

With routine Chiropractic care ceased due to government due to COVID-19, you may need to assist patients using Telehealth.

Telehealth does not replace or substitute face to face care however considering the circumstances it may be beneficial for remote patient communication, reassurance, guidance and support.

The following are guidelines for UCA members in best practices for using Telehealth.

Requirements:

- Telehealth encompasses any form of remote consultation regardless of the formal term used by the Chiropractor.
- Telehealth appointments are subject to GCC Code of practice guidelines
- Chiropractors who provide Telehealth must physically be in the UK while delivering virtual consultations to patients who are physically in the UK
- Chiropractors who choose to offer Telehealth, are subject to the same GCC and UCA regulation as if they were providing the services in person.
- The provision of Telehealth can only be provided by the registered Chiropractor and may not be delegated to anyone else

Consent:

The Chiropractor must:

- Inform patients of the limitations that Telehealth services impose on chiropractic care, such as the lack of hands-on evaluation and treatment.
- Inform patients of the risks involved in Telehealth such as privacy of patient information and share safeguards the Chiropractor is using to address risks
- If the Chiropractor chooses to record a call/video conference ask for consent before doing so. store and protect this data as you would with other health records.

Privacy protection:

The chiropractor is required to:

- Adhere to GDPR privacy protection guidelines
- Exercise privacy and security requirements throughout the Telehealth appointment process which includes; scheduling, emailing and communication during virtual consultation. Make sure you and your patient are in a private environment.
- Use safeguards such as user authentication and data encryption, password security, patient verification technologies, protected wireless networks, data tracking and auditing.
- Avoid using Facebook as it is not secure. PhysiTrack, Jane, Zoom, Skype and WhatsApp are examples of secure systems.

- Use a secure transmission system and for storage of patient information related to Telehealth services.
- Headphones can assist in maintaining privacy and quality of your call by removing background noise.

Best practice guidelines:

- You will require a computer or mobile device, a built-in or external microphone, and/or camera with video capability for video conferencing.
- A high-speed internet connection will prevent breaks in audio or video.
- A video link allows you to perform a physical evaluation during your consultation.
- Receive and document verbal consent to conduct Telehealth session
- Inform patients of the fees and services they will receive as a part of Telehealth.
- Document Telehealth session as you would with in person visit. Specifically document; history of chief complaint, medical history, examination findings, clinical impressions, action plan for patient, self care advice, red flags and referrals if necessary
- During your session if you are unable to achieve the necessary observations and examination to assess the patient's condition. You could either refer elsewhere if you suspect red flags and their complaint is beyond your scope of practice or for a face-to-face treatment.
- Chiropractors should not refer for diagnostic imaging or diagnostic testing based on the Telehealth consultation.
- If you choose to refer for a clinical appointment, apply risk assessment and take into consideration all current guidance for emergency chiropractic care as per UCA
- Before making a clinical appointment, use Telehealth to triage patients for COVID-19 risk factors such as Covid symptoms, at risk group, vulnerable category etc. before referring to a clinic.
- At the end of the session ask the patients if they have any questions and offer options for continued offline support such as via email if they require additional support.