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GUIDANCE FOR TELEHEALTH

With the province of Saskatchewan declaring a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 virus, residents of Saskatchewan have been strongly encouraged to practice social distancing in order to flatten the curve and reduce the impact on the Healthcare System. As psychologists, we all have to manage our caseloads effectively and make different individual choices in terms of how we practice. The Psychology Association of Saskatchewan (PAS) has researched different provider options to conduct sessions remotely using video conferencing applications or software. The PAS does not exclusively endorse any of the products and receives no financial benefit from having any of the vendors listed below.

Each of the services offered enters into their own version of a data protection agreement. Please review the specific agreement with each vendor to ensure compliance with privacy laws in Saskatchewan.

While there are many options for psychologists to conduct video conferencing sessions with patients, the following platforms were selected based on the following criteria:

Cost

Security - primary focus being end-to-end encryption for video conferencing

Control of data

Below are a list of options that is by no means exhaustive and in no particular order:

1. Google G Suite <https://gsuite.google.com/>

Cost: Basic Plan \$7.18 per month

Security Features:

- 2-Step login verification
- Information rights management - Administrators and users can disable downloading, printing, and copying of files from the advanced sharing menu, as well as set expiration dates on file access.

- Audit Tracking- G Suite allows administrators to track user actions and set up custom alerts within G Suite. This tracking spans across the Admin Console, Gmail, Drive, Calendar, Groups, mobile, and third-party application authorization. For example, if a marked file is downloaded or if a file containing the word “Confidential” is shared outside the organization, administrators can be notified.
- Customer support included
- Data is encrypted using 128-bit or stronger Advanced Encryption Standard (AES).

2. Thera-Link <https://www.thera-link.com/>

Thera-Link is a more comprehensive platform offering different features in addition to video conferencing. PAS cannot speak to any of the other features and members can evaluate the platform and contact the vendor for any questions specific to the additional features.

Cost: \$30 - \$45 per month for a single provider. Different tiers of cost allow different numbers of sessions.

Security Features:

- All video encrypted via AES-256 bit encryption
- Personal health information encryption
- Browser protection

3. Zoom <https://zoom.us/>

Zoom offers different platform options depending on the individual psychologist's needs. The option that includes only video conference capabilities was selected.

Cost: Free for the basic plan which has HD capabilities; Unlimited individual sessions.

Security Features:

- End to end security is an added layer of application security. Zoom can encrypt all presentation content at the application layer using the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) 256-bit algorithm.
- No monitoring, viewing, or tracking of the video or audio content of your video meetings or webinars
- No sharing of customer data with third parties
- Limiting retention of accounts to 30 days after termination to assist with product reactivation (if requested by customer).
- After 30 days have passed, the account is permanently deleted

Zoom and Canadian compliance document

https://zoom.us/docs/doc/PIPEDA_PHIPA%20Canadian%20Public%20Information%20Compliance%20Guide.pdf

4. Doxy.me

<https://help.doxy.me/en/articles/95909-can-i-use-doxy-me-in-canada>

Platform developed exclusively for the delivery of telehealth.

Cost: No cost for basic plan; Unlimited sessions and usage; No HD video in free plan, upgrade needed for HD video.

Security:

- Secure data center
- End-to-end encryption
- No patient data stored
- Breach insurance
- Meets PIPEDA/PHIPA requirements

Additional Resources Regarding Privacy

Office of the Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner - HIPA Guide Webinars

<https://oipc.sk.ca/resources/webinars/hipa-guide-webinars/>

Government of Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner Guide to HIPA

<https://oipc.sk.ca/assets/ipc-guide-to-hipa.pdf>