SUBJECT/TITLE: USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines on the use of cell phones and other electronic equipment at UIHC and to alert UIHC staff members to their potential interference with electronic patient care equipment.

DEFINITIONS: Electronic patient care equipment: An electrical device that is intended to be used for diagnostic, therapeutic or monitoring in a patient care area.

POLICY:

Electromagnetic Interference (EMI) is known to be a potential source of interference with electronic patient care equipment. The use of cellular phones, two-way radios, television sets, computers, and other electronic equipment in close proximity to electronic patient care equipment may trigger alarms or cause malfunctions.

PROCEDURE:

A. Cell Phones
   1. Restricted Areas
      Cell phones are not allowed to be used and shall be turned off in the Main OR and Ambulatory Surgery Center operating rooms.

   2. In all other areas of the hospital, cell phone use is restricted to areas greater than three feet from electronic patient care equipment. Signs will be posted advising of this restriction at the entrances to inpatient areas, procedure rooms, and other locations where electronic patient care equipment is common.

B. Two-Way Radios
   Two-way radio transmission is restricted to areas greater than three feet from electronic patient care equipment.

C. Other Electronic Equipment
   There are no restrictions on the use of other electronic equipment (i.e., computers, televisions, video games); however, staff should be alert for signs of interference with electronic patient care equipment.

D. In the interest of patient safety, staff shall comply with these requirements and enforce the requirements with patients, visitors, and vendors, etc.
E. Clinical staff shall complete a Patient Safety Net (PSN) report if they suspect the function of any electronic patient care equipment has been affected by EMI.

References


ECRI Institute, Cell Phones and Electromagnetic Interference, Executive Summary, Volume 3, January 2009

NFPA: Health Care Facilities Handbook 2005. General definitions Section 3.3.139

ECRI: Health Devices Hazard Report. EMI may cause false asystole alarms in certain Philips IntelliVue monitoring products. 2011 Sept, 313-314

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