



TO: Catholic Health Medical Staff and all Epic Users

FROM: Victor Filadola 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-compliant, 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