Vocera FAQs

Question	Answer
What is Vocera?	Vocera Collaboration Suite (VCS) is a mobile application that offers HIPAA-compliant texting and calling to improve clinical communication and collaboration.
Why should I use Vocera?	Vocera is the preferred NM clinical communications tool. It enables you to quickly and efficiently find and message physicians and staff with patient information that is not possible with a page or an unsecured text. The more physicians who use Vocera, the more powerful it is.
How does Vocera replace what we already do and help us do it better?	Vocera can improve communication activities currently completed in In Basket or via paging by enabling quick connections with context. Vocera also offers an enterprise-wide directory by name, location or role, message read-receipt and access to the application on your phone or computer.
Who can use Vocera?	Employed and independent physicians, residents and APPs can download Vocera on their own devices. Inpatient care teams at Central DuPage Hospital, Delnor Hospital, Lake Forest Hospital and Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital also have access to Vocera on shared iPhones. The process to roll out care team access at other hospitals is underway.
How do I sign up?	Download Vocera Collaboration Suite today from Google Play or the App Store. Log in using your NM user ID and password. View download guides for iOS Devices or Android to set it up correctly.
Can I access Vocera from Epic?	The project to add a link to Vocera in the external websites menu within Epic is in development and will be available soon.
How do I avoid getting contacted when I'm not working?	You can manage your availability in the app to avoid unwanted contact: • Set do not disturb for texts or calls (or both) to appear as unavailable. • Forward your calls to your office phone, answering service or other number. • Log-out of Vocera if you are going on vacation or will be out for multiple days.

FAQ
Physicians

Question	Answer
Why don't we use Epic secure chat, instead?	Epic secure chat is the texting application within Epic that becomes part of the patient record. Vocera offers HIPAA-compliant text and calling for clinical and administrative topics outside of Epic that allows you to attach images.
Can I make a setting in Vocera to convert texts to voice?	Text-to-voice capability is not available. You can set the type and volume of notifications to help you know when you receive a text.
Will Vocera drain my battery?	The battery issue has been fixed. Here are tips to preserve battery life: • Connect to NM Mobile when you are on any Northwestern Medicine campus and "forget other networks." • Turn off unnecessary applications running in the background. • Turn off vibrations. Vibration mode consumes more battery power than a ringtone. • If you will be off-campus for multiple days, log out of the app.
Do I need to be on an NM campus to send or receive messages?	No. Vocera works on- and off-campus. When on-campus, you must connect to NM Mobile in order to receive Vocera calls and messages. Off campus, Vocera will work over other Wi-Fi or cellular data.
Can I be logged into Vocera on two different devices at the same time?	No. When you try to log in to the second device, Vocera will log you off of the first device.
Can I access Vocera from a desktop?	Yes. You can access the application on your mobile device and from a desktop on the Northwestern Medicine network. Visit the **Vocera Web Console**.
Can I use Vocera on an iPad or tablet?	Vocera is not available on tablets at this time.
Will my phone number be available to everyone?	You will designate a preferred contact number in the app, but it will not be published in the health system directory.

FAQ
General

Question	Answer
What are the guidelines for using Vocera?	View **Vocera Etiquette** for appropriate use cases.
How do I make a call?	To place a call, click the call button in a contact's profile or ask the Genie voice command to call someone by name.
Can I view a message without clicking it?	No. Your secure messages screen shows only the subject line and one line of the message. You must click the message to read it.
Will contacts receive my messages if their status is unavailable?	Yes. They will still receive the messages. You will receive a read-receipt when your message has been viewed.
Will patients I'm assigned to in Epic populate in the Vocera Patient list?	Yes.
How can I find someone if I don't know their name?	In Contacts, search by role, site or patient care team.
Can I attach images to a Vocera message?	Yes. View a **tip sheet**.
Can I attach lab results?	No.
Will I receive a patient's critical lab results in Vocera as an urgent alert?	No. Critical lab results are not interfaced with Vocera.
Can I accept an order via a text?	No. The Joint Commission regulatory standards do not allow orders via text messages. Enter orders only in Epic.
Can I forward my pager to Vocera?	No, this functionality is not available.

FAQ
General

Question	Answer
Will Vocera replace pagers?	Web paging will not be turned off. Vocera enables secure text messages to other clinicians and is used in addition to your pager.
Can I delete a message?	No. You can hide a message but not delete it. A new message within that conversation string will cause the hidden message to reappear.
Can I send information about more than one patient in the same text?	No. One patient only can be attached to a text. You will need to start a new thread for a different patient.
Can I delete patient information from a text?	No. You cannot remove patient's information once they are added to a text.
What happens if I am on an urgent call and I receive another urgent call?	The first urgent call will be placed on hold.
If I forward calls to someone who has their calls forwarded, what happens?	Calls will forward twice, once to the 2nd party, then ending with the 3rd party
If I have favorites at another site, are they still there if that site filter is off?	Yes. For example, you work at X site and save a contact from Y site. Uncheck Z site from the site filter list and keep your X site checked. You will still see your Z contact under Favorites.
What if there is more than one person with the same name using Vocera?	When you use the Genie voice command, Genie will ask "did you mean Joe Smith in [department]"? to distinguish contacts.
Can I use Vocera outside the building?	No. Vocera uses the NM Mobile wireless network that is available only inside NM buildings. It is not available outside, nor in elevators, stairwells or other spots that lack wireless access points.

