

Informed Patient Consent and Script

AHS Consent to Treatment/Procedure(s)

The **AHS Consent to Treatment/Procedure(s) Policy PRR-01**

<https://extranet.ahsnet.ca/teams/policydocuments/1/clp-consent-to-treatment-prr-01-policy.pdf> , located on the Alberta Health Services (AHS) Clinical Policies and Procedures webpage states that informed consent for an assessment, treatment or procedure should be a process between the patient and the most responsible health practitioner who has responsibility and accountability for the specific assessment/treatment/procedure to be provided to the patient. The patient may decide to accept or refuse the treatment/procedure. The outcome of the consent process must be documented on the patient's health record.

Obtaining Patient Consent for Virtual Health

AHS healthcare providers are encouraged to inform patients every time they offer them a Virtual Health appointment using virtual care technologies, and to ensure that patients are aware they have the option to attend the Virtual Health appointment, or to be seen in person.

The **Script to Inform Patients about Virtual Health** ([next page](#)) is available for healthcare providers and professionals when offering Virtual Health appointments to patients. In keeping with the **AHS Consent to Treatment/Procedures(s) Policy PRR-01**, patients have a right to be informed by their healthcare provider about the benefits and risks of a Virtual Health appointment. The patient's voluntary acceptance or refusal to attend a Virtual Health appointment is to be documented in the Patient's Health Record. If a patient chooses not to participate in Virtual Health, they should be provided an alternate option for their appointment (e.g. in person clinic or emergency department visit, referral, etc.).

The patient's consent to participate in a Virtual Health appointment is implied when they arrive for their appointment (e.g. at a Telehealth location or when they connect to their appointment online). If any procedure/treatment, recording or sharing of information is to occur during the Virtual Health appointment that requires written consent as per AHS Policy, the healthcare provider is responsible to coordinate this with the patient.

Resources to Use When Informing Patients about Virtual Health

Script to Inform Patients about Virtual Health ([next page](#))

Virtual Health Patient Information Brochure on the AHS Virtual Health page on insite:

<https://insite.albertahealthservices.ca/it/Page1119.aspx>

Health Information Collection Poster on AHS insite:

<https://insite.albertahealthservices.ca/Main/assets/tms/lp/tms-lp-health-information-act-information-sheet.pdf#search=health%20information%20act%20poster>

Script to Inform Patients about Virtual Health

Background

This **Script to Inform Patients about Virtual Health** is a resource for AHS healthcare providers and professionals to use when informing patients about Virtual Health. See the Virtual Health Recommendation: Informed Patient Consent ([Page 1](#)) for more information about obtaining informed consent for Virtual Health.

Introduction

You have the option to have a Virtual Health appointment with [insert name of health care provider and their role](#), who is located in the [insert name of clinic or program](#), at [insert facility and city where clinic is located](#).

This appointment is to [describe the nature of the patient's appointment and scope of services being provided using Virtual Health](#).

You can choose Virtual Health or you can have your appointment in person. To help you decide, here is some information about Virtual Health:

General Information for the Patient

Virtual Health uses technology such as videoconferencing to connect you with healthcare providers when you are not at the same location. This means you don't always need to go to your healthcare provider's office for an appointment.

- You will get all the information you need about when and where to go to your appointment.
- Your clinic will let you know the services that will be provided to you during your Virtual Health appointment and/or any services that they cannot provide during that time.
- During your Virtual Health appointment, you and your clinician may talk about how you are feeling, review your treatment plan and care options, and your clinician may give you health information and education.
- The Virtual Health service is free for you.
- Alberta Health Services Virtual Health technology connections are secure. Any personal or health information you share with your healthcare provider during the appointment is used only for your care and treatment and other purposes allowed by law. Your healthcare provider keeps this information confidential, which is the law under *Alberta's Health Information Act*.
- For your Virtual Health appointment, you will need to be in a private, quiet and well-lit area so that your health information and privacy is protected and your health care provider can hear and see you well.

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- You and your health care provider will let each other know who you are and the reason for your appointment. You should tell each other if anyone else is in the room or comes in to the room during your appointment, and name who they are, even if they can't be seen on the screen.
- There may be some limitations associated with virtual care appointments. For example, the healthcare provider's assessment may be limited to what they can see on screen and they may want to see you in person for more of an assessment. They may choose to end the videoconference and schedule an appointment to see you in person at another time.
- Your appointment won't be recorded unless your healthcare provider feels it should be. Before your appointment, your healthcare provider must get your written permission following Alberta Health Services processes and consent form for recording, and tell you when the recording starts.
- If the Virtual Health technology doesn't work on the day of your appointment, your healthcare provider may need to contact you to book a new appointment with you for a different day and time. If the technology is not working, you can call the clinic where your healthcare provider is located, to let them know.
- You may have a family member or someone else you trust with you during your appointment.
- If at any time you feel that a Virtual Health appointment is not right for you, tell your healthcare provider and they will cancel or stop the appointment. Then they will make other plans with you so you'll keep getting the healthcare you need.
- In a medical emergency, always call 911 or visit the nearest emergency department or urgent care centre.
- If you have other questions or health concerns, you can also call your family physician, a clinic you are going to, or dial 811 on your phone for Health Link – Health Advice.
- If you have questions about Virtual Health before, during or after your Virtual Health appointment, please call [*insert name of the clinic and/or healthcare provider if applicable*](#) at [*contact information \(phone/email as applicable\)*](#).

Questions to Ask the Patient after Giving General Information

1. Do you have any questions about Virtual Health or your appointment?
2. Keeping in mind the risks and benefits of getting care by virtual means, would you like to have your Virtual Health appointment using virtual technologies, or in person?