

# University Health Network Policy & Procedure Manual Administrative – Cell Phones & Wireless PDA Devices

## Policy

At University Health Network (UHN), patients, staff and visitors may use radio-frequency-transmitting devices [cellular phones, PDAs (personal digital assistants) with radio transmitters, two-way pagers, walkie-talkies] in any [area of the Hospital](#) where direct patient care is not being provided.

The use of cell phones equipped with a digital camera to capture images of patients and staff is not allowed anywhere at UHN.

In areas where patient care is being provided, all cell phones, PDAs with radio transmitters, two-way pagers and walkie-talkies must be **turned off at all times**, because radio-frequency devices have been shown to interfere with the proper operation of certain medical devices at close range. [Affected areas](#) of the Hospital will be indicated by signage, and staff in those areas will be alerted to take steps to prevent radio-frequency transmitting device use.

Patients who are sent home with medical devices for continued treatment (e.g., infusion pumps, dialysis machines) must be given verbal and written caution ([Patient letter](#)) not to use radio-frequency-transmitting devices while any medical device is operating. Include this caution for patients who receive implanted electrical devices such as pacemakers

UHN staff may [purchase cell phones](#), PDAs with radio transmitters or pagers if all of the following criteria are met:

- The employee's supervisor or manager confirms, via e-mail, that the equipment is necessary to the efficient execution of work related responsibilities.
- A valid reason for preference of a cell phone over a pager is provided.
- As part of regular duties:
  - a. the employee must regularly remain within contact by telephone while away from his/her office on two or more occasions per week. Such duties may include on-call support, or
  - b. a cellular phone is necessary to ensure the safety of the individual.
- Personal use of the equipment is to be kept to a minimum.
- The employee accepts the responsibility to safeguard the equipment at all times.

UHN staff may use research funds to purchase cell phones, PDAs with radio transmitters or pagers, subject to the conditions on the funds. Research Financial Services must be consulted before the purchase. Use of research core budget for the

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purchase is determined by the employee's manager, based on job requirements and budget allocation.

Patients, staff and visitors are informed of this policy with signs posted in appropriate sections of the Hospital, requesting that radio-frequency transmitting devices be turned off in patient care areas.

All Hospital staff involved in patient care will monitor and enforce this policy for the patients in their care.

Hospital staff and outside services, such as fire, police and ambulance, are requested to confine their use of radio-frequency transmitting devices to non-patient care areas as much as possible. The Hospital understands that it may not be possible to comply with this policy in emergency situations, and then asks the user of the radio-frequency-transmitting device to keep as far distant from any operating medical device as the situation permits.

Any medical device malfunction that is believed to have been caused by interference from a radio-frequency-transmitting device must be reported immediately to the Hospital staff providing care to that patient. The staff must check the medical device to determine whether it is functioning properly. If it is not, it must be removed from patient treatment, sent for service, and patient care continued with a replacement device.

If a department normally designated a "no radio-frequency device use" area is moving, managers must make arrangements to ensure the new location has similar signage and policies in place.

## Wireless PDA Devices

PDA devices such as those from RIM, iPAQ or Palm, that offer wireless connectivity, are considered as cellular phones for the purpose of this policy, provided that the device conforms with the technical specifications identified in this policy.

## Technical Specifications for Wireless PDAs

**Network Type:** CDMA or GSM/GPRS only. Most cell phones manufactured since 2002 meet these requirements, however, some PDA devices with built-in cell phones do not conform to these specifications. Before purchasing or using any such device, staff should be aware of the following limitations:

- Only specific models of PDA devices will conform to these specifications. While a given manufacturer produces numerous models, only specific models will meet these requirements. Users must confirm through the Service Desk that their specific device model meets these specifications in order that the device may be used as a cell phone in [permitted areas](#) of the Hospital.

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- Not all PDA devices can be supported by UHN. Specific Blackberry PDA devices are now supported at UHN subject to the network type and permitted areas requirements.
- UHN supports synchronization of corporate e-mail and calendar data with the Blackberry PDA.
- UHN Research supports wireless browser-based applications developed on research infrastructure in addition to synchronization. Deployment of applications must be approved by Research Information Systems and must conform to all UHN data-handling requirements.