FAQ
General

Question	Answer
If I forward calls or messages to another contact, can someone else end it?	No. Only the individual who initiated the forward can stop the forwarding/
Can I send a picture to Epic?	This capability is not available. Pictures remain within Vocera.
Can I take a video in Vocera?	Vocera does not have video capability.
Are pictures discoverable?	Pictures taken and sent within the Vocera are HIPAA compliant. However, all electronic information is discoverable by the NM Vocera administrator.
Where can I find Vocera tip sheets and other resources?	• Vocera on **NMI**: NMI > Departments > Information Services > Vocera • Vocera on **Physician Forum**: Physician Forum Home > Vocera Resources • Content section of the Vocera app: Go to the navigation bar at the bottom, tap More > Content.
When should I use do not disturb?	Set yourself to do not disturb to block calls and texts when you are not available. When you make yourself available again, you will see texts and missed calls that while you were on do not disturb. Log out of Vocera by clicking your profile picture and selecting Log Out if you are on vacation or will be out of the office for multiple days.
What do I do if I lose my phone?	If your personal phone is lost or stolen, open a ticket in MyNM Service Center. Indicate that you have Vocera Collaboration Suite installed. This will allow Vocera to remotely wipe all the data in the app from your phone.

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FAQ
Shared iPhones

Question	Answer
Will the shared iPhone chime or provide an alert if I leave a wireless area?	No. An active call will drop. You will not be able log-on or use the shared phone off campus.
Can I take a picture of newborn, for example, and send it to a patient's family upon request?	Do not send pictures or texts to non-Vocera users.
If I select a call back from an alert, does that mean that I accept the notification?	Yes.
Does Vocera have a call park function?	No.
Can I use FaceTime with Vocera?	No. FaceTime is not available on shared iPhones.
Can I access Safari web browser on shared iPhones?	You will not be able to browse the web. Safari is available only for IT to push updates remotely.
Can I be in more than one role in Vocera at the same time?	Yes. Use Staff Assignment to assign yourself to all temporary roles you are filling for the shift. If any of roles have an assigned extension, those extension numbers will ring to your phone.
What is seen on a recipient's caller ID when calls are made to an external number, such as calling a patient's family?	When calling from a shared iPhone, the Vocera guest access number for your site is displayed.

FAQ
Shared iPhones

Question	Answer
When a nurse functions as a PCT can they log in as a PCT for call escalations?	No. RNs and PCT are permanent roles assigned in Vocera staff profiles. If a PCT is not assigned to a patient room for his or her shift, the alert will skip the role and escalate immediately to the next role assigned
Can I call a patient room from Vocera?	Yes, you can dial the bedside phone number. To connect with patient rooms at a different location, use Genie to find the number.
What displays when a patient calls a nurse's extension from their room?	The hospital phone number displays.
Do I dial 9 for outside calls?	No. External numbers are directly dialed starting with 1-area code –xxx-xxxx
If I forward calls or messages to another contact, can someone else end it?	No. Only the individual who initiated the forward can stop the forwarding/
If I float to another unit or site, can I take the shared iPhone?	No, before you leave to another unit or site, sign in the phone you're using and sign out another phone from the new location. Shared phones should stay within their departments to ensure that they are available for staff.
Can I silence my shared iPhone?	It is not recommended to silence phones.
Does the shared iPhone have a permanent number?	Some staff will have a permanent number assigned to their Vocera profile, but not to the phone itself. Vocera can find contacts by name, role, group, room assignment and care team.
How do I know my Vocera assigned extension?	Your assigned number will display in your profile.

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FAQ
Shared iPhones

Question	Answer
How can I find physicians if I don't know their names?	In Contacts, search by role, site or patient care team.
How long do messages and voice mails stay on shared iPhones?	Text messages will not be deleted. Phone messages delete after 14 days. It is not recommended to leave a voicemail for contact who uses a shared iPhone. Alarms and alerts delete after 10 minutes.
Can an external caller reach my assigned number?	Yes. If you have an assigned number to your profile, you can share it with external callers so they can reach you directly.
Can I accept an order via a text?	No. The Joint Commission does not allow orders via text messages. Enter orders only in Epic.

Vocera resources
Find tip sheets, videos and other support materials in the following locations:
- **On NMI**: NMI Home > Departments > Information Services > Vocera
- **On Physician Forum:** Physician Forum Home > Vocera Resources
- **In the Content section in Vocera:** Go to navigation bar at the bottom > More > Content

If you need help, call MyNM Service Center at 312.926.4357.

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