

LaFleur Brooks' Health Unit Coordinating

7th edition

Chapter 04

Communication Devices and Their Uses

Lesson 4.1

Using the Telephone

1. Define the terms in the vocabulary list.
2. Write the meaning of the abbreviations in the abbreviation list.
3. List and apply eight rules of telephone etiquette.
4. Identify circumstances in which it would be necessary to use the hold and transfer buttons on the telephone and demonstrate the use of each button.
5. List six items to be recorded when taking a telephone message and explain why it is important to accurately record and communicate messages.

Lesson 4.1

Using the Telephone (cont'd)

6. Explain the steps required when receiving a critical (panic) value message.
7. Describe briefly how to plan a telephone call to a doctor's office regarding a patient.
8. Identify two methods of leaving messages for hospital personnel and doctors and provide guidelines for each method.
9. List the information that would be found in the hospital telephone directories, including the doctors' roster.

Telephone Etiquette

- Answer the telephone promptly and professionally.
- Identify yourself properly by stating location, name, and status.
- Speak into the telephone.
- Give the caller your undivided attention.
- Speak clearly and distinctly.
- Always be courteous.

Telephone Etiquette, cont'd

- When you do not know the answer, state that you will locate someone who can help the caller.
- If necessary to step away or answer another call, place the caller on hold after asking permission to do so and waiting for an answer.

Use of the Hold Button

- Locate information or a person for the caller.
 - Return to the person on hold every 30 to 60 seconds to ask if they wish to remain on hold or prefer to leave a number for a return call.
- Answer other phone lines.
 - Return to the first caller after asking the second caller if they would hold or offer that caller an option to be called back.
- Protect patient confidentiality.
 - Conversations held in the nursing station often involve confidential patient information and should not be overheard.

Use of the Transfer Button

- Always explain to the caller why it is necessary to transfer their call.
 - Provide the name of the person or department along with the direct number in case they are disconnected.
- Place the caller on hold.
- Press the transfer button.
 - Dial the correct person or department
- Advise the person answering that a call is being transferred.
 - Provide the caller's name. When it is certain that the connection is complete, quietly hang up.

Telephone With Several Lines and a Hold Button



HUC Handles Telephone Communication for Unit



Taking Messages

- Be sure to record the following:
 - Who the message is for
 - The caller's name
 - The date and time of the call
 - The purpose of the call
 - The number to call if a return call is expected
 - Your name
- Messages must be relayed in a timely manner!

Critical (Panic) Messages

- All hospitals have a protocol for handling critical (panic) value messages that include:
 - The lab technician verifying the value
 - Immediately calling the results to the licensed provider or the designated responsible personnel (nurse or nursing unit)
 - A read back of the critical value by the person taking the message is required.
 - The name of the person providing the message and the person taking the message should be documented.

Placing Telephone Calls

- Have information and the patient's chart handy so facts will be available when questions are asked.
- Write down the main facts that need to be discussed and the telephone number to be called, should the line be busy and the call needs to be placed later.

Placing a Call Regarding a Patient

- Write down:
 - Name of the person to be called
 - Name of the person requesting the call
 - Name of the patient
 - Reason for the call
- Before placing a call requested by a nurse to a doctor:
 - Alert the nurse that the call is being placed.
 - Ask that he or she stay on the unit or designate someone else to take the call in their place.

Voice Mail

- When leaving a message on voice mail:
 - Speak slowly and distinctly.
 - Include the name of the patient and/or the doctor.
 - Give first and last names and spell the last name.
 - If including a telephone number or lab values, speak slowly and repeat numbers twice.
 - Always leave your name and telephone number.
 - Repeat both twice (beginning of message and end of message).

Text Messages

- Texting to a telephone or pocket pager is another way of leaving messages for doctors or off-duty personnel.
 - Keep texts brief and to the point.
 - Do not use abbreviations that may not be understood.

Telephone Directories

- These directories are typically available in the hospital:
 - Alphabetized directory of extension numbers for telephones in the hospital
 - Department numbers and key personnel
 - Directory of individual pocket pager numbers
 - Doctors' roster

Lesson 4.2

Communication Systems and Devices

10. Describe three uses of robots in the hospital setting.
11. Identify at least five capabilities and benefits of using wireless communication systems in the hospital setting and list three wireless communication systems used in hospitals.
12. Explain what is meant by “mass communication” and identify what events would require its use.
13. List four uses of GPS tracking systems.
14. Identify three biometric authentication methods for patient identification and list three benefits of its use.

Lesson 4.2

Communication Systems and Devices (cont'd)

15. Explain the use of common equipment and communication devices that may be used on a nursing unit.
16. Identify three supply transportation systems for sending supplies, such as some laboratory specimens, some medications, and other items, to and from nursing units and hospital departments.
17. Discuss possible repercussions of using the redial button on a fax machine on the nursing unit.
18. List the four basic types of computers that may be used in the hospital.
19. Explain the main difference in the HUC role when the EMR is in use versus paper charts.

