



**TO:** Catholic Health Medical Staff and all Epic Users

**FROM:** Victor Filadora II, MD, MBA, Chief Physician Executive  
Catherine Mohr, Chief Nursing Officer

**RE:** Important Information Regarding Epic Secure Chat

**DATE:** October 25, 2024

---

To ensure Epic Secure Chat is used appropriately throughout Catholic Health, please review the following:

**What is Secure Chat?**

- A HIPAA-complaint, secure messaging tool within Epic to communicate and collaborate with other Epic Users

**When Should I Use Secure Chat?**

- For non-urgent communication related to daily work activities
- Secure Chat is meant to convey brief, non-emergent information to other clinicians
- Secure Chat should **not** be used for critical information
- Secure Chat is **not** a substitute for clinical decision making, official documentation, or placing orders
- If you haven't heard back from the person you are trying to reach, you should contact them another way

**Does Secure Chat replace our current method for contacting on-call physicians?**

- No. Continue using your existing method to contact on-call physicians

**Are Secure Chat messages part of the Medical Record (MR)?**

- **No.** All clinical messages need to be documented in the MR.
- The documentation needs to include that the message was sent AND a response was received
- The sender is responsible for ensuring message responses
- These messages are subject to discovery in legal proceedings
- ALL CARE AND TREATMENT INFORMATION SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED IN THE MEDICAL RECORD

**If using Secure Chat, always check the recipient's status and only use if the status is **Available**. Otherwise, use another existing method of communication to ensure your message is received.**

- Always set your availability each day/shift.
- If a response is not received in a timely manner, another attempt should be made and/or an alternate mode of communication should be used

**Transition to verbal communication for complex or urgent conversations.**

- Save time and avoid confusion by picking up the phone and having an in-person discussion
- Do **not** message back and forth multiple times for the same issue
- Do **not** use pagers, email, or personal text for complex or urgent conversations