April 2020

Vocera COVID-19 Use Cases

We’ve organized a Vocera COVID-19 Response Task Force to define simple configurations of our technology that customers can use to make communication more efficient and potentially more effective in this pandemic. Some of these use cases were defined and put into production by our customers. Others come from our own ideas and experience. All begin by defining a scenario in which a customer would find themselves during these unprecedented times.

Our service and support teams at Vocera can help you implement many of these use cases at no cost if you don’t have time or are not sure how. Large deployments of some more complex use cases may require a paid services engagement; ask about our special COVID-19 pricing promotions.

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Communicate Efficiently and Safely

1. **Communicate safely and efficiently while wearing PPE.** Staff can wear the Vocera Badge or Smartbadge under PPE in conjunction with a headset to communicate safely throughout a shift and preserve PPE. Staff can use the Announce Through Speaker function to recite messages, so they don’t need to look at the Badge or Smartbadge while wearing PPE. Enable hot word detection on the Smartbadge so caregivers can say “Hey Vocera” to initiate communication.

2. **Keep staff connected while at home.** Hospital staff can log in to your hospital communication system with their Vocera smartphone app while at home or outside of the hospital.

3. **Make sure the communication loop is closed.** Configure rules and roles for auto-escalations when someone is in Do Not Disturb or declines an alert to ensure no messages are lost.

4. **Make it easy for care teams to reach people in the community outside the hospital.** Add outside numbers to your Global Address Book on the Vocera Voice server. This will allow care team members to call directly to the local department of health, surrounding hospital command center, infectious disease office, local clinics, and more—without needing to search for phone numbers or connect to a telephone.

5. **Allow Vocera users outside the hospital to reach users inside or outside the hospital.** In a time when more people are working outside of the hospital, configure your solution so users outside the hospital who are licensed for Direct Access can call a direct access number, use their name and password to authenticate, and use the Vocera Genie to call another Vocera user or a number in the Global Address Book on the Vocera Voice Server. This eliminates the need to ask an operator or unit secretary to find a person manually.

Communicate with Groups

1. **Prepare ED staff for an incoming COVID-19 patient.** Configure your solution so EMS can communicate with ED staff while in transit with a suspected COVID-19 patient. Examples include EMS using a Vocera smartphone app to call the ED charge nurse on his or her Vocera device. The ED charge nurse can instruct EMS to bring the patient to the negative pressure room and send an urgent broadcast to the incident response team (i.e., “Code 19: ETA 7 minutes, ED Bay 4”). Care team members can don PPE prior to arrival of patient.

2. **Safely admit and triage a walk-in patient who is possibly COVID-19 positive.** For example, if a walk-in patient is showing COVID-19 symptoms, the triage nurse can send an Urgent Broadcast (i.e. “Code 19 Triage Area”) to the appropriate response team from their Badge or Smartbadge while wearing PPE.

3. **Mobilize response teams.** Configure your solution so urgent information can be communicated quickly to a specific group, such as a COVID-19 response team, without overhead paging. Users can send a message using a Vocera template or place a call with a Vocera device or smartphone app. For example, EMS en route to the hospital with a suspected COVID-19 patient can let the COVID-19 response team know they’re coming. The response team can then prepare for the incoming patient.

4. **Mobilize your COVID-19 leadership team.** Configure message templates to quickly communicate urgent information to your leadership group. Examples include an urgent request to join a conference call, or updates on triage area backlog.

5. **Reach a group of subject matter experts easily.** Use the Call by Group functionality so users can reach experts easily. For example, a non-critical care physician redeployed to treat COVID-19 patients can use
her Vocera device or smartphone app to reach the right specialists when she needs assistance or information.

6. Enable instant communication with the entire incident-response or infection-control team. Configure a variety of COVID-19 response groups so users can quickly and easily call or send a message to all members of the group. This can be used for regular and/or urgent communications.

Push Notifications to the Right People

1. Flag a positive COVID-19 patient or test result. Add an alert heading to an urgent lab result, call, or STAT order. For example, configure your solution to indicate that a patient who is the subject of a call or notification is COVID-19 positive. An urgent header will appear on the recipient’s Vocera device or smartphone app indicating the notification is critical.

2. Allow caregivers to be notified immediately with a patient’s COVID-19 test result or when risk factors are present. Configure your solution to allow caregivers to receive immediate notifications from your lab system or clinical surveillance system on positive or negative results. Critical lab values and patient vitals indicating COVID-19 can be sent from the EHR to clinicians.

