

Procedure Title: TeleHealth Maintaining Technical Integrity

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TeleHealth Maintaining Technical Integrity

SCOPE

System Wide: This procedure applies to all regional telepresenters working with SIU HealthCare clinicians and SIU HealthCare's partner TeleHealth organizations providing care via TeleHealth. This policy addresses clinical operations and patient care activities for both the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and SIU Healthcare which will be collectively referred to as SIU.

PURPOSE

To outline the process for TeleHealth patient sites to ensure the video and audio quality is maintained for a TeleHealth visit and to outline equipment and procedures for doing so.

PROCEDURE BODY

The policy is to ensure that video and audio quality is maintained at a level sufficient for clinical care during interactive TeleHealth consultations.

1. Responsibilities

- a.** The TeleHealth nurse is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the quality of audio and video during a clinical consultation between a clinician and patient.
- b.** The TeleHealth Director ensures adequate training in equipment use, communication techniques, and interactive styles successful for communicating clinic information over TeleHealth technologies for clinicians and the TeleHealth nurses.
- c.** The TeleHealth nurse ensures adequate communication during a clinical consult via TeleHealth technologies between the patient and the consulting clinician.
- d.** The IS department is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the video network including all hardware.

2. The Role of the TeleHealth Nurse in Maintaining Technical Integrity

- a.** Demonstrates sufficient clinical competency in the proper use of videoconferencing equipment and in trouble shooting problems during a consultation.
- b.** Instruct patients how to communicate via TeleHealth technologies prior to consultation.
- c.** Observes communication between the consulting clinician and patient during the consultation with the exception of Psychiatry consults or for those in which the patient requests the TeleHealth nurse to leave the room.
*In the instance the nurse is asked to leave the room during a consult:
 - The nurse will ensure all equipment is working properly before leaving.
 - The nurse will stay for a brief introductory period to ensure two-way communication with the clinician has been established.
 - The nurse will inform the patient where they will be in the event that technical difficulties occur.
- d.** If the TeleHealth nurse determines that the clinician and the patient did not have proper two-way communication due to technical difficulties or speaking at the same time, the nurse will ask the patient or clinician to repeat any necessary information.

- e. If the quality of the audio or video is insufficient enough to recreate the interaction experienced or is unacceptable to either the patient, clinician, or the patient's family, the TeleHealth nurse may request the consultation be stopped and rescheduled in person or via TeleHealth.

3. Technical Failure Reporting

- a. At the time the TeleHealth nurse discovers a technology problem before a consultation begins and before the patient is in the room, the nurse will complete all on-site problem solving procedures.
- b. If the TeleHealth nurse cannot resolve the technical problem, a call will be placed to the **TeleHealth Helpline (217)545-8600**.
- c. Technology problems will be worked on prior to the patient being placed in the room to ensure privacy. *If the patient had already been placed in the room, the TeleHealth nurse will move the camera off the patient and in a position where only the TeleHealth nurse can be viewed. Ensure all electronically transferred patient data cannot be viewed prior to calling the Helpline.
- d. The TeleHealth nurse will then inform the patient that a need to involve technical staff is necessary to repair of the problem. The patient will be given the option of waiting in the exam room or in the waiting area.
- e. The Helpline will follow internal procedures for identifying the source of the problem and providing the right technician for solving the problem as quickly as possible.
- f. The Helpline technician will call and inform the TeleHealth nurse the technician's name and that the technician may view the patient site remotely until the technology problem is resolved.
- g. The technician will resolve the problem and will inform the TeleHealth nurse through videoconferencing system that the problem is resolved.
- h. The technician will announce to the TeleHealth nurse that they are dropping out of the call and will not participate unless the TeleHealth nurse calls with further problems.
- i. All technology problems will be documented by the TeleHealth nurse on the TeleHealth Technology Report Form. This form is mailed by the Telehealth nurse in the provided envelopes and reviewed by the TeleHealth Director.
- j. All technology failures are tracked and analyzed by the Administrative team for causes to help minimize or eliminate repeat technical problems during consultations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND QUESTIONS

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