

 **Provider**[®] 790 Application Brief

Pocket Paging Integration Improves Caregiver Mobility While Maintaining a Quiet Healing Environment

Application Overview:

Changes in nursing styles, such as team nursing and patient focused care, means that caregivers are more mobile than ever on the patient floor. In the past, the Ward Secretary or Attendant would answer patient calls and then overhead page throughout the unit to locate staff and notify them of their patient's call. While this method notified staff quickly, it also disturbed *every* resting patient on the floor. In addition, today many nursing stations no longer have a staff member that answers patient calls and if they do they may only be answering calls during daytime hours.

While many acute care facilities are investing in facility-wide wireless phone system to relay patient calls to staff, this is a very expensive option to cover an entire facility with wireless phones. In some acute care and many skilled care facilities, enterprise wireless phone systems are simply not an affordable option. Pocket paging is a much less expensive alerting option that easily covers an entire facility from a single pocket page transmitter.

With pocket paging integration, the patient call information is relayed directly to the assigned primary caregiver both quickly and quietly. If the primary caregiver can't answer within a predetermined time period, other backup caregivers in the team are automatically paged. Pages are sent until the call is cleared; ensuring no call goes unanswered or forgotten. Pocket paging doesn't require a Ward Secretary to answer patient calls and best of all it is completely silent so patients can rest. If a Ward Secretary is answering calls, they can triage which patient calls to determine which calls require a caregiver and only then send a pocket page message to the caregiver. The Ward Secretary can also send out silent "Tag Messages" to relay information to staff members instead of using a disruptive overhead audio page. In situations that require multiple caregivers to be simultaneously notified of an event, such as a code blue or staff emergency, pocket paging is a very quick and economical mass notification option.

Feature/Benefits:

- **Multiple Modes of Operation** – Three different pocket page modes support different types of staffing and styles of nursing:
 - **Manual Mode** – At any time a staff member at a nurse console can select a staff's pager and then select either a room number or a free form or pre-programmed "tag message" which in turn will display at the pager. This allows staff to send information to other staff without audio paging and disturbing patients.
 - **Semi-Automatic Mode** – When answering a call at the nurse console, the staff member selects a "Green", "Orange", "Yellow", or "Stat" service request which in turn both gives an indication outside the patient room and pages the assigned caregiver(s)

- **Automatic Mode** – All calls are automatically routed to an assigned caregiver’s pager, eliminating the need for an attendant to be present at the nurse console. Many facilities chose to operate in Automatic Mode at night and Semi-Automatic Mode during the day.
- **“Crash” Team Notification** – all members of a crash team receive a pocket page message as soon as a specific call priority is placed, regardless of their location on the floor or throughout the facility. Different crash teams can be created for different types of calls such as a facility-wide Code Blue (cardiac arrest), local Code Pink (baby in duress), and a local Staff Emergency.
- **Selective Patient to Staff and Call Priority Assignment** – Each caregiver’s pocket pager is assigned to only receive calls from specific rooms/beds assigned to them. Within these assigned rooms/beds, specific call levels can be sent to any of the three levels (green, orange, or yellow) of staff within the caregiving team. This flexibility allows call priorities, such as Routine or Bath, to route to the Orange level staff first, while Emergency and Priority calls can route to the Green level staff first.
- **Backup Notification** – After paging an assigned caregiver for a patient call or service request, if the call/service request is not cleared within a present time it is automatically forwarded to a backup caregiver’s pager. A patient call/service request may be forwarded sequentially to a preprogrammed series of up to four different pagers, ensuring that the patient’s call is answered as quickly as possible.
- **Patient Call Information Display** – The caregiver’s pager will display the room number, bed (if applicable), and call priority. If the call is triaged by a Ward Secretary, then the page can also include specific information about the nature of the call such as NEEDS WATER, PAIN MEDICATION, TOILET ASSIST.
- **Complete Mobility** – Staff members receive pages anywhere within the facility, affording them optimum mobility while ensuring patient calls are received.
- **Parallel Operation** – Patient calls annunciate at Nurse Console(s), Duty Station(s), and at the assigned caregiver’s pager. If the mobile caregiver can’t respond to the patient’s call, the multiple modes of call notification make other staff within the unit aware of the call and they can respond.
- **Diagnostic Pages** – If the Provider nurse call system has a technical problem, diagnostic pocket page messages will be sent to technicians describing the problem and affected system. This information speeds service to the system and ensures it will be available when needed for potentially life-saving communications.

Key Users and Managers:

Nurses/Caregivers – When patients need assistance, the call information (room & bed number, call priority, and description “tag message”) is quickly and quietly routed to the assigned staff member’s pocket pager anywhere within the entire facility. Caregivers remain mobile and can spend more time on the floor interacting with their patients since they do not make needless trips back and forth to the nursing station. Patients are not disrupted by overhead paging and staff can save steps responding to their patients. Pocket paging supports much greater staff mobility and in turn allows greater flexibility in caregiver assignments based on patient needs. Pocket paging also supports team nursing assignments with up to three levels of caregivers assigned to the same patient and working as a team. Routing specific call priorities to the level of staff which typically respond to these types of calls also supports the team nursing operation. If the caregiver needs to go to the patient room, the informational “tag message” lets them know what the patient needs so they don’t need to make an additional back and forth trip; saving both steps and time. Pocket pagers and wireless phones can be easily integrated together as part of the same caregiver team – e.g. the nurse carries a wireless phone and other team members have less expensive pagers.

Administration /Nursing Management – Pocket page messaging is a very quick and inexpensive means to relay patient calls and service requests to the staff members assigned to specific patients. For group notification of events, such as Code Blue or Staff Emergency, pocket paging quickly notifies multiple staff members of the event. Saving time in responding to patient calls, especially emergency calls, increases the likelihood of a positive outcome and in turn decreases the facility’s liability because of poor performance. Pocket paging supports quiet patient floors with faster staff responses to patients in turn resulting in higher patient satisfaction scores. Pocket paging also affords staff increased mobility, which adds to greater job satisfaction. The Automatic Page Mode eliminates the need for a Ward Secretary dedicated to answering patient calls at the Nurse Console allowing this staff resource to be used for other important tasks. The ability for the Nurse Manager to receive pages for calls that haven’t been cleared by the patient’s caregiving team allows the Manager to address staffing/response issues before they become a liability or affect patient satisfaction.

IT/Biomed – Whoever is responsible for servicing the system is accountable to keep the system running 24/7 and to repair it as quickly as possible if there is a problem. The diagnostic pocket page messages are sent the moment there is any problem allowing the technician to resolve the issue as fast as possible. For IT groups who do not want wireless phones on their LAN, pocket paging provide a simple and inexpensive alternative for getting patient call information directly to the assigned caregiver(s).