

Telemedicine

The **Standards of Practice** of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta ("the College") are the **minimum** standards of professional behavior and ethical conduct expected of all regulated members registered in Alberta. Standards of Practice are enforceable under the *Health Professions Act* and will be referenced in the management of complaints and in discipline hearings. The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta also provides **Advice to the Profession** to support the implementation of the Standards of Practice.

- (1) For the purpose of this Standard, "telemedicine" means the provision of medical diagnosis and patient care through electronic communication where the patient and the provider are in different locations.
- (2) A regulated member who practises telemedicine for a patient located within Alberta **must**:
 - (a) hold a valid and active Alberta practice permit with the College; and
 - (b) adhere to the College [Standards of Practice](#), [Code of Conduct](#) and [Code of Ethics](#).
- (3) Notwithstanding clause 2 (a), a regulated member who does not hold a valid and active Alberta practice permit **may** practise telemedicine for a patient located within Alberta if:
 - (a) the total number of telemedicine events are limited to five (5) times per year; or
 - (b) the telemedicine event is for emergency assessment or treatment of a patient.
- (4) A regulated member who holds a valid and active Alberta practice permit and practises telemedicine for a patient located outside Alberta **must** comply with the licensing or registration requirements of the jurisdiction in which the patient is located.
- (5) A regulated member **must not** issue or sign a prescription, by electronic or other means, unless the regulated member:
 - (a) obtains a medical history and conducts an appropriate examination of the patient adequate to establish a diagnosis and identify underlying conditions;
 - (b) ensures there are no absolute contraindications to the treatment recommended or provided; and
 - (c) has an appropriate, informed discussion to ensure the patient understands the risks, benefits and course of action if concerns are identified.
- (6) Notwithstanding clause 5, a regulated member **may** issue a prescription without meeting the full scope of the requirements listed above in the following circumstances:
 - (a) for emergency treatment of a patient;

Terms used in the Standards of Practice:

- "Regulated member" means any person who is registered or who is required to be registered as a member of this College. The College regulates physicians, surgeons and osteopaths.
- "Must" refers to a mandatory requirement.
- "May" means that the physician may exercise reasonable discretion.
- "Patient" includes, where applicable, the patient's legal guardian or substitute decision maker.

- (b) in consultation with another regulated member who has an ongoing relationship with the patient and who has agreed to provide ongoing supervision of the patient's treatment; or
- (c) in an on-call or cross-coverage situation in which the prescribing regulated member has access to the [patient's medical records](#).

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