



## VIRTUAL CARE – QUICK START GUIDE

Providing virtual care can be as simple as a **phone call** but can also include text messaging, email, and video visits.

You can use tools that both you and your patients are already familiar with. The SMA in collaboration with our healthcare partners are providing the video assessment tool **PEXIP** free of cost.

**Saskatchewan EMR Program** is here to support you, please reach out with your virtual care questions to:

☎ 306 657 4557 ✉ [emr@sma.sk.ca](mailto:emr@sma.sk.ca)

🌐 <https://www.sma.sk.ca/4/emr-program.html>

The SMA recognizes the pressures that a public health outbreak puts on physician practices and the health care system. As such the SMA is working with the Ministry of Health, eHealth Saskatchewan and EMR vendors to inform physicians about the value of virtual care to help practices contain the spread of COVID-19 and manage the additional demand for patient care.

In the current situation we recognize that physicians' office practices and delivery of care may be significantly impacted. Physicians should continue to act in the best interests of their patients and may need to adapt and be resourceful in a rapidly changing and challenging environment. Virtual care is one important way you can continue to care for you patients while keeping your patients, yourself and your staff safe. Choose tools that work well for you and your patient and is a secure platform.

### The Essentials to Getting Started With Virtual Care

- Obtain patient **email addresses** and/or **mobile numbers**

Email addresses can be used for communicating new virtual care services to groups of patients, and depending on the virtual care tool can be used for sending the virtual visit link/URL to a patient.

Mobile numbers are useful for communicating with a patient if there are any issues with the virtual visit, or to ensure they are ready for their visit.

### Virtual Care Tools – Examples

Common tools for consideration in use by physicians.

<b>PEXIP</b>	Videoconference provider to patient – <b>subsidized</b> by SMA/Ministry of Health and provided free of cost to all Saskatchewan physicians
<b>Doxy.me</b>	Videoconference provider to patient
<b>Zoom</b>	Videoconference provider to patient, with multiple attendees
<b>Memora Health</b>	Secure text messaging

### **Accuro EMR – QHR Technologies**

**Medeo** – An integrated digital health patient engagement tool available as a mobile app or web-based tool. Medeo enables patients to use their mobile devices to securely message their provider, attend virtual calls, and book appointments with their providers using Accuro. QHR is **offering the 6 months free** Medeo licences.

**Online Booking** - Gives your patients power over their own time while securely managing yours. Spend less time on the phone and more time running your practice.

**Secure Patient Messaging** – Message your patients from the Accuro EMR. Share comments, results, and documents. Messaging is ideal for follow-ups, lab result reviews, and post-op consultations that don't require an in-person visit. Only providers can initiate and close a message thread.

**Secure Video Visits** - Provide video appointments for chronic care, injury and pain management follow-ups, include other providers, and securely reduce barriers due to distance or patient mobility issues.

### **Med Access EMR - TELUS**

**TELUS EMR Mobile** – TELUS EMR Mobile allows clinicians to access their EMR from multiple devices (phone, tablet, desktop), anytime, anywhere. Use TELUS EMR Mobile to access your schedule, patient demographics, and patient charts; add notes and interact with staff and clinicians from your clinic. It is easily paired with your EMR. Download the app today

**TELUS EMR Video Visits** – Virtual Visit capability will soon be available from your Desktop EMR, Smartphone or Tablet. TELUS EMR Video Visits will allow you to schedule and conduct a video visit and live chat with a patient. TELUS EMR Video Visits is being piloted next week in targeted clinics and will be made available for gradual roll-out the week of March 30, 2020. EMR Video Visits will be available **free of charge for 4 months** from activation for customers who sign up before May 31, 2020. Available on your Desktop, Smartphone or Tablet

**Health Myself** – provides a convenient and EMR integrated solution for patients and providers to engage virtually through video consults (NEW), provider to patient messaging, online booking and automated appointment reminders. Additionally, Health Myself allows users to broadcast notifications to entire patient groups providing a mechanism to share important COVID-19 messaging to patients. The new video consult feature will be made available **free of charge for 4 months** to all new and existing Health Myself Portal customers who sign up before May 31, 2020.

### **New templates and forms to support management of COVID-19**

The following templates and forms have been added to the System Template Library to support you in the screening and management of COVID-19 patients.

- COVID-19 Initial Screening – used by staff to support initial screening of incoming patient phone calls
- COVID-19 Assessment Tool – used by providers to document patient encounters during COVID-19 pandemic

