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# TELEMEDICINE PRACTICE GUIDELINES

25 March 2020

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# 1 GUIDELINES – MODERN MEDICINE

1. Telemedicine Practice Guidelines (25 March 2020)
2. Frequently Asked Questions [FAQs] on Telemedicine Practice Guideline (06 Apr 2020)
1. Modifications in Medicine List in Telemedicine Practice Guidelines(11 Apr 2020)

# 2 GUIDELINES - ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE - HOMEOPATHY

## TELEMEDICINE PRACTICE GUIDELINES (10 Apr 2020)

Enabling Registered Homoeopathic Practitioners to  
Provide Healthcare Using Telemedicine

Weblink: <https://www.ayush.gov.in/docs/126.pdf>

Issued by: Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH)

# 3

## GUIDELINES – ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE – AYURVEDA, SIDDHA & UNANI

### TELEMEDICINE PRACTICE GUIDELINES - (07 Apr 2020) for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani Practitioners

[Weblink](#)

Issued by: Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM)

# 4 AUDIENCE

This document is intended for the consumption of a registered medical practitioner (RMP).

RMP is defined as: A person who is enrolled in the State Medical Register or the Indian Medical Register under the Indian Medical Council Act 1956.' [IMC Act, 1956]. 'You', 'Your', 'Yourself' or 'RMP' refers to a registered medical practitioner.

# 5 MEDICAL ETHICS, DATA PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

Patient's personal data should not be disclosed or transferred without written consent of the patient

Principles of medical ethics, including professional norms for protecting patient privacy and confidentiality as per IMC Act shall be binding and must be upheld and practiced.

(Guidelines Section 3.7.1)

3.7.1.1 Principles of medical ethics, including professional norms for protecting patient privacy and

confidentiality as per IMC Act shall be binding and must be upheld and practiced.

3.7.1.2 Registered Medical Practitioner would be required to fully abide by Indian Medical Council

(Professional conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002 and with the relevant provisions of the IT Act, Data protection and privacy laws or any applicable rules notified from time to time for protecting patient privacy and confidentiality and regarding the handling and transfer of such personal information regarding the patient. This shall be binding and must be upheld and practiced.

(cont'...)

# 5.1 MEDICAL ETHICS, DATA PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

## 3.7.1.4 Misconduct

It is specifically noted that in addition to all general requirements under the MCI Act for professional conduct, ethics etc, while using telemedicine all actions that wilfully compromise patient care or privacy and confidentiality, or violate any prevailing law are explicitly not permissible.

Some examples of actions that are not permissible:

RMPs insisting on Telemedicine, when the patient is willing to travel to a facility and/or requests an in-person consultation

RMPs misusing patient images and data, especially private and sensitive in nature (e.g. RMP uploads an explicit picture of patient on social media etc)

RMPs who use telemedicine to prescribe medicines from the specific restricted list

RMPs are not permitted to solicit patients for telemedicine through any advertisements or inducements

**3.7.1.5 Penalties:** As per IMC Act, ethics and other prevailing laws.

# 6 EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION FOR PATIENT EVALUATION

(Guidelines Section 4. Pg 26)

- The RMP may ask the patient to provide relevant information (complaints, information about any other consults for the same problem, available investigation and medication details, if any). The patient shall be responsible for accuracy of information shared by him/her with the RMP.
- If the RMP feels that the information provided at this stage is inadequate, then he/she shall request for additional information from the patient. This information may be shared in real time or shared later via email/text, as per the nature of such information. The consultation may be resumed at a rescheduled time after receipt of the additional information (this may include some laboratory or radiological tests). In the meantime, the RMP may provide health advice as appropriate.
- If the RMP is satisfied that he/she has adequate patient information for offering a professional opinion, then he/she shall exercise one's professional judgment for its suitability for management via telemedicine.
- If the situation is NOT appropriate for further telemedicine consultation, then the RMP should provide Health advice/ Education as appropriate; and/or refer for in-person consultation.



# 7 IDENTIFICATION

## RMP

Identify yourself to the patient before the start of every teleconsultation.

Inform the patient about your name and qualification.

Note: This may be uncomfortable to be done every time, especially to a known patient but it is necessary as per the Guidelines.

## PATIENT

**Patient identification is mandatory at all Times.**

(Section 3.2 Pg 16)

Confirm the patient's identity to your satisfaction by asking for their:

- name,
- age,
- address or
- any other identification that may be reasonable.

# 8 CAREGIVER IDENTITY AND AUTHORIZATION

Caregiver identity and authorization should be checked:

If the patient is not a minor or is not incapacitated, then a caregiver cannot consult on behalf of the patient unless he or she has a formal authorization by the patient or his/her legal representatives (family members).

