

FACULTY PRACTICE GROUP – Ambulatory Operations

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

SECTION: Code of Conduct

SUBJECT: Voicemail Etiquette

REFERENCE #:

PAGE: 1 OF 2

APPROVALS: FPG: CAO-SC: APCA: N/A EAC: N/A

EFFECTIVE: 06/2011

PURPOSE:

Voicemail is an important tool that enables staff to effectively communicate with customers, colleagues, and individuals associated with UCLA Health System. Voicemail communication should be handled in an appropriate fashion to maintain a professional UCLA image and to support business operations. This standard and guideline outlines best practices for FPG outpatient practices and business offices. This document does not cover HIPAA requirements or information on PHI.

Staff members are expected to professionally handle all voicemails. Implementation of etiquette rules is important to ensure the following:

- Professionalism: by using proper wording, UCLA Health System will convey a professional image.
- Efficiency: improve the quality of outgoing voicemail messages

POLICY:

Incoming Message Handling

All voicemail messages should be responded to timely according to departmental operational guidelines. Department management should establish protocols for message handling. Management should set expectations regarding messages left after hours, if call handling is expected after the practice or business office closes.

When retrieving voicemail, be prepared to document information and listen to the message in full before taking action. Messages should be reviewed in full and prioritized in accordance with the level of urgency. Seek help if needed in order to respond to messages within the standard timeline.

Outgoing Message Handling

A customized *standard outgoing greeting* should be recorded that adheres to C-I-CARE standards as follows. Preparing a greeting script is recommended in order to plan out what you need to say before recording and to have the information documented.

- Thank the caller for calling
- State the name and department of the voicemail owner and the number reached
- State availability during normal business hours and when calls are returned
- Provide any instructions that may expedite call handling when the voicemail message is returned such as a medical record number or account number
- Speak slowly and clearly.

A customized *temporary out of office* greeting should be recorded that adheres to C-I-CARE standards if a representative will not be available to return calls “timely”. Professional courtesy suggests that if messages cannot be returned for more than one business day, it is imperative to inform callers of availability and to set an expectation of service. An alternative number/representative should be indicated if calls cannot be returned within one business day, such as during a vacation, sick leave, or extended leave. The temporary outgoing greeting should be promptly removed upon return to the office.

REFERENCES

POLICY AUTHORITY:

UCLA Faculty Practice Group Ambulatory Operations

COGNIZANT OFFICE:

For interpretations of this policy, resolution of problems and special situations, contact:

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REVISION HISTORY

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