

Video Visit Guidelines

Site Applicability

All VCH Sites

Practice Level

All VCH clinical staff, medical staff and non-clinical professionals: basic skill

Requirements

These Video Visit guidelines must be followed by Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) staff and medical staff when communicating by video conference with patients, clients or residents; family members or representatives; care providers; and/or staff members; and/or other external agencies; and in conjunction with the [VCH Emailing Policy \(BD-00-11-40000\)](#) and adherence with applicable regulatory colleges. This guideline is applicable while conducting video visits in any VCH facility, staff residence, or other private space, which include working from home.

NOTE: For the purposes of these guidelines, “patients, clients or residents” includes their family members or representative.

Need to Know

Video visits should be conducted when appropriate to meet patient, client or residents’ needs and when the clinical interaction does not require in-person physical examination, the application of peripheral diagnostic equipment, or an environmental assessment. Appropriate scenarios for virtual health will be defined by each clinical program area and discipline.

Guidelines

Requirements for doing video visits while working remotely (i.e. from home):

- Need to have access to a private room. Household members or visitors should not be able to see or hear you or your patient, client or resident during your video visit
- The location should be in a professional looking environment. If this is not possible, it is recommended to use a [VCH background](#)
- Ensure that the space is well lit
- All policies related to professional appearance apply while working remotely (i.e. dress code)
- Working remotely with personal information:
 - Do not share a laptop or desktop computer used for clinical work with other individuals, including family members and friends
 - When patient records are not being used, store in a locked filing cabinet or desk drawer that you have sole access to

Prior to the video visit:

- Consider the need for additional support, at the patient, client or resident's location, such as a family member or support personnel depending on the goal of the visit (eg. need for physical or environmental observation).
- Discuss the specific purpose(s) for the video visit with the patient, client or resident, and what technology, other supplies or type of clothing they will need for the visit
- Inform the patient, client or resident when the video visit will occur or how a session will be scheduled.
- Gather the necessary information (i.e. email address, phone number) to connect with the individual.
- Schedule and send the meeting invitation to the patient, client or resident confirming the date and time of the video visit.
- Ensure patient, client or resident has read [Patient Notice for Video Visits](#). Obtain verbal consent and document in the appropriate clinical record.
- Ensure that the patient, client or resident email address is collected and stored securely ideally within the patient, client or resident's chart or electronic health record.
- Authenticate the owner of the email address. This may be accomplished by:
 - Sending an initial email to confirm the right person is being contacted prior to sending the video visit invite or any personal information, or communicating
 - Asking the patient, client or resident to verify a piece of information that only they would know (i.e. date of birth, date of last appointment, middle name etc.) by text or phone.

Preparing for a video visit:

- Find a quiet, private space
- Test out all your equipment before you start to ensure it is working, including microphone, speaker and camera
- Set-up your camera at eye level
- Close any unnecessary programs
- Plug in your computer or mobile device if possible
- Ensure you have access to a secure stable internet connection (the use of public or wifi access such as Starbucks is not permissible with VCH standard of practice)
- Adjust room lighting to ensure patient, client or resident can adequately see you

During the video visit:

- Confirm if the patient, client or resident is at their home address. If not, get the location
- If there is an emergent adverse event that requires medical attention, contact 9-1-1.
- Ensure you are on time for the appointment
- Do not record the clinical interaction. In cases where video recording is necessary, contact the Information Privacy Office for a privacy review
- Wear appropriate staff ID in a place that is visible to the patient, client or resident
- Inform or introduce the individual to all those participating in the call at the beginning of the visit
- Limit video visit communications to information necessary for the effective provision of care within a videoconferencing environment.

- If screen sharing, ensure all other programs such as Microsoft Outlook email or calendar and other documents that may contain personal or confidential information are closed before initiating screen sharing.
- If the patient, client or resident has not read the Patient Notice for Video Visits, obtain verbal consent to continue with the video visit. Examples of verbal consent can be found in the Staff User Guide located on the [Virtual Health intranet page](#).
- When the patient, client or resident enters the video call, ensure the patient or client or resident identity. Identifiers may be provided verbally which may include date of birth, given name, surname or PHN. Alternatively, they can show their government issued identification documents such as a passport, provincial health card or a driver's license
- Discuss the specific purposes for the video visit
- Stay engaged
 - Treat the video visit like you would an in-person visit
 - Use active listening techniques (eg. maintain eye contact and nod along to show you're listening)
 - If you need to take notes or look away, mention that you're doing so to the patient or client or resident
- Explain next steps
 - Once the visit is over, thank the patient or client or resident for doing the video visit and explain what they need to do next (eg. follow-up, laboratory, medications, practice activities, do exercises etc.) if anything
 - Discuss the plan for a follow up meeting if required
- At the end of the meeting, ensure that the video visit has ended

Documentation

- Document in the patient, client or resident's chart, as you would in a face-to-face or other Telehealth consultation, as per your professional standards and program specific requirements. [Documentation Policy \(BCD-11-11-41002\)](#)
- Report any actual or potential privacy breaches to the VCH Information Privacy Office, as per [IM 342: Reporting and Management of Information Privacy Breaches \(D-00-11-30026\)](#).
- Ensure that you are documenting the encounter type appropriately within your electronic health record

Patient and Family Education

- Provide patients, clients and residents with [Patient Notice for Video Visits](#)

Related Documents

VCH - PHC

- [Emailing Policy \(BD-00-11-40000\)](#)

VCH

- [VCH Texting Policy \(D-00-11-30028\)](#)
- [Zoom Application Use \(D-00-07-30311\)](#)
- [FaceTime Use \(D-00-16-30128\)](#)
- [VCH Information Privacy Page](#)
- [Working Remotely Page](#)

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	Endorsed By: (Regional SharePoint 2nd Reading) Health Authority Profession Specific Advisory Council Chairs (HAPSAC) Health Authority & Area Specific Interprofessional Advisory Council Chairs (HAIAC) Operations Directors Professional Practice Directors Final Sign Off: Vice President, Professional Practice & Chief Clinical Information Officer, VCH
Owners: <i>(optional)</i>	VCH
	Developer Lead(s): Regional Director, Virtual Health, Regional Development Team members: Leader, Virtual Health, Regional Business Analyst, Virtual Health, Regional Professional Practice Initiatives Lead, Community Nursing For Regional Councils/Program: Executive Director, Virtual Health and Clinical Informatics