



Telepractice

Approved by CRPNM Board of Directors
December 2019

Practice Direction

Telepractice



Background

Practice directions set out requirements related to specific aspects of registered psychiatric nursing practice and provide more detailed information related to the *Registered Psychiatric Nurses Act*, the *Registered Psychiatric Nurse Regulation*, other relevant legislation, the *Standards of Psychiatric Nursing Practice* and the *CRPNM Code of Ethics*.

The intent of this practice direction is to define the expectations for Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) who are providing telepractice services to clients¹ in other locations outside their own practice setting. Telepractice is the use of telecommunications technology to deliver health care services at a distance that are located outside of the setting in which they practice.

Telecommunications refers to all types of voice, data and video transmission. This is a broad term that includes a wide range of information transmitting technologies such as telephones (wired and wireless), microwave communications, fiber optics, satellites, radio and television broadcasting, the internet and telegraphs.

Telepractice may include any or all of the following:

- Consultation
- Assessment and monitoring
- Health teaching/client education
- Diagnosis
- Treatment
- Professional development
- Collaboration amongst health care providers

Practice Direction

All Registered Psychiatric Nurses who provide or are contemplating the provision of telepractice services must be familiar with the benefits and risks of providing this type of service. RPNs in many practice settings may use telepractice to deliver psychiatric nursing services; provide education; assess and monitor client progress; obtain information; assess and monitor outcomes; access client records and provide counseling and psychosocial intervention(s). RPNs providing telepractice services must meet the practice expectations outlined in this document.

¹ For the purposes of this document “client” is defined as, but not limited to, patient, family, community and/or population.

Practice Expectations

Registered Psychiatric Nurses engaged in the practice of telepractice are considered to be practising psychiatric nursing in Manitoba, regardless of where the client is located.

1. Registered Psychiatric Nurses engaged in or contemplating offering telepractice services must be registered with the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba;
2. Registered Psychiatric Nurses engaged in or contemplating offering telepractice services must act in accordance to the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Act, its attendant regulations, the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, all relevant Manitoba laws and statutes, federal legislation and organizational policies; and
3. Registered Psychiatric Nurses providing services to clients outside of Manitoba must contact the RPN regulatory body in the province where the client lives to see if they must be registered in that jurisdiction before providing telepractice services to the client. If an RPN regulatory body does not exist, extra precaution should be taken by the RPN to ensure that they are following all applicable provincial laws in the province in which the client is located regarding telepractice.

Applying the Principles to Practice

Duty to Care

The duty to care in a telepractice setting should follow the same principles as in a face-to-face interaction:

- The Registered Psychiatric Nurse is responsible to provide the client adequate, current, relevant and ongoing care instructions.
- The client's location in relation to the RPN should not affect the outcome of that care.

Suitability

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services needs to consider whether or not a client is suitable for telepractice services by contemplating multiple factors, such as:

- The ability to communicate under a variety of conditions; i.e. environmental and technological.
- The scope of the service(s) being provided.
- Familiarity with and limitations of the technology being utilized.
- Whether the technology complies with legal requirements and operational protocols such as scheduling, reserving space (where applicable) and timeliness of the services being provided.

Ethics

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services must remain diligent to the psychiatric nurse-client relationship and maintain the integrity and value of this relationship.

- The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services must also uphold the ethics of the profession and provide accessible, safe and quality care.
- The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services must also be able to recognize when and where potential boundary violations may occur, when a telepractice approach may not be appropriate for the services being delivered and the scope of practice of the RPN and profession as a whole.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Informed Consent

The principles of privacy, confidentiality and informed consent apply in a telepractice setting just as they do in providing direct care.

- The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services needs to take extra precautions when delivering telepractice services to ensure that the client's privacy and confidentiality are maintained and ensuring that informed consent is obtained prior to any services being delivered by telepractice.
- The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services must state their identity and location at the outset of each consultation or session and the identity of each client is confirmed prior to the delivery of telepractice services for each consultation or session.

Documentation and Client Records

The principles of documentation and access to client records do not change regardless of where or how psychiatric nursing care is being delivered.

- The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services must be mindful of where and how documentation occurs and how access to client records can be obtained especially where multiple providers are involved and if the client is in another jurisdiction.
- The Registered Psychiatric Nurse providing telepractice services needs to take into account who is the trustee of the client's record and how information may be shared while delivering telepractice services.

Resources

Canadian Nurses Protective Society (2008). Telephone Advice. InfoLAW, A Legal Information Sheet For Nurses, 6(1).

College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (2018). Telepractice. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Author.

British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals (2018). Telehealth Practice Standard. Vancouver, British Columbia: Author.

College of Nurses of Ontario (2017). Practice Guideline: Telehealth. Toronto, Ontario: Author

This publication is available in alternate formats on request



THE COLLEGE OF

REGISTERED PSYCHIATRIC NURSES of MANITOBA

1854 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3J 0G9
T 204 888-4841 / F 204 888-8638
crpnm@crpnm.mb.ca / www.crpnm.mb.ca