

GREENVILLE HOSPITAL SYSTEM
MANUAL OF POLICY DIRECTIVES

POLICY: S-104-13

TITLE: Use of Cell Phones and Other Portable Communication Devices

DATE: June 22, 2010

- I. Policy Statement. In an effort to maintain a safe environment for patients, visitors, and employees by minimizing unnecessary distractions, it is the policy of the Greenville Hospital System to limit the use of personal cell phones and other portable communication devices during worked time. Cell phones and other portable communication devices should never be used in any way that would distract from patient care or customer service.

This policy applies to any portable device that makes or receives phone calls, leaves messages, texts messages, accesses the Internet or allows for the reading of and responding to email.

- II. Guidelines.

- A. Personal Cell Phones or Similar Devices. During work time, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion with the use of personal communication devices as is expected with the use of any business phone. Personal phone calls (including text messaging) during the work day, regardless of the phone or device used, are not appropriate and can interfere with productivity and be distracting to others. Employees are expected to make personal calls on non-worked time and to inform family and friends of the policy.

Generally, personal cell phones should not be kept in work areas. However, decisions to allow employees to keep phones and/or answer personal cell calls and/or messages will be made at the department level based on department needs. If department managers allow employees to have cell phones during work time, the sound should be turned off. Calls should generally be returned during break time or with supervisory approval.

- B. GHS-issued cell phones or similar devices. When business needs demand immediate access to an employee, GHS may issue a cell phone or similar device for work-related communications.

- C. Orders, Consult Requests and Critical Values/Information: Orders, consult requests and critical values/information require personal voice conversation. **Information that needs to be communicated immediately should not be texted or left on voice mail.**

If a physician is paged regarding an order, a consult request and/or critical information but does not respond within a reasonable timeframe, a second request should be made through the GHS Call Center at 455-8760.

- D. Cell phone cameras: Use of cell phone cameras is included in the intent of Policy S-50-03, "Releasing Information to the Media" and other policies that specify that patients may only be photographed for officially approved uses and must provide written consent before being photographed.

III. Responsibility

- A. Employees are responsible for understanding and following all aspects of this policy.
- B. Management staff is expected to serve as role models for proper compliance and to ensure that employees understand and follow the expectations related to cell phones and other portable communication devices.