB radios, walkie talkies or other RF transmitters in patient care areas should inform the owner that these devices must not be used in patient care areas (in patient rooms).

Cell phones should not be placed on or near medical equipment, because they may cause the medical device to malfunction.

Staff may not use a cell phone during patient care activities.

Police, paramedic, fire fighter, maintenance and other hospital personnel may leave radio frequency transmitters "on" to receive messages but should not key or activate the device in patient care areas. Non-compliance should be immediately reported to Public Safety.

In emergency situations, police, paramedic, fire fighter, maintenance or other hospital personnel who must use a radio frequency transmitter in a patient care area, should maintain a distance greater than one 10 feet from any patient care equipment when transmitting.

At the discretion of the unit manager or caregiver, if the usage of a cellular phone is deemed to distract caregivers, distract a patient's roommate, or create an unsafe or unpleasant atmosphere, the caregiver may insist that the cellular phone be turned off.

Hospital personnel may use wireless telephones that are low-power and localized to a given area. These wireless telephones must first be approved by both the Telecommunications and the Clinical Engineering Departments.

Hospital personnel should contact Clinical Engineering any time they feel that cellular phones or RF transmitters may be causing interference with medical devices or causing unexplained changes to device settings, displays, or in any way affecting their operation.

**J. ATTACHMENTS :**

None

**K. REFERENCES :**

Electrically Powered Non-Patient Care Equipment Policy #11-030

**L. SEARCH WORDS :**

None

**M. ENFORCEMENT:**

Violations of this policy or associated procedures may result in appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with University By-Laws, General Rules of Conduct for All University Employees, applicable collective bargaining agreements, the University of Connecticut Student Code, other applicable University Policies, or as outlined in any procedures document related to this policy.

**N. STAKEHOLDER APPROVALS :**

On File

**A. COMMITTEE APPROVALS :**

NONE

**B. FINAL APPROVAL :**

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>1. <u>Andrew Agwunobi, MD (Signed)</u><br/>Andrew Agwunobi, MD, MBA<br/><b>UConn Health Chief Executive Officer</b></p>  | <p><u>07/19/2021</u><br/>Date</p> |
| <p>2. <u>Anne D. Horbatuck, (Signed)</u><br/>Anne D. Horbatuck, RN, BSN, MBA<br/><b>Clinical Policy Committee Co-Chair</b></p>  | <p><u>07/21/2021</u><br/>Date</p> |
| <p>3. <u>Scott Allen, MD (Signed)</u><br/>Scott Allen, MD<br/><b>Clinical Policy Committee Co-Chair</b></p>   | <p><u>07/14/2021</u><br/>Date</p> |
| <p>4. <u>Caryl Ryan (Signed)</u><br/>Caryl Ryan, MS, BSN, RN<br/><b>Interim Chief Operating Officer, JDH</b><br/><b>VP Quality and Patient Services &amp; Chief Nursing Officer</b></p> | <p><u>07/12/2021</u><br/>Date</p> |

**C. REVISION HISTORY :**

Date Issued: 10/95

Date Reviewed: 5/97, 2/00, 10/03, 05/06, 03/07, 11/08, 9/09, 08/13, 3/21

Date Revised: 5/07, 1/15, 05/18, 3/21, 6/21