Lesson 4.2

Communication Systems and Devices (cont'd)

20. Discuss how the health unit coordinator may be notified when an HUC task needs to be performed on a patient's record, when the electronic record has been implemented.
21. Discuss the possible consequences of the inappropriate use of e-mail and/or social networks on hospital computers.
22. List three types of documents or items that the HUC would scan to be entered into the patient's electronic record.
23. Discuss the uses of and the HUC's responsibilities in the maintenance of the nursing unit census and bulletin boards.

Hospital Robots

- Newest "members" of hospital support staff, they are used to:
 - Dispense medication.
 - Make deliveries.
 - Visit patients.

Hospital Robots, cont'd

- RobotCart
 - Transports materials like food, x-ray films, and linens throughout the hospital
- McKesson ROBOT-Rx
 - Automated system that stores and dispenses single doses of drugs for entire hospitals
- Robot doctors
 - Used by doctors to examine patients from continents away with interactive robots and hi-tech visuals

Wireless Communication Systems

- Advantages include:
 - Hospital workers are able to quickly reach area law enforcement as well as each other for help.
 - Nurses' stations are quieter and less hectic as calls are made directly to caregivers.
 - Can be integrated with third-party applications, such as nurse call systems and in-building PBX systems, which allows nurses to respond faster to patient needs.
 - Patients and families have the ability to contact the nurse directly from both inside and outside the hospital.

Wireless Communication Systems, cont'd

- More advantages:
 - Can take the call directly without leaving the bedside, even in the intensive care unit
 - Easy to use – naturally spoken commands – hands-free conversations
 - No need to memorize telephone/extension numbers
 - Saves money by lowering or eliminating phone and pager costs

Examples of Wireless Communication Systems

- Vocera® B2000 Communications Badge
- Vocera Smartphone
- Vocera mobile applications
- Locators
- Polycom's SpectraLink wireless telephone
- Ascom 914T Pocket Receiver

A Locator Device



Mass Communication

- All hospitals in the United States have developed disaster or emergency preparedness plans that outline:
 - Chains of command
 - Communication procedures
 - Other important protocols to keep the hospital running in a crisis, such as:
 - A multiple injury car, train, or airplane accident
 - A bombing, earthquake, infectious disease outbreak, etc.

Patient Care Technology (Tracking) Systems

- GPS Tracking Systems
 - Locate key equipment
 - Maintain inventory
 - Track patients and personnel
 - Provide the status of bed availability and the nearest skilled staff resources needed
 - Improve efficiency of transport and order turnaround times to departments
 - Provide the information needed to effectively move patients to appropriate levels of care and discharge them in a timely, safe, and cost-effective way.

More GPS Tracking Uses

- For condition monitoring, such as in temperature controlling equipment (refrigerators, freezers, warmers)
 - Tags are used in pharmacies, blood banks, laboratories, operating rooms, and nursing units where proper temperature conditions are critical.
- Monitor the temperature of warming blankets in operating room and on nursing units
 - Temperature monitoring tags can be programmed to record temperature as frequently as desired.

Biometric Authentication

- Ultra-Scan fingerprint technology
 - When a patient is already in the system and returns, admissions staff identifies him or her using a fingerprint and date of birth.
- Fujitsu PalmSecure
 - Patients that are unconscious or not alert enough to identify themselves – a simple palm scan is most effective.
- Iris Recognition Systems
 - Improve issues of potential patient fraud, lower the risk of writing in the wrong medical record, and improve workflow.

Common Equipment/Communication Devices Used on Nursing Units

- Patient Call System Intercom
 - Provides a method of hearing patients' requests without going into their rooms
- Pocket Pagers (digital)
- Pocket Pagers (voice)
 - Dial the pager number and clearly state the message and call back number twice.

Pocket Pager



Common Equipment/Communication Devices Used on Nursing Units, cont'd

- Voice Paging System
 - The hospital switchboard operator, upon request, pages someone on a speaker that is heard in every area of the hospital.
- Copy Machines
 - Usually available on or near nursing units for making copies of written or typed materials

Common Equipment/Communication Devices Used on Nursing Units, cont'd

- Document Shredders
 - To shred patient forms that contain confidential information
- Label Printer
 - A machine that prints patient labels from information entered into the computer

Supply Transportation Systems

- Specimens obtained by a painful or difficult procedure should never be placed in a transport system.
- Medications that do not break or spill may be transported in a hospital transport system.
 - Pneumatic tube system
 - Telelift system
 - Dumbwaiter (may be found in older hospitals – used to send larger items, such as food trays, etc.)

