

# UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA • IRVINE HEALTHCARE

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE: *CELLPHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE*

Date Effective: 1/13

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### **I. PURPOSE**

The use of a personal cell phone, Bluetooth, Blackberry, iPhone, iPod, or other personal electronic device (PDA) for personal use may present a hazard or distraction to the user, co-workers, patients, and visitors. This policy is meant to ensure that the use of these devices will not disrupt hospital operations and supports patient safety and service.

### **II. BACKGROUND**

The use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices has become widespread, including use by patients, visitors, employees, faculty and staff. Guidelines for the use of these devices are important to ensure patient safety, consistency of use for faculty and staff, fairness and reasonable accommodation for our employees. The guiding principle of providing patient-focused care first must prevail in applying all policies, including the use of cell phones.

### **III. POLICY**

Unless otherwise authorized, personal cell phones and other personal electronic devices must be in the silent or vibration mode at all times, in all patient care areas and while interacting with patients and visitors. Cell phone use at UCIMC will primarily be for work-related activities. While incidental personal use is allowed, it should be limited to break and lunch periods in non-patient care areas whenever possible.

In addition to telephone services, many cell phones or personal electronic device providers offer additional functions and/or services including, but not limited to text messaging, web browsing, digital photography, audio-visual, and television. Employees should not use any of these services except during breaks and lunches and in non-patient care areas. Employee use of a cell phone or other digital electronic device camera may never be used for patient photography.

We expect that our patients and visitors will use common courtesy along with their cell phones and we will remind them if needed. Patient or visitor use of the camera function of their cell phone is permitted, providing the photography does not include UCI faculty or staff or other patients.

Department/unit managers have the option of establishing more restrictive Department Policies governing their unique departments, operations, patients, and visitors.

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### **REFERENCES**

- UCI Care
- HIPAA. Photography and Multi-media recording of patients

- HIPAA. Use of patient identifiable Health information on portable computing and electronic storage devices

Original Implementation Date: 09/09

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