MEDICAL STAFF
COMMUNICATION POLICY

PURPOSE:
To clarify guidelines regarding communication expectations for all members of the Medical Staff at CaroMont Regional Medical Center. Expectations regarding responses for request for Emergency Room Call and Consultations, as well as expectations regarding the privacy of patient information protected by HIPAA are covered by separate policies.

RESPONSIBILITY/SCOPE:
In order to facilitate patient care in a safe and timely fashion, it is the responsibility of every Medical Staff member to provide a means of direct, immediate contact. The acceptable modes of communication set forth below in the Procedure/Guidelines section. Non-secure texting or non-secure emails are not an appropriate mode of communication for patient information.

PROCEDURE/GUIDELINE:
Approved Communication Methods between Medical Staff Members for urgent and emergent situations:

1. Person to Person
2. Telephone/Cell Phone
3. Secure Texting (through CaroMont approved Secure Text Messaging Application(s))
4. Pager
5. Answering Service

Approved Communication Methods between Medical Staff Members for non-urgent and non-emergent situations:

1. Person to person
2. Telephone/Cell Phone
3. Secure Texting
4. Pager
5. Answering Service
6. Secure Email
7. Faxing

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF ALL COMMUNICATION METHODS:
1. All communication will comply with the Medical Staff Code of Ethical Conduct Policy.
2. Communication will take place in a timely fashion, involving the appropriate person(s), in an appropriate setting.
3. Communication, including spoken remarks, written documents, faxes, secure texts and emails, will be honest, direct, and conducted in a professional, constructive, respectful and efficient manner.
4. Cooperation and availability are expected of physicians, and staff
5. All communications must comply with CaroMont Health policies and procedures and, if applicable, with HIPAA.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY:
CaroMont Health will provide resources to the Medical Staff to facilitate appropriate and HIPAA compliant communication between Medical Staff members and other staff. Specifically, CaroMont Health will maintain:
1. A Provider Data Base information system accessible by internet to provide specific Medical Staff contact information and current call responsibilities.
2. A Secure Texting Platform to allow HIPPA compliant patient information to be shared between members of the Medical Staff.
3. A Secure Email System to allow HIPPA compliant patient information to be shared.
4. Secure Access to language lines to facilitate communication between Medical Staff members and patients/families that are not fluent in English.

REFERENCES:
Medical Staff Code of Ethical Conduct Policy
CaroMont Health HIPPA Policy
CaroMont Health Secure Text Messaging Policy