Telehealth Services Guide

September 15, 2023

ICE

ICE Health Service Corps

FOREWORD

The Telehealth Services Guide supplements the IHSC Directive: 01-48, *Telehealth Services Directive*.

The Clinical Support Services Unit (CSSU) chief authors and maintains the *IHSC Telehealth Services Guide.* The guide explains concepts and types of services, assigns responsibilities, and details processes and procedures for requesting and approving telehealth services. The CSSU chief oversees the IHSC Telehealth Services Program.

The guide applies to all IHSC health staff who support health care operations within ICE-owned detention facilities, and IHSC Headquarters personnel who administer or support the program.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This IHSC Telehealth Services Guide provides instructions and practical information to guide staff in the use of telehealth technologies and resources while caring for ICE detainees. The term "telehealth" refers to the use of technology to remotely connect detainees to vital health care. Remote services include clinical, specialty care services, detainee and professional health-related education, and consultation services. Telehealth increases detainee access to health promotion and disease management services.

Telehealth broadens the efficiency of health care by increasing access to clinical care not available on-site and eliminating or reducing travel time and associated costs. Telehealth is a solution for geographically remote areas where staffing shortages are prevalent or specialty practices are limited, as it connects detainees to medical services and improves the continuum of care. Telehealth has expanded specific diagnostic provisions, psychiatry/behavioral health, infectious disease, non-invasive cardiology, and dental care among detainees in ICE custody.

This guide provides instruction on how to request remote clinical or specialty care, consultations, and health-related education. Telehealth technology methods include store-and-forward, remote monitoring, and live video. The guide describes the key roles and responsibilities of IHSC units, and outlines the general process for requesting, delivering, and monitoring telehealth services. Lastly, the guide orients clinicians on how to use telehealth services effectively. Discipline-specific standard operating procedures outline specific roles, responsibilities, and processes, when applicable.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Clinical Services Support Unit (CSSU)

1. Develops, reviews, and updates policies and official guidance for implementing administrative and or clinical procedures related to telehealth services.

2. Develops, reviews, and updates policies and official guidance for implementing administrative and or clinical procedures related to telehealth services.

3. Monitors the federal and state regulatory and legislative policy environments for program impact on the delivery of telehealth services; incorporates changes when appropriate.

4. Provides administrative oversight and guidance on the utilization of telehealth technologies.

5. Coordinates reviews of telehealth service utilization, and collects statistical information for implementing telehealth process improvements.

6. Ensures the technical interface between IHSC Headquarters and IHSC facilities.

7. Ensures IHSC staff who provide telehealth services have access to orientation and training in the use of telehealth technologies.

B. Health Services Administrator (HSA) or Designee

1. Supports telehealth service operations at the facility level, ensuring adequate space, technology access, and working equipment.

2. Coordinates scheduling for detainee appointments.

3. Ensures IHSC personnel receive training on telehealth services.

4. Ensures facility statistical and maintenance reports, and clinical documentation, are collected and reported per official guidance.

5. Identifies an appropriate location for telehealth service that includes considerations for access, privacy, and safety.

6. Identifies an appropriate location for all equipment, supplies, and tools that facilitate telehealth services, including but not limited to computers, telephones, cameras, speakers, microphones, diagnostic items, and ensures all are in good working condition.

7. Provides information about numbers of requests made and completed, specific feedback about delays in scheduling, canceled appointments, off-site visits not needed because of substituted use of telehealth services, and other findings from patient outcomes.

C. Clinical Director (CD)

1. Supports telehealth service referrals and implements procedures for clinician utilization at the facility level.

2. Ensures IHSC health services staff complete assessments and follow up actions from telehealth services per official guidance.

3. Provides feedback to clinicians when appropriate about remote clinical and specialty care consultations, health-related education for telehealth services requests and follow up, and addresses incomplete documentation.

4. Participates in quality improvement activities.

D. Referring Clinicians

1. Performs comprehensive patient assessments.

2. Initiates requests for telehealth services per official guidance.

E. IHSC Telehealth Providers

1. Perform assessments and develop treatment plans utilizing telehealth technology.

2. Complete documentation per official guidance.

III. TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Upon arrival to the facility, staff provide all detainees with the Patient Handbook and inform all patients about accessing health services.

A. Telehealth Service Referrals

1. The referring clinician initiates all telehealth services requests in the electronic health record.

   a. The written request describes clinical symptoms, relevant medical history, clinical findings, laboratory tests, radiograph images, electrocardiograms, treatments, and other relevant medical information for referral justification.

   b. Provider-to-provider and store-and-forward telehealth service requests do not require detainee presence.

2. The priority of referrals for telehealth services is categorized by providers as outlined in IHSC standards of care and per IHSC's existing policies.

   a. In indicated cases for immediate medical services, telehealth technologies should not impede local emergency procedures for evaluating and treating life-threatening conditions and or situations, specific on-site clinical encounters, security, or facility safety.

   b. The HSA or designee ensures timely processing of all requests for telehealth services.

3. The CD or designee is the final clinical authority and ensures appropriate follow up for all referrals.

B. Specific Telehealth Services

Using store-and-forward, remote monitoring, real-time or live video telehealth services, reduces the need for off-site visits.

1. **Remote Clinical Services:** Medical, behavioral health, psychiatry, dental, and pharmacy providers perform assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and consultation for continuity of care.

2. **Specialty Consultants, Infectious Disease, and Cardiology:** Perform assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and consultation for continuity of care.

3. **Diagnostic Radiology, Photography, and Videos:** Clinicians evaluate radiographs or other stored imaging for diagnosis, and treatment for continuity of care.

4. **Detainee Health-Related Education:** IHSC health services staff perform specific topic and condition-based encounters to review, inform, reinforce, demonstrate, diagnose, and treat for continuity of care.

5. **Professional Health-Related Education:** Clinical preceptors and students use telehealth technologies per existing IHSC polices.

6. **Specialty Services and Consultation (not available on-site):** Perform assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and consultation for continuity of care.

C. Request for Referral in eCW

IHSC health services staff utilize eCW to make referrals for telehealth services per existing IHSC polices.

D. Continuous Quality Improvement

IHSC health services staff utilize identified administrative and clinical performance measures per the quality improvement program guide for patient outcomes.

IV. REFERENCES

A. Terms and Definitions (New Terminology)

See definitions for terms used in this guide in IHSC Directive 01-48, *Telehealth Services*, located in the IHSC Policy Library. The following definitions apply for purposes of this guide:

1. **Student.** Individuals enrolled in a professional course of study, college, or university to prepare for a career in a specific field, including but not limited to public health, health professions provider, or other categories or specialties found in IHSC.

2. **Telehealth Equipment.** Communication technologies, such as videoconferencing monitors and cameras, computers, telephones, speakers, software, mobile devices, and clinical diagnostic tools, remotely access health care services and manage the detainee's health care. These technologies improve or support health care services.

3. **Training.** As part of the orientation for IHSC personnel, consultants and students, telehealth training topics include the utilization of telehealth services, store-and-forward, remote monitoring, and real-time interactive technology materials.

B. Resources

1. IHSC patient education brochure, translated into multiple languages, orients patients to the clinic, and explains the use of telehealth services. Find the patient education materials at

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2. eCW User Guide Telephone Encounter:

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