

VOCERA MOBILE PHYSICIAN COMMUNICATION FAQs

General FAQs

What is Vocera?

The Vocera Collaboration Suite (VCS) application allows secure texting between physicians and advanced practice providers (APPs) across Northwestern Medicine. You can also make calls with Vocera.

Why should I use Vocera?

Vocera is the preferred tool for NM clinical communications. It is HIPAA-compliant and Improves physician and care team collaboration and the patient experience by connecting people and information through secure and integrated communication when you are on or off campus.

Who can use Vocera?

The application is available to contracted, employed, independent, resident and house staff physicians and APPs. The inpatient care teams at Central DuPage Hospital, Delnor Hospital, Lake Forest Hospital and Marianjoy Rehabilitations Hospital also have access. The process to roll out care team access at other hospitals is nderway.

How do I sign up?

Physicians and APPs need to download this application to their personal devices to begin securely communicating with each other. Log-in using your Epic ID and password.

Will Vocera drain my battery?

The battery issue has been fixed. Read the [battery performance tip sheet](#) for more information. Make sure you connect to NM Mobile on any Northwestern Medicine campus and “forget other networks.”

Does the care team have access to Vocera?

All physicians and APPs across NM have access to Vocera. The care team has access to Vocera using shared devices at Lake Forest Hospital, Central DuPage Hospital, Delnor Hospital and Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital. Additional hospital care teams will receive Vocera throughout FY21.

Do I need to be on a Northwestern Medicine campus to send or receive messages?

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 WiFi networks or by using cellular data.

Can I be logged in to 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.

Will I stay logged in to the application, or will I need to log-in each time?

You will stay logged in and will not need to re-enter your ID and password unless you logged out. After three hours of inactivity, you will need to enter a PIN you chose when you set up your account.

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?

No, the application is not available on tablets at this time.

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How do I make calls?

To place a call, click the call button in a user's profile or ask the Genie to call someone by name. Incoming calls will be received like all other calls to the device.

Do I have to publish my phone number on the Vocera app?

No, you will designate a preferred contact number in the app, but it will not be published in the health system directory.

Will contacts receive my messages if their status is unavailable?

Yes, physicians will be able to receive messages when their status is unavailable.

How can I find physicians if I don't know their names?

A: In contacts, you can search by role, site or patient care team.

Can I send patient images in Vocera?

Yes. You will have the ability to capture and securely send images using Vocera. This PHI remains within Vocera and is not on the physician's personal phone. However, you cannot access your device's picture library while using Vocera.

Can I view the message without clicking on it?

No. Your home screen will only show the notification, not the content. You must enable notifications in your device settings.

Will critical lab values be sent to me through Vocera?

No.

How can I communicate with my patient's care team?

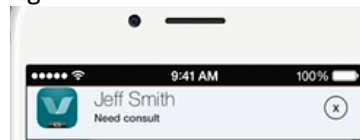
The Epic Treatment Team assignments is viewable in Vocera when you enter the patient's name, MRN or room, and you can call or message them directly. As a note, a consult physician should assign themselves to the care team in Epic for more efficient contact in Vocera.

How do I send urgent messages?

Urgent communications regarding patient care should be managed using existing communication tools, such as paging, to connect with the individual requested.

What do notifications look like?

Vocera notifications look similar to text message notifications on your device. The banner notification shows the sender name and message subject (if applicable). The content of the message will not be visible.



How do I make calls?

To place a call, you can click the call button in a user's profile or ask the Genie to call someone by name. Incoming calls will be received like all other calls to the device. Note: All calls use your cellular plan. In Phase Two, you will be able to connect to the Northwestern Medicine Voice network and make calls over Wi-Fi through the app.

What network should I be connected to when onsite at a NM facility? You should connect to the NM Mobile network when onsite at a Northwestern Medicine facility. Use your Epic username and ID to log in. You should "forget" any other NM networks on your phone (i.e. NM Data, NM Guest).

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How do I update my contact profile information? To update the contact information that displays in your profile, please email MedStaff.Office@nm.org.

Where does the physician profile information populate from? The data in physician profiles was pulled from Profisee which integrates data from both medical staff office (MSO) and Epic.

Existing Communication Tools and Practices

Will Vocera replace pagers?

No. Web paging will not be turned off. Vocera enables secure text messages to other physicians and APPs and is used in addition to your pager.

Can I forward my pager to Vocera?

This functionality is not currently available.

Will Vocera replace PerfectServe at Kishwaukee Hospital and Valley West Hospital?

