

# How An iPhone Improved Patient Care In The ICU

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At iMedicalApps we have traditionally expounded on how smart phones can help us with patient care in regards to providing Physician centric tools at bedside. These range from [drug reference tools](#) [1] to various [clinical algorithm](#) [1] medical apps.

But there are also non-traditional methods where smartphones enable us to improve patient care at the bedside. These are subtle, but can be equally or more powerful.

When I was working in the ICU recently, there were two “non-traditional” methods that I utilized my iPhone for to improve the care of my patients.

Patient 1:

I was taking care of an adolescent who was still on a ventilator and was having difficulty passing their SBT (spontaneous breathing trial). It was understandably a terrifying experience for the patient as they were still able to communicate and understand their overall disposition — the patient had plenty of family and nursing staff talking them through this. Heavily sedating the patient would only hurt their chances of passing the SBT, so we needed them to be as calm as possible without too much sedation.

The staff and family had given the patient a notepad so they could communicate; however, the adolescent was getting agitated since they could not verbalize themselves due to the breathing tube being in place. Unfortunately, the patient had pathology preventing them from adequately being able to write on a notepad — their words appeared as scribble.

When I came on for my overnight shift, I handed the patient my iPhone.

The words flowed with ease. We sometimes forget adolescents are more used to taping on a glass screen than writing on a notepad. Also, taping is much easier from a dexterity and muscle effort standpoint than writing on a pad when you're lying down — especially when you're connected to a breathing machine.

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[2] <http://www.kevinmd.com/blog/2013/08/iphone-improved-patient-care-icu.html>