

# Standard Area 1.0

## Service Delivery



### 1.7 Virtual Care

#### Standard

A **regulated member** of ACSLPA will ensure the provision **quality services** when providing **virtual care**.

#### Indicators

To demonstrate this standard, the regulated member will:

- a) Ensure they have acquired the necessary knowledge, skills and support (e.g., technical, communication, observation) to effectively deliver **client** services virtually.
- b) Ensure that methods of virtual service delivery and documentation meet applicable privacy and confidentiality requirements (e.g., encryption of audio and video information, appropriate retention and destruction of audio and video **records**).
- c) Make informed decisions based on best practices, evidence and sound professional judgment as to whether virtual care is an appropriate option to address specific clients' needs.
- d) Practice within the legislated scope of practice for the province(s) in which they are registered.
- e) Obtain clients' **informed consent** to the proposed virtual services ensuring that clients are fully aware of the risks, benefits, and other service options, and that they are free to refuse or revoke their consent for services at any time.
- f) Take all reasonable steps to mitigate risks for the client, including ensuring that a person who may be assisting them in their physical space has the qualifications, **competencies** and skills necessary to safely and effectively perform their duties.

#### Expected Outcomes

Clients can expect to be informed about the risks and benefits of virtual care. Just as with face-to-face services, they can expect to receive ethical quality services using a virtual care format, and they have the right to refuse or revoke their consent for virtual services at any time.

**Client** refers to "a recipient of speech-language pathology or audiology services, and may be an individual, family, group, community or population. An individual client may also be referred to as a patient."

**Competence/competent/competency** refers to "the combined knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to provide professional services."

**Informed consent** refers to when "a client gives consent to receive a proposed service following a process of decision-making leading to an informed choice. Valid consent may be either verbal or written unless otherwise required by institutional or provincial/territorial regulation. The client is provided with sufficient information, including the benefits and risks, and the possible alternatives to the proposed service, and the client understands this information. The client can withdraw informed consent at any time."

**Quality services** refers to "services in the health care system as measured by accessibility, acceptability, appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, and safety factors, including cultural safety and freedom from racism/discrimination."

**Record** refers to "information in any form or medium, including notes, images, audiovisual recordings, x-rays, books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers and papers and any other information that is written, photographed, recorded or stored in any manner."

**Regulated member** refers to "an individual who is registered with ACSLPA in any of the regulated categories of membership prescribed by *ACSLPA Bylaws*, the *Health Professions Act* and our *Regulations*."

**Virtual care** refers to "the provision of speech-language pathology and audiology services at a distance, using synchronous and asynchronous information and digital communications technologies and processes (examples include telephone, virtual computer platforms, email, and text messaging). Virtual care is often referred to as telepractice or telehealth services, and may include interactions between SLPs, audiologists and their clients, as well as interactions between health care providers. It may be for the purposes of diagnosis, assessment, treatment, consultation, and education."