## Workflows for Providing Virtual Care

<p><b>Team engagement – Staff / MOAs are key to success</b> - Consider internal meetings to discuss the changes, workflow, and responsibilities.</p>
<p><b>Obtaining and recording patient email addresses and mobile numbers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email addresses can be used for communicating new virtual care services to groups of patients, as well as sending the virtual visit link/URL to an individual patient (depending on the tool. Some have smartphone apps.</li> <li>• Mobile numbers are useful for communicating with a patient if there are any issues with the virtual visit, or to ensure they are ready for their visit.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Informing patients about the new virtual care service</b> - Consider using an email software solution, which will enable you to email groups of patients with information about the new virtual care services.</p>
<p><b>Patient Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)</b> - Consider creating an FAQ document for your patients. E.g. This could include how to book virtual visits, technical tips, troubleshooting, patient etiquette, etc.</p>
<p><b>Allowing patients to email back to the clinic</b> - Consider setting up a new email address to allow patients to send emails to the clinic.</p>
<p><b>Patient suitability</b> - Consider which patients or visit types are suitable for virtual visits. Reviewing your schedule over the last week could help with identifying potential patients and visit types.</p>
<p><b>Schedule planning</b> - Consider specific days and time slots for virtual visits. How will this work with existing schedules? Consider creating an appointment type for virtual visits.</p>
<p><b>Booking virtual visits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how patients can book virtual visits.</li> <li>• Consider staff triaging the booking of patients for in person or virtual visits.</li> <li>• Depending on the tool chosen, consider a virtual waiting room or sending out individual meeting links.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Setting up the room</b> - Consider placement of EMR screen vs. placement of video screen. Can both be displayed on the same screen, or are two screens needed? <b>Essential items include:</b> webcam, microphone and speaker.</p>
<p><b>Virtual visit etiquette</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the space that the patient will view during a virtual visit.</li> <li>• Consider clarifying your actions to the patient if you are not looking at them. E.g. typing up notes on the EMR.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Starting a virtual visit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how to ensure the patient is ready for their virtual visit.</li> <li>• Consider the role of the MOA. Will they contact the patient ahead of time? Will they set up the visit for the physician on the computer?</li> <li>• Does the tool have a virtual waiting room?</li> <li>• Does the patient need to call and 'check in'?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Visit notes</b> - Consider having a standard method for recording that the visit was conducted over video. Charting the patient encounter for video consults is the same as for an in-person visit.</p>
<p><b>Sending documents</b> - If working away from the clinic office, consider how to transfer documents E.g. prescriptions, lab and imaging requisitions using fax, eFax or other ways to the patients preferred pharmacy and labs. Could an MOA send this from the clinic? Consider testing the EMR from home to see what is possible. Does the patient need access to a printer?</p>

**Follow-up visit** - Consider the workflow for arranging a follow-up visit for the patient. What are the instructions for the patient?

## Equipment Essentials and Testing

### Equipment essentials

For a video-based virtual visit the computer, laptop, tablet, or smart phone you are using needs to have:

- Webcam
- Microphone
- Speaker

### Testing your equipment

It is important to test the hardware to ensure your webcam, microphone and speaker are all working and it also helps to be familiar with how to adjust the settings as well.

### Testing the speed of your internet connection

Run an online speed test from the room you would use for video consults to find out the internet speed. Use the equipment you are planning to use for the most accurate test. You can use the site (<https://www.speedtest.net/>).

## Billing Guide

**510A- Pandemic Telephone Assessment - \$35.00** - A maximum of two telephone assessments per patient per day by any physician.

**515A - Pandemic Video Assessment - \$35.00** - A maximum of two video assessments per patient per day by any physician.

## Virtual Care Enablement program

Supporting the implementation of virtual care across the province with:

- **Peer Support Program:** a network of Physician and MOA Peer Mentors to support their colleagues, and/or help facilitate webinars and learning sessions.
- **Webinar Series:** regular webinars will be offered to support you with getting started and optimizing use of virtual care. A list of scheduled webinars can be found on the [SMA website](#).

We are looking for VC peers, please reach out, if you are interested.

✉ [emr@sma.sk.ca](mailto:emr@sma.sk.ca)



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Does the virtual care tool need to be integrated into EMR?

Not every EMR vendor offers virtual care tools at this time (although some are in progress). Some EMR vendors may also have the ability to integrate with third-party vendors. If your EMR does offer virtual care capabilities, you should consider the difference in workflow compared to using a tool that is outside of your EMR. We have summaries of virtual care capabilities for two EMRs in Saskatchewan Accuro and Med Access and you can reach out to find out more.

Which virtual care tool should I choose?

There are many different virtual care platforms on the market that will vary with respect to cost, functionality, privacy and security, workflow and user interface. There are also differences in the device requirements to run a tool (e.g. Windows operating system only) and whether any downloads are required (web-based vs. app-based), which can impact workflows and accessibility.

Do you have any information on the approximate costs for the various virtual care solutions?

Virtual Care pricing varies depending on a number of factors including number of licenses, usage (e.g. number of participants or duration of services allowed), service model, customization, etc. Some of the tools are free of charge – refer to the section on Tools in this Toolkit for a list of options. For tools that are not free, you will need to contact the vendor directly for a personalized quote. Be sure to also ask about other services that the vendor may charge for, such as IT support and training, custom reporting, and data analytics, as these costs can vary among vendors. At this point PEXIP is the only video conferencing software subsidized by SMA and Ministry of Health.

How do I ensure that the device I am using for virtual care is secure?

All systems, applications, and devices used for virtual care should be behind a firewall with anti-malware and anti-virus software installed. You should ensure the device used for videoconferencing is not obsolete and software is current so the most recent updates can be applied. Furthermore, all devices should be password protected using a complex password.

Updates to this guide will be made on an as-needed basis, please check back [SMA website](#) for the most recent version.

**Saskatchewan EMR Program** is here to support you, please reach out with your virtual care questions to:

☎ 306 657 4557 ✉ [emr@sma.sk.ca](mailto:emr@sma.sk.ca) 🌐 <https://www.sma.sk.ca/4/emr-program.html>