### **Areas Where Radio-frequency-transmitting Devices Are Permitted**

Radio-transmitting devices are permissible in all areas of University Health Network where they will not impede patient care or interfere with electrical equipment.

### **Areas Where Radio-frequency-transmitting Devices Are Not Permitted**

#### **Princess Margaret Hospital**

Floor 2B	All Clinics, Procedures Room, HDR area
Floor 1B	All Simulator areas, including waiting areas
Floor M (main)	Ambulance Waiting (patient holding) area
Floor 2	Transfusion Unit, Chemo Daycare except waiting area
Floor 3	Operating Room, all areas
Floor 14	All areas (patient floor)
Floor 15	All areas (patient floor)
Floor 16	Roof garden, Palliative Care Centre
Floor 17	All areas (patient floor)
Floor 18	Short Stay Unit (SSU), Ocular Oncology Centre – except waiting room

#### **Toronto Western Hospital**

1 Fell	Emergency – except in waiting area
2 Fell	Entire floor; OR, ICU, PACU
3 Fell	Diagnostic Imaging; Telemetry monitoring system
4 Fell Shelf	Neurophysiological monitoring (EEG, EMG) – except outer waiting area
5 Fell	EMU
7 Fell	Cardiopulmonary rehab (telemetry system planned for hallway)
5 East	Nuclear Cardiology
8 East, MP	EEG, EMG
4 MP, MC	Day Surgery, Recovery, CVU

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## Toronto General Hospital

2 West CSB	OR, PACU
4 West CSB	Entire floor because of telemetry system
5 West CSB	Entire floor because of telemetry system
10 CSB	MSICU/Transplant – except waiting room
G Eaton	Same-day Discharge
2 Eaton	Entire floor – except Cardiovascular OR waiting room
6 Eaton	Entire floor because of telemetry system
10 Eaton South	Thoracic
11 Eaton Centre & North	EEG, EMG
12 Eaton	Diagnostic Test Centre
14 Eaton	Entire floor because of telemetry system
G RFE	Emergency – except in waiting area
2 CSB	Endoscopy and Cystoscopy

## Toronto Medical Laboratories

Although patients are not treated at TML, staff are cautioned to be aware that radio-transmitting devices can interfere with laboratory equipment and should operate under this assumption.

### UHN Wide

Radio-frequency-transmitting devices are banned in all medical imaging suites and control rooms, including Ultrasound, except in corridors and waiting areas.

The use of the camera function, which exists with certain cell phone and PDA products, is banned throughout UHN.

The use of radio-frequency-transmitting devices is acceptable in all administrative areas and office areas, along with all areas of The Residence (90 Gerrard St. West).

Use in physicians' offices is acceptable, provided patients who are present are not connected to medical devices.

## Procedure

### Purchasing a Cell Phone or PDA (Hospital Funds)

1. Upon confirmation from the staff member's supervisor that [eligibility criteria](#) have been met:
  - The staff member purchases a **cell phone** from a Bell World location upon presentation of his/her UHN identification badge.

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**Note:** UHN has an agreement with Bell for the government rate for cell phones.

- Upon receipt of the Bell World invoice, the staff member submits it to his/her supervisor for payment.
2. If eligibility criteria have been met to purchase a PDA (Blackberry device), complete the Hardware Order Form on the SIMS web site.  
[http://intranet.uhn.ca/departments/sims/forms/hardware\\_order/form.asp](http://intranet.uhn.ca/departments/sims/forms/hardware_order/form.asp).

**Note:** The staff's supervisor will receive a copy of the order form by e-mail.

### **Purchasing a Cell Phone or PDA (Research Funds or Research Core Budget)**

1. Upon selection of a cell phone or PDA device, obtain a quote and submit the request to Research Finance.
2. Research Finance will advise if the selection falls within guidelines for cost allocation to Research funds or Research core budget.

**Note:** If funded from the Research core budget, the manager or director checks the allocation.

3. Once Research Finance confirms eligibility for funds allocation, submit the quote to Research Information Systems to check for compatibility.
4. Once all signatures are obtained, use standard Research purchasing practices for Research purchases.

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