

Telehealth

Initiating Telehealth Services

Telehealth should not be offered before an in-person session. The decision to provide services via telehealth should be made on a case-by-case basis. It is recommended that you not offer the option to all of your clients because it is easy to opt into telehealth and miss out on the benefits of meeting in person.

Confidentiality & HIPAA

Ideally, please provide telehealth with a HIPAA compliant platform (DCYHC uses a HIPAA-compliant version of Zoom). HIPAA-compliant platforms that your Seneca equipment can access include: Skype for Business and Microsoft Teams. HIPAA compliance ensures that these interactions occur in a secure space – its the equivalent of closing a door and turning on a sound machine in the office! It protects client confidentiality and their private information.

Documentation

Document what platform you used to provide your service in your mental health note, selecting the Telehealth option for “location.” You must also indicate in the note where the client was at the time of service. Telehealth sessions in which the client did not use their camera are coded "Phone" not "Telehealth."

Prepping Your Client

- Inform your client (and their family, if applicable) of the potential risks and limitations of receiving services via telehealth.
- Provide your client (and their family, if applicable) with information about accessing nearby emergency services.

Each time a telehealth service is provided, clinicians must:

1. Assess whether the client is appropriate for telehealth, including, but not limited to, consideration of the client's psychosocial situation.
2. Ensure client & family confidentiality is maintained. When clinicians are providing telehealth off-site, they must ensure they are located in private space, with appropriate sound barriers as necessary.
3. Maintain professional boundaries. As clients and families will be able to view the clinician and the space in which they are located, clinicians must organize their space in a way that provides a neutral, non-personalized background. Clinicians must also maintain their appearance as a professional, even if they are not in a working environment.

Tools to Improve Practice

Guidelines for Conducting Mental Health Services with Technology