

Delivering telehealth services: Set-up, ‘websites manner’ & resources

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Telehealth delivery checklist

Set-up

- Ensure you are someplace private where you cannot be overheard to protect patient confidentiality
- Eliminate distractions from the background. Aim for as few things in the background as possible. What looks good in-person, often looks cluttered or distracting on camera.
- Try to frame your set-up so that your camera is slightly higher than you and you can look right into it. If you are using a laptop, you may want to consider propping it on a couple of books or a box.
- Use diffused light. This means using overhead lights, desktop lamps, and windows to eliminate shadows rather than shining one source of light directly on you. Try to avoid having a bright window or lamp right behind you as it may make the client unable to see your face.
- Check and make sure your technology is working - the camera is able to turn on, the microphone works, and your internet connection is stable.

“Websites” manner

- Try to look directly at the camera rather than at the person. This gives the appearance of making eye contact. It may be helpful to move the video of the patient right under the camera so that you are already looking at the camera.
- It may be necessary to verbally respond to a client to let them know that you are listening. Sometimes non-verbal cues get lost over video.
- Avoid distractions. Don’t look at your phone or check your email. If you pause to write a note or look away from the camera to do so, let the client know what you are doing.
- Be clearly able to explain telehealth to clients including the pros and cons.

Resources for delivering telehealth services

General

1. Community Technical Assistance Center of New York. (2020, April 1). Essential tips for tele-behavioral health engagement. See: <https://ctacny.org/sites/default/files/FINAL-NYAPRS%20-%20MCTAC%20Essential%20Tips%20for%20Telemetal%20Health%20Engagement.pdf> Provides a step by step process of how to conduct a telehealth session and prepare the client for telehealth delivery.

2. Hawaii State Department of Health Genomics Section. (2020, March 19). Telehealth best practices. See:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTkTUVCUf9Y&feature=youtu.be>
A very simple, 4 minute video explaining how to set-up and prepare for a telehealth visits.
3. Old Dominion University and HRSA. Telehealth etiquette video series. See:
<https://learntelehealth.org/telehealth-etiquette-series/>
While a little over the top, these videos are very clear on what to do and not do during a telehealth visit. They also provide different scenarios for different health professionals.

For children and youth

4. Community Technical Assistance Center of New York. (2020, April 15). Best practices in telemental health with children and adolescents. See:
<https://ctacny.org/training/person-screen-best-practices-telemental-health%C2%A0-children-adolescents>
This is an excellent presentation by a psychologist who delivered telehealth to children and adolescents before the pandemic. She provides tips, games, and activities for engaging children during the call. She also addresses common issues with delivering telehealth to teens.
5. CNY BHCC. (2020, April). Building rapport with youth via telehealth. See:
<https://www.cnybhcc.health/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Engaging-youth-in-telehealth.pdf>
Provides developmentally appropriate tips for using telehealth with children and teens. It explains key differences in what children and adults may need in telehealth visits.
6. CNY BHCC (2020, April). Telehealth activities for youth. See:
<https://www.cnybhcc.health/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Telehealth-Activities-for-Youth-Updated-4.16.20.pdf>
Specific activities and websites that can be used with teens during the telehealth visit in order to make them feel less anxious and engaged.

Please note: Any documents shared by CNY BHCC to respond to the challenges of COVID-19 are prepared based on the information available at the time of creation and are offered to assist our partners in combating this pandemic. It is each organization's responsibility to do their own due diligence if using other's documents and ensuring documents are based on most recent guidance. Any documents used should be reviewed by your own teams/counsel to ensure you are meeting your own regulations and standards. CNY BHCC and/or creators of shared resources shall not be held responsible for the use of their documents by partners. Please continue to utilize resources provided by CDC, NYS DOH, NYS OMH, NYS OASAS and NYS OPWDD.