3. Send pulse oximeter alerts to the right recipient. Configure your Vocera system to send pulse oximeter alerts with certain parameters or thresholds directly to the attending nurse or respiratory therapist’s Vocera device or smartphone app to raise awareness of COVID-19 indications.

4. Accelerate room turnover workflows. Configure your system so that once staff enter patient discharge or transfer information into the EHR, a bed cleaning request alert is sent to Housekeeping/EVS to clean the room. Housekeeping/EVS receives a bed cleaning request on their Badge or Smartbadge and is prompted to verbally respond when the cleaning is in progress and complete. Responses from Housekeeping/EVS can automatically update the status in the EHR in real time.

5. Push COVID-19 policy updates to the right team members. Make it easy for care teams to receive regular updates on changes to policies related to COVID-19, such as visitor policies or PPE requirements. Push out messages to Vocera smartphone app users containing links to internal or external websites containing current hospital protocols.

Facilitate Patient and Family Communication

1. Allow patients and family members to connect with a specific caregiver. Configure your solution so a landline phone in any hospital room can be used to reach a care team member. For example, a patient or family member can dial 111 to reach their assigned nurse or dial 222 reach the respiratory therapist.

2. Make it easy for patients to discretely receive their COVID-19 lab results. Set up a centralized phone number for patients to call to receive their COVID-19 lab results using the Vocera Genie access number. The patient’s call can be automatically routed to the remote test results notification team, so the patient can receive their results quickly and discretely.

3. Enable nurses and patients to communicate in pop-up bed locations lacking nurse call. Many rooms and beds in pop-up bed locations don’t have nurse call. For isolation pop-up locations, a nurse must don full PPE to communicate with the patient. Patients also don’t have a way to communicate with their nurse. Families are unable to connect with their loved one.

Help restore the human connection between care teams and patients with a new feature for use with Vocera devices. Secure a Badge or Smartbadge near the upper torso of each patient bed. Log into the
device with a generic profile such as “Room 5 Bed 1.” Set the generic profile to auto-answer with no other actions permissible.

Care team-to-patient communication. When a nurse needs to speak with the patient, the nurse simply presses the Call button on his or her Badge and says, “Call Room 5 Bed 1” from anywhere outside the room. Staff can also call from a landline, or from a Vocera smartphone app or web client. The Badge or Smartbadge attached to the patient’s bed auto-answers (the patient does not have to touch the Badge), and the nurse and patient can communicate quickly and safely.

Patient-to-nurse communication. When the patient needs to contact the nurse, simply press the call button on the Badge to reach the assigned nurse.

*Note: If the Vocera B3000n Badge is attached to the bed, the battery will need to be swapped every 8-12 hours. If the Vocera Smartbadge is attached to the bed, in addition to the battery, it can be plugged into an external power source using a USB-C charger.

*Note: Vocera hardware and software are not intended to replace a UL 1069 nurse call system. The care team connect feature is intended to enable communication between patients and care teams in temporary bed locations.

Offload the Burden of Managing and Tracking Details

1. **Reduce the need to remember who’s working on the COVID-19 team.** Use the On-Call Schedule feature for COVID-19 team scheduling. Hospitals using Vocera Collaboration Suite and the Vocera Messaging Platform Web Console can take advantage of the app’s on-call scheduling feature. Hospital staff can easily send a message to the on-call group knowing that the correct users will get the message.

2. **Reduce the need for caregivers to rely on memory.** Staff can set reminders using the Set a Reminder function.

3. **Simplify ventilator alarm descriptions.** Vocera Engage users can configure their system to simplify terminology and include actions based on the ventilator alarm type. Engage provides flexibility to allow you to modify the “Heading” description of a ventilator alarm notification to adapt for use by clinical staff without familiarity or years of experience in critical care or intensive care units. Engage also allows you to include URL links in alarm notifications so staff can view clinical reference material or CDC educational content.

Support Staff Well-Being

1. **Remind staff to take a pause in the current chaos and practice mindfulness.** Practicing mindfulness can reduce stress, sharpen concentration skills, and contribute toward overall mental and physical health. Vocera Badge and Smartbadge users can say “Play mindfulness” to spend 30 seconds, one minute, or five minutes.

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