No. During Phase 1 of the Vocera rollout, those who use PerfectServe at Kishwaukee Hospital and Valley West Hospital will continue to do so for communications within these two facilities. Physicians and APPs are encouraged to download Vocera to enable secure text messaging systemwide.

Will Vocera replace Engage Mobile at Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital?

No. During Phase 1, shared device users will continue to use Engage Mobile for communication within Lake Forest Hospital. Physicians and APPs are encouraged to download Vocera to enable secure text messaging systemwide.

How do I send urgent messages?

Urgent communications regarding patient care should be managed using existing communication tools, like paging, to connect with the individual requested.

Security and Discoverability

Is Vocera secure and HIPAA compliant?

Yes. All messages are securely saved on Northwestern Medicine's internal server, not on a third-party site.

Will the text messages be part of the medical record?

No.

What do I do if I lose my phone?

If your phone is lost or stolen, please open a ticket with the IT applications team. Indicate that you had the Vocera Collaboration Suite application installed. This will allow Vocera to remotely wipe all the data in the app from your phone.

Availability Status

Can I adjust status within Vocera to inform others of my availability to receive messages?

Yes. It is your responsibility to manage your availability. Log-out after your shift and when you are not on call to silence calls and messages. If you simply close the Vocera app without logging out, it will continue to run and you will receive calls and messages.

What are all the status and availability options, and what do they mean?

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You can indicate your availability using three color options: green, orange and red.

- **Green** = Available: You are logged in to the application and will receive messages.
- **Orange** = Do Not Disturb: When you are in Do Not Disturb mode, you will not receive messages.
Note: Urgent messages will break through Do Not Disturb mode.
- **Red** = Unavailable: You are logged out of the application or do not have connectivity to the application (Wi-Fi or cellular). You will not receive messages until you log back in or connectivity is restored.

When should I use Do Not Disturb?

The DND feature will block calls and texts, though the texts and call histories will be available to that user once Use DND when you are not available.

How will I know if other physicians have downloaded the app so that I can communicate with them?

If a physician has not downloaded the application, they will show up as “unavailable” (red status color).

Can we integrate to an on-call system?

Not yet. Vocera is able to integrate with an on-call system, and we are exploring this option.

Message Forwarding

Can message forwarding be set up for a specific time frame?

No. This function is not currently available.

Can I forward another user’s messages?

A: No. You can only forward your own messages.

When you turn on message forwarding, will it automatically change my availability?

Yes. Turning on message forwarding will indicate you are in Do Not Disturb mode. If the you turn off Do Not Disturb but leave on message forwarding, messages will still be forwarded, but you will show as available.

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Directory Searching

Can I look up physicians or APPs by specialty?

A: Yes. You will be able to search for a specialty and see the list of physicians or APPs in that group.

Can I text a specialty group?

A: Yes. Once you find the specialty group you are looking for, you can text that entire group or an individual in that group.

Q: Can I search for a specialty group within a specific site or hospital?

A: Yes. You can select a site or hospital, and then search for a specialty group within that site/hospital.

Q: Can I search for a specific service (ex: consulting or admitting) using Vocera?

A: This search function is not available.

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Alerts and Notifications

What are the different alerts based on user status, message priority, and device ringer settings?

User Status	Device Ringer	Normal Priority	High Priority	Urgent Priority	Banner Notification	Message Received
Logged in, Available (green)	Ringer on	Single tone	Tone until silenced by user	Tone until silenced by user	Yes	Yes
Logged in, Available (green)	Ringer off (vibrate)	Vibrate, no tone	Vibrate, no tone	Tone until silenced by user	Yes	Yes
Logged in, Available (green)	Ringer off (silent)	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	Tone until silenced by user	Yes	Yes
Logged in, Do Not Disturb (orange)	Ringer on or off (vibrate or silent)	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	Tone until silenced by user, will not break through if "Do Not Allow Urgent" is turned on in settings	No	Yes
Logged in, Message Forwarding (orange) NOTE: Recipient will receive message and alerts per their status	Ringer on or off (vibrate or silent)	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No	Yes
Logged in, Lost Connectivity (red)	Ringer on or off (vibrate or silent)	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No	Yes (when logged back in)
Logged out, Do Not Disturb (red) NOTE: DND mode is cleared out once logged out	Ringer on or off (vibrate or silent)	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No	Yes (when logged back in)
Logged out, Message Forwarding (red) NOTE: Message Forwarding will be cleared out once logged back in	Ringer on or off (vibrate or silent)	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No	Yes (when logged back in)
Logged out, Unavailable (red)	Ringer on or off (vibrate or silent)	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No tone, no vibrate	No	Yes (when logged back in)