

Title: MAINTAINING LABORATORY PATIENT SAFETY and PRODUCTIVITY (Internet, Telephone and Other Electronic Device Usage)

Policy Statement:

Accuracy, attention to detail, productivity, and efficiency are all key characteristics that determine the quality and quantity of work performed in the laboratory sites. These characteristics also determine the individual's and cumulatively the organization's ability to meet the MultiCare standards of Safety, Customer Service, Clinical Outcomes, and Cost Effectiveness. Accordingly, this policy sets out usage expectations for the internet, telephones, personal electronic devices, etc. to better ensure patient safety and maintain laboratory productivity.

Definition:

Work Area – Any location where laboratory business is conducted, including lab testing and desk areas, processing areas, reception desks, drawing rooms, reagent rooms, storage areas, etc.

Procedure:

I. INTERNET:

- Internet Usage as defined by MHS policy (Excerpted from Information Security, Appendix 5 – Monitoring Acknowledgement Form)
"As an employee of MultiCare Health System, I ____, recognize and understand that email, Internet, and electronic files systems are to be used in accordance with the terms and conditions of MHS Information Security policy. I understand that use of this equipment for private purposes other than appropriate incidental personal use is strictly prohibited. I agree not to access a file or retrieve any stored communication other than as authorized."
"I am aware that MultiCare Health System reserves and will exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose all matters on the MHS Information System Network at any time, with or without employee notice, and that such access may occur during or after working hours. I am aware that use of an MHS-provided password or code does not restrict MHS's right to access electronic communications."
- Laboratories Northwest defines "incidental personal internet usage" on laboratory based MHS computers as no more than 5 minutes per day for each employee.
- Streaming radio stations through the Internet is prohibited, as this type of use ties up Internet band-width and creates significant delays in response time for legitimate, work-related Internet based uses.
- Employees may bring their own computer laptops or other personal computer devices to use during their breaks and lunches; however these devices cannot be used in laboratory work areas. Personal computer devices may be used in break rooms, cafeterias, or other public areas.
- Job-specific and assigned CE and educational tasks may be completed at

laboratory computers, including completion of mandatory education, MTS modules, performing work-related research on procedures or tests, etc. General educational pursuits may not be completed on laboratory-based computers

- Employees have 24-hour access to the Wagner Library and Resource Centers, located at Tacoma General, Allenmore Hospital, and Covington Medical Clinic. PC's are available for employee use for education or other work-related activities. Additional information about the Wagner centers can be found in MHS Policy "Wagner Library – Criteria for Use".

II. TELEPHONE/CELL PHONES:

- Personal phone calls during work-time must be limited to no more than 5 total minutes per day.
- Personal cell phones, cell phone headsets, and pagers may not be used in laboratory work areas. (Staff may use their cell phones and pagers at will during their breaks and lunch times as long as they are outside of the work areas. Staff are reminded to wash their hands prior to using their phones and pagers.)
- Cell phones and two-way radios are prohibited from use in critical/intensive care rooms, including ED and OR rooms, and due to the potential for interference with medical equipment, prohibited from all patient rooms. Consequently, cell phones must be turned off before laboratory employees enter patient care areas.
- If for some reason the employee must carry their cell phone (and the employee does not work on patient floors), the phone should be either turned off or turned to vibrate only and must never be accessed in the presence of a patient or customer.
- Viewing and sending text messages during work hours is strictly prohibited

III. RADIOS, CD PLAYERS: Radios and CDs may be played in the work areas if the following conditions are met:

- Radios, CD players, boom boxes, etc. should not be in the testing area where there is a risk of biohazard contamination, unless it can be left there and will not be transported back to the owner's home
- The musical or station selection is agreeable to all present in the work area
- The volume is set low enough as to not be disruptive in the work area
- If audible to the general public, the selection must be business appropriate. (If there is any question about what is business appropriate, please refer to the section manager.

IV. OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Other personal electronic devices (IPOD's®, MP3 players, or any other device with headphones or ear-buds) are prohibited from use in the work areas at any time, unless expressly permitted by the section supervisor or manager.

V. STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: All laboratory staff will be asked to sign a written acknowledgement of this policy (Appendix A), either at the inception of the policy or at the time of hire. The policy will remain in effect until otherwise notified in writing. Acknowledgment forms will be maintained in the employee's 6-part folders.

VI. CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE: Non-compliance with these

policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in accordance with MHS Human Resources Progressive Guidance Policy. Inappropriate usage may be determined through electronic audit (past use or real time) and/or direct observation.

Related Policies:

MHS System Policy: *Technology: Information Security + Appendix 5 (Information Security/Monitoring Acknowledgement Form)*
 MHS System Policy: *Wagner Library: Criteria for Use*
 MHS System/Human Resources Policy: *Progressive Guidance Policy*
 MHS IS policy: *"Guidelines for Information Security and Internet Usage"*
 MHS System/Environment of Care – Safety Management Policy: *"Cellular Phone and Two-Way Radio Use"*

Summary of Edits:

2014 Revised formatting and expanded Medical Director Review
 9/2014 Update Medical Director review; removed Dr. Hodges and added Dr. Love.

References:

Point of Contact: Laboratory Regulatory Compliance Consultant

Approval By:

LABORATORIES Northwest Medical Directors
 G. David Austin M.D.
 Jason E. Love M.D.
 Larry O'Bryant M.D.

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Appendix A

**LABORATORIES Northwest
MultiCare Health System
Policy Acknowledgement**

Name _____ Unit/Dept. _____

Job Title _____ Employee ID# _____

Policy: *Maintaining Laboratory Patient Safety and Productivity (Internet, Telephone, and Other Electronic Device Usage)*

- I am aware that LNW defines "Incidental Internet Usage" as 5 minutes per day
- I am aware that streaming radio stations through the internet is prohibited
- I am aware of the existence of Wagner Library and Resource Centers for educational activities and other work-related activities
- I am aware that personal phone calls during work time are limited to not more than 5 total minutes per day
- I am aware that personal cell phones, cell phone headsets, and pagers may not be used in lab work areas, and are prohibited from use in patient care areas
- I am aware that viewing and sending text messages during work hours is strictly prohibited
- I am aware that radios and CD players may be used in laboratory work areas under certain conditions as outlined in the policy
- I understand that personal electronic devices with headphones or ear-buds are prohibited from the work area unless expressly permitted by the supervisor or manager
- I understand that non-compliance with any of these points or any other items in the policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in accordance with MHS Human Resources Progressive Guidance Policy
- I am aware that in accordance with MHS System Policy: *Technology: Information Security + Appendix 5 (Information Security/Monitoring Acknowledgement Form)*, my use of the MHS internet and telephone may be monitored at any time, without my knowledge

I have read and understand the Laboratories Northwest policy "Maintaining Laboratory Patient Safety and Productivity (Internet, Telephone, and Other Electronic Device Usage)", which includes (but is not limited to) all of the policy statements above. I agree to comply with all stated policy details included in the policy.

Employee Signature

Date

(Original to be maintained in employee's 6 part folder)

