

Dear MPS Tech Committee,

I'm starting to figure out the nuts and bolts of telehealth technology, but some of the nuances of the visits themselves still confuse me. Are there policies and expectations that I should discuss with my patients around telehealth visits?

Sincerely, StillConfused!

Dear StillConfused,

Here are some standard operating procedures and protocols for telehealth; you may want to keep this in mind when starting a visit.

At the **beginning** of a video session with a patient, verify and document

1. Name of clinician and patient



"Hello, I am Dr. Torous. I am speaking with Jane Doe, right? Is there anyone else in the room you want me to be aware of"

2. Location of the patient



"Can you let me know where you are right now? It is important for me to know this before each session"

3. Immediate contact information for clinician and patient



"If we get cut off for any reason, how else I can I reach you? If there is an emergency, you can also reach me at [answering service, business phone number, etc]"

4. Expectations about contact between sessions



"Although we are connecting in real time here and now, I want to review how we will communicate outside of these video visits. [Insert plan and note you cannot respond in real time outside of these visits]"

5. Emergency management plan between sessions



“Should an emergency happen between visits, the plan that we have made is for you to [Insert plan]”

Derived from the American Psychiatric Association’s Telepsychiatry Toolkit:  
<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/telepsychiatry>