

Infection Prevention & Control in the Virtual Care Environment

The information, resources, and steps outlined in this Virtual Health Recommendation have been developed in consultation with Alberta Health Services (AHS) Infection Prevention & Control, and are for consideration by clinical programs when using virtual care (telehealth) technologies to deliver care at a distance.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Telehealth Equipment and Mobile Electronic Devices

Users are responsible for cleaning Telehealth equipment and mobile electronic devices after each use. See [Resources](#) (on page 3) that provide information about infection prevention and control practices, recommendations for selection, placement, cleaning and disinfection of bedside computers and electronic devices used in clinical and non-clinical areas. This includes Telehealth equipment and peripheral devices (e.g., Telehealth touch panels, remote controls, utility carts and peripheral devices such as handheld camera, digital stethoscope, puck speakers and document camera) as well as mobile electronic devices such as phones and tablets.

The AHS Infection Prevention & Control – Best Practice Recommendation for Bedside Computers and Electronic Devices (see [Resources](#)) includes guidance for cleaning and disinfecting mobile electronic devices such as phones and tablets (e.g. requirements for cleaning and disinfecting mobile electronic devices after they've been in contact with the patient environment).

Note: Apple provides cleaning and disinfections instructions for their specific devices: <https://support.apple.com/en-ca/HT204172> .

Cleaning and Disinfection of Telehealth Equipment and Peripheral Devices

Hand hygiene is the most important factor in preventing transmission of microorganisms. Perform **Hand Hygiene** before using any telehealth equipment.

Perform hand hygiene with Alcohol-Based Hand Rub (ABHR) unless hands are visibly soiled. If hands are visibly soiled, wash hands with soap and water.

NOTE: The user is responsible for cleaning equipment after each use.

Clinical programs and staff at patient sites are encouraged to develop a plan for team members to clean virtual technologies / equipment after each use, as outlined in this document.

Telehealth touch panels, remote controls and peripherals (hand held camera, digital stethoscope, etc.) must be cleaned after each use by following the steps below:

Virtual Health - Infection Prevention & Control in the Virtual Care Environment | 2

1. Perform hand hygiene either by using ABHR **or** by washing hands with soap and water.
2. Clean equipment with AHS provided ready to use (RTU) disinfectant wipes such as Virox RTU®, Accel®, Oxivir® or Percept Wipes®. The type of disinfectant available varies by zone/site. Check the expiry date of the product.
3. Follow the manufacturer label and Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) sheet regarding use of the personal protective equipment (PPE).
4. Cleaning and disinfection is performed in **three** steps:
 - 4.1. Take a disinfectant wipe and squeeze to remove excess fluid. Use a wipe to clean and remove visible soil. Discard wipe.
 - 4.2. Take a second wipe and squeeze to remove excess fluid. Use the wipe to disinfect following instructions for time surface has to remain wet. Discard wipe.
 - 4.3. Allow surfaces to **air dry** as per disinfectant instructions.

Note: Do not spray or pour disinfectant directly onto the equipment.

5. Perform hand hygiene either by using ABHR **or** by washing hands with soap and water.

Mobile telehealth equipment

Any mobile Telehealth equipment that is used in the patient environment, must be thoroughly cleaned and then disinfected with a RTU disinfectant as per the steps outlined above. Patient environment means the area immediately surrounding the patient (within 2 metres).

See [next page](#) for links to **Resources located on the AHS External Web: Infection Prevention & Control**

Virtual Health - Infection Prevention & Control in the Virtual Care Environment | 3

Resources located on the AHS External Web: Infection Prevention & Control

Hand Hygiene Policy PS-02

<https://extranet.ahsnet.ca/teams/policydocuments/1/clp-hand-hygiene-ps-02-policy.pdf>

Infection Prevention & Control - Best Practice Recommendations: Bedside Computers and