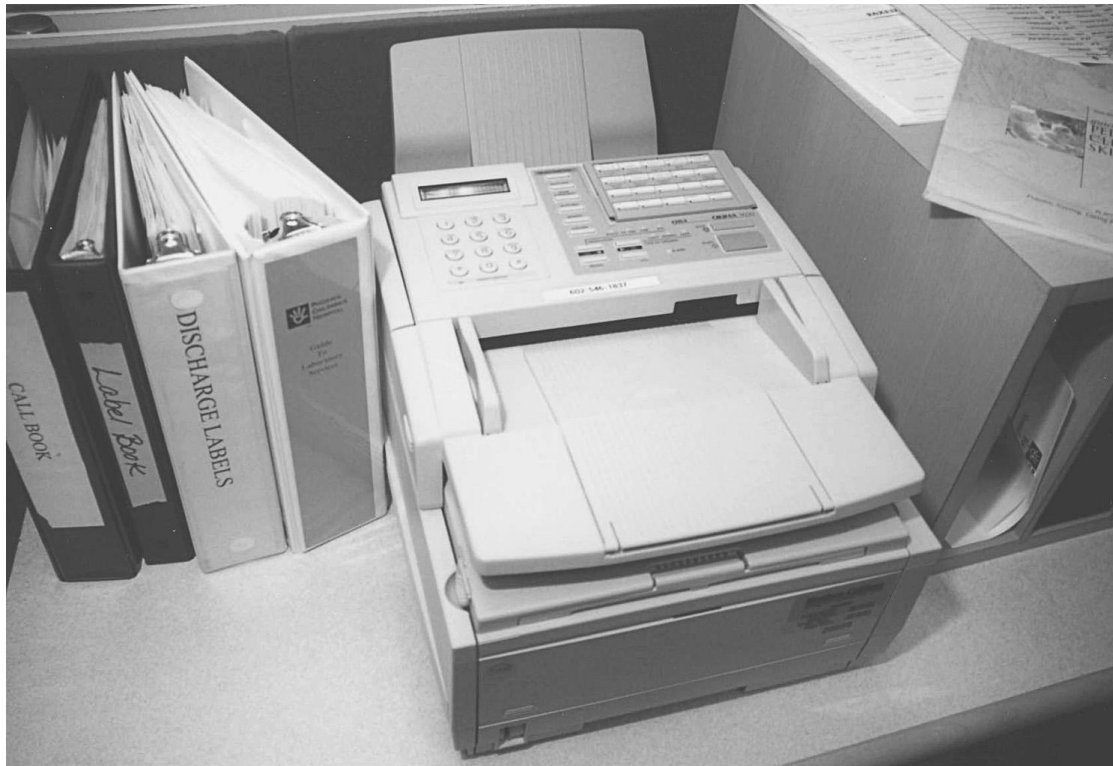
A Pneumatic Tube System



Facsimile (Fax) Machine

- A telecommunication device that transmits copies of written material over a telephone wire from one site to another
 - Fax Redial Option – Do not use the redial option. It may send a document to the wrong location. Patient information is extremely confidential, and if it is sent to the wrong location, an employee may be disciplined or terminated.

Facsimile (Fax) Machine



Basic Types of Computers Used in the Hospital

- Desktop
 - Non-mobile personal computer (PC) intended to be used at the same dedicated location day after day
- Laptop or Notebook
 - Portable computer
- Toughbook
 - Laptop designed to withstand vibration, drops, spills, extreme temperature, and other rough handling that can be taken into patient rooms for bedside documentation
- Tablet PCs (also called pen tabs)
- Handheld computer
 - Portable computer intended to be held and used in a hand

Computer Stations on the Unit



Mobile and/or Bedside Computers

- Workstation on wheels (WOW)



Using a Pen Tab



Computer Use with the Paper Chart

- Remove printed documents from printer as soon as possible.
- Place printed documents in appropriate patient's chart.
- Downtime requisitions used during times when computer is shut down

E-mail

- Used to send and receive messages
- Frequently used for communication between the HUC and hospital personnel and departments within the hospital

Social Networks

- More hospital and health care systems are using social media, such as Facebook or Twitter.
- Social media tools are a powerful way to listen to patients and obtain a better understanding of them, as well as an easier way to reach the media for news stories and press releases.

Document Scanner

- Used to transmit images of documents/pictures into a computer system
- Used to track and store electronic documents and/or images of paper documents
 - The HUC scans documents into the patient's EMR – the documents are certified by the health information technician before they become a part of the patient's permanent EMR.

A Document Scanner



Nursing Unit Census Board

- Small white board in nurses' station
- Displays unit room numbers, patient names, admitting doctor names, and the name of the nurse assigned to each patient
- HUC must update continuously

Nursing Unit Bulletin Boards

- Found at the nursing station, it shows:
 - Policy changes
 - Education updates
 - Schedules of staff development classes, workshops, in-services, and/or meetings
 - Computer updates
 - Personal events, such as weddings, showers, birthdays, and holiday parties
- The HUC may be given the responsibility of maintaining the education nursing unit bulletin board.