



Policy

TITLE: Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices in the Clinical Areas

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/1/10 Revised 3/7/22

APPROVER(S): Dean of Medical Education, OCS Head of School

NUMBER: Reference # OCS 100.16

I. Purpose

It is the policy of Ochsner Clinical School (OCS) to provide guidelines and direction for the acceptable use of personal cell phones and other personal electronic devices in the clinical areas. The use of personal cell phones and other personal electronic devices in the clinical areas must comply with the guidelines established in this policy.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all Ochsner Clinical School students.

III. Policy Statements

There are times when a student must take care of personal issues during scheduled training hours or wish to use a personal electronic device for purposes other than clinical education. However, personal telephone calls must be kept to a minimum and should be made during breaks and/or meal periods. The use of personal electronic devices for purposes other than medical education should only be used during breaks and/or meal periods. This will minimize disruption of business operations and help ensure the safety of students and patients.

IV. Policy Implementation

A. Personal Cell Phones, Headsets/Earpieces and Other Personal Electronic Communication and Entertainment Devices:

Personal cell phones and other personal communication or entertainment devices should be turned off or placed in the silent mode within Ochsner facilities, including public areas, in offices and patient care areas. Headsets or earpieces are not to be worn, even when not in use, during active clinical hours unless the device is approved as work-related equipment. Students should keep personal calls and text messages to a minimum and clearly out of public view. Unless it is an emergency, personal calls and text messages should be made during breaks and meal periods and away from clinical, treatment and front office areas. Students rotating in a patient care area or in an area where they are unable to be reached will have a message taken and forwarded to the student. Every effort will be made to assist a student in receiving an emergency call.

B. Cell Phone Usage during Break or Meal Periods:

If a call or text must be made in a public or shared area, students are to maintain conversations that are as brief as possible to minimize distraction to others in the area. Students are expected to respect fellow staff members and follow instructions if reminded of this policy.

Students are expected to adhere to any directive from the clinical supervisor relative to cell phone and electronic device utilization.

C. Restricted Use:

In some hospital departments, particularly those areas where patient care is delivered, cell phones may be prohibited. In these instances, personal cell phones and other messaging devices are to be left with the student's other personal items. If a student has a personal reason to carry a cell phone in a designated prohibited area on a particular day, the student may request from their supervisor a time-limited exception to carry the cell phone. These requests are approved solely at the discretion of the supervisor and must be made in advance.

D. Usage to Conduct Hospital Business:

The use of some cell phones has been authorized to meet patient care or hospital operation's needs. Cell Phones approved for patient care business use should be set to vibrate or silent mode.

E. Cell Phone or Other Personal Devices with Photo/Recording Capabilities:

In order to protect the confidentiality of our patients, students and employees, the taking of photographs or the recording of conversations in the workplace is strictly prohibited.

V. Enforcement

- A. Patient care and safety are vital to the Ochsner Mission therefore all students have a role in the enforcement of this policy.
- B. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.
- C. Exceptions to this policy may only be granted by the student's supervisor manager or higher.
- D. Failure to comply with this policy may result in progressive discipline up to and including termination of employment for employees or termination of contract or service for third-party personnel, students or volunteers.