Even if a patient is a minor, the caregiver's identity needs to be checked.

# 9 MAINTAIN DIGITAL TRAIL DOCUMENTATION OF CONSULTATION

(Section 3.7.2)

It is incumbent on RMP to maintain the following records/ documents for the period as prescribed from time to time:

3.7.2.1 Log or record of Telemedicine interaction (e.g. Phone logs, email records, chat/text record, video interaction logs etc.).

3.7.2.2 Patient records, reports, documents, images, diagnostics, data etc. (Digital or non-Digital) utilized in the telemedicine consultation should be retained by the RMP.

3.7.2.3 Specifically, in case a prescription is shared with the patient, the RMP

# 10 PRESCRIPTION

If a prescription is being issued, then ensure it complies with legal requirements for a regular prescription:

Prescription must comply with the Drugs & Cosmetics Act 1940 and the Professional Conduct Guidelines of the MCI, 2002. A photo, scan or a digital signed copy of the prescription may be provided, as appropriate. If the prescription is directly sent to the pharmacy, ensure there is a consent from the patient, before transmission to the pharmacy.

(FAQ Q18 Pg 8.)

Prescription: As in all scenarios, the RMP will be responsible for his/her prescriptions.

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# 10.1 PRESCRIPTION MATRIX

Table: Matrix of permissible drug list based on the type and mode of communication

List Group	Mode of communication (Video/Audio/Text)	Nature of consultation (First-consultation/follow-up)	List of Medicines
O	Any	Any	List O <sup>1</sup>
A	Video	First Consultation, follow-up for continuation of medications	List A <sup>2</sup>
B	Any	Follow-up	List B <sup>3</sup>
Prohibited	Not to be prescribed	Not to be prescribed	Schedule X of Drug and Cosmetic Act and Rules or any Narcotic and Psychotropic substance listed in the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Act 1985 <sup>4</sup>

1. This list includes commonly used 'over-the-counter medications such as Paracetamol, Oral Rehydration Solution(ORS) packets, Antacids etc. This list also includes medicines that may be deemed necessary during emergencies and would be notified from time to time.
2. This list includes usually prescribed medications for which diagnosis is possible only by video consultation such as antifungal medications for Tinea Cruris, Ciprofloxacin eye drops for Conjunctivitis, etc. and Re-fill medications for chronic diseases such as Diabetes, Hypertension, Asthma etc
3. This list includes 'add-on' medications which are used to optimize an existing condition. For instance, if the patient is already on Atenolol for hypertension and the blood pressure is not controlled, an ACE inhibitor such as Enalapril
4. For instance, Anti-Cancer drugs; Narcotics such as Morphine, Codeine etc.



# 11

# TELECONSULTATIONS CANNOT BE ANONYMOUS



Teleconsultations cannot be anonymous and explicit consent is required if you initiate the teleconsultation:

- Both the patient and you need to know each other's identity for every teleconsultation.
- Do not start the teleconsultation unless explicit consent has been taken. Often, the teleconsultation platform facilitates this.

# 12 APPROPRIATENESS OF A TELECONSULTATION

**Do not continue with teleconsultation if it is not appropriate.**

If you are not satisfied with the information provided by the patient to provide specific treatment, i.e. prescription or health advice, then you should provide limited consultation and/or refer the patient for an in-person consultation.

# 13 EMERGENCY TELECONSULTATIONS

Do not deny emergency teleconsultation, but limit it to immediate assistance, first aid or referral advice:

In case alternative care is not present, teleconsultation might be the only way to provide timely care. In such situations, you may provide consultation to your best judgement.

**Guidelines** [Section 4.1.2.2 (3) Pt 3. Pg 28]

If the patient presents with a complaint which the RMP identifies as an emergency condition necessitating urgent care, the RMP would then advice for first aid to provide immediate relief and guide for referral of the patient, as deemed necessary.

(cont'...)



# 13.1 EMERGENCY TELECONSULTATIONS

## Guidelines (Section 4.5 Pg 32)

In all telemedicine consultations, as per the judgment of the RMP, if it is an emergency situation, the goal and objective should be to provide in-person care at the soonest. However critical steps could be life-saving and guidance and counseling could be critical. For example, in cases involving trauma , right advice and guidance around maintaining the neck position might protect the spine in some cases. The guidelines are designed to provide a balanced approach in such conditions.

The RMP, based on his/ her professional discretion may

- o Advise first aid
- o Counseling
- o Facilitate referral

In all cases of emergency, the patient **MUST** be advised for an in-person interaction with a Registered Medical Practitioner at the earliest

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THANK YOU AND WELCOME TO  
**THE PRACTO FAMILY**

