DHCA TELECONSULTATION

POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

Teleconsultation, a category of telehealth, utilizes technologies to allow healthcare professionals to deliver on-demand care, through the delivery of healthcare services directly between healthcare professional and a patient, and/or peer to peer as healthcare professional to healthcare professional, typically using video conferencing.

For the purpose of this policy, teleconsultation is defined as follows: remote telecommunications, generally for the purpose of diagnosis or treatment and may include services enabled by a range of secured telecommunications media such as, telephone, internet based video, email and other similar electronic-based communications provided by a DHCA Licensed Service Provider.

This policy has been developed by Dubai Healthcare City Authority- Regulatory (DHCR), the regulatory arm of Dubai Healthcare City Authority, to provide healthcare operators and healthcare professionals licensed by DHCA the requirements in the development and implementation of teleconsultation services in accordance with relevant Regulations, Policies, and Standards.

1.	APPLICABLE TO
1.1	All Healthcare Operators and healthcare professionals licensed by DHCA providing or intending to provide teleconsultation services to their current and established patient populations.

2.	POLICY
2.1	**Healthcare Operator Requirements and Responsibilities**: Prior to conducting teleconsultation services, Licensed Healthcare Operators will need to comply with the following: 2.1.1 Identify the scope and provide evidence to support the use of the provided teleconsultation services, and comply with operational policies and procedures of the service delivery; 2.1.2 Ensure the teleconsultation services and technologies fulfill the patients' needs and guarantee medical care continuity; 2.1.3 Must have approved documents for clinical governance framework, management functions and policies and procedures made available for review including but not limited to: 2.1.3.1 Patient identification; 2.1.3.2 Patient risk assessment; 2.1.3.3 Patient consent; 2.1.3.4 Emergency procedures; 2.1.3.5 Protection of patient protected information and maintenance of confidentiality; 2.1.3.6 Prescribing recording and reporting in accordance with local and federal regulations.

		(MOHAP regulations must be followed regarding the prescribing and management of controlled substances);
		2.1.3.7 Adverse event, incident, patient complaint, or near miss recording and reporting;
		2.1.3.8 Equipment quality control and failure management;
		2.1.3.9 Management of patient appointments, referrals and follow up to ensure quality and continuity of care;
		2.1.3.10 Collection, management and maintenance of the teleconsultation documentation along with any integration with the patient medical record in accordance with applicable laws and regulations;
		2.1.3.11 Quality improvement and procedures for performance management, quality assurance and control processes, system for periodical review of policies and procedures pertaining to the services and training of professionals and administrative staff;
		2.1.3.12 Accountability as a DHCA licensed facility for any and all information received via teleconsultation from a non DHCA licensed professional which is used in direct patient care.
		2.1.4 Ensure that services are not used as an alternative solution for shortage of qualified healthcare professionals who are normally required to provide the services in healthcare facilities;
		2.1.5 Ensure that all cost associated with the utilization of teleconsultation services is made available and communicated to the patients, families and fellow healthcare professionals and organizations;
		2.1.6 Comply with requests from DHCA for information and co-operate with any audit and inspection activities;
		2.1.7 Have systems and processes for good quality data recording, storage and backup in accordance with the DHCA Medical Records Policy, and any relevant federal laws & regulations in the UAE;
		2.1.8 Applying for and obtaining required Commercial and Operating Licenses or amendments to existing licenses is mandatory prior to initiating teleconsultation services.
	2.2	**Healthcare Professional Requirements and Responsibilities:**
		2.2.1 The Healthcare professional must hold a valid DHCA professional practicing license;
		2.2.2 Has undergone documented training and testing on use of the systems, processes and equipment;
		2.2.3 Clinical Privileges;
		2.2.4 Healthcare Professionals practicing teleconsultation shall comply with all of rules of professional conduct and provide services within their scope of license and are accountable for any and all medical information received via teleconsultation from a non DHCA licensed professional which is used in direct patient care;
		2.2.5 Healthcare Professionals have the right to decline delivering services using teleconsultation

	based on their clinical judgement;
	2.2.6 Any and all medication prescribing, including over the counter, as a result of a teleconsultation visit can only be carried out by a DHCA licensed healthcare professional with prescribing privileges.
2.3	**Facility Technical Requirements and Responsibilities:**
	2.3.1 Equipment, devices and supplies including the following:
	2.3.1.1 Video devices and equipment needed to facilitate the communication (asynchronous and Synchronous) between the professional and patient to support all teleconsultation services delivered;
	2.3.1.2 Equipment and devices compatible with technical communication to safely and securely transmit data and information in accordance with all applicable local and federal laws and regulations regarding health data protection;
	2.3.1.3 Equipment of suitable quality, designated for medical use installed and used properly and in manner to guarantee patient safety and patient privacy and confidentiality;
	2.3.1.4 Equipment that has been periodically and appropriately maintained and serviced in accordance with manufacturers specifications.
	2.3.2 Policy and procedures in case of any emergency or technical failures for communication equipment and devices and IT systems to assure the security and protection of the patient health records, including downtime procedures.
2.4	**DHCR Roles and Responsibilities:**
	2.4.1 DHCA shall ensure that this policy is in accordance with its standards and regulations and shall notify operators if any edits or revisions occur;
	2.4.2 DHCA personnel reserve the right to conduct surveys and inspections to ensure compliance;
	2.4.3 DHCA reserves the right to withhold approval or direct discontinuation for any services upon establishing evidence of unsatisfactory standards, treatment outcomes or breach of regulations;
	2.4.4 DHCA shall communicate with all operators to ensure transparency and clarity with regard to inspection and audit, clinical and non-clinical complaints.

3.	COMMUNICATION (check all that apply)
☒	Announcement
☒	Awareness
☐	Training
☒	Other specify: Website Upload

4.	DEFINITIONS
4.1	Definitions and abbreviations available on DHCR website documents under technical references or via this link: https://www.dhcr.gov.ae/en/laws-and-regulations/handbooks-and-technical-references

5.	REFERENCES
5.1	DHCR Standard for Telehealth Services
5.2	DHCR Medical Records Policy
5.3	DHCC Health Data Protection Regulation No 7 of 2013

REVISION HISTORY

S No	Summary	Amend Type*	Page	Issue No	Issue Date
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

* Amend Type: New / Add/ Modify / Cancel