TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE - GENERAL GUIDELINES

Scope: All Employees/Volunteers

Key Actions & Words

Answer telephone calls within three rings. Speak distinctly in a moderate voice that conveys helpful approach, say: "Good morning/evening. This is [unit name]. My name is [your name]. How may I help you?"

If caller must be placed on hold, ask if OK, wait for a response and inform the caller how many calls are ahead of them.

Answer a caller's questions promptly. If you can't help, offer to transfer their call if appropriate but do not pass calls around from department to department. Take a message and be sure it reaches the appropriate person.

When inquiring about a caller's identity, say: "May I ask who is calling please?" or "Who may I say is calling?"

End the call by asking "Is there anything else I can help you with?" or by saying "Thank you for calling, have a pleasant day."

Difficult Call

If the caller's problem is unresolved, say: "I apologize that I am unable to resolve your [concern issue/etc.]. May I take your number and have a member of our management team (or the patient rep.) return your call as soon as possible?"

Refer the call to the appropriate person as soon as you hang up.

"Good (morning, afternoon, or evening) [hospital name] Hospital, (your dept), this is (name), how may I help you?"

If you cannot hear or understand the caller
I'm sorry I couldn't hear you or did not understand you; would you please repeat that for me?

If you still cannot hear or understand the caller
Would you mind spelling [_____________________] for me?

Transfer Calls

“What Person/Dept would you like to reach? (Identify/verify location of patient/dept.) I am transferring you to (Dept name or person) at (give the caller the phone number), you may want to write this number down in case we become disconnected.”

- Transfer the call.
- Remain on the line, explain caller's needs.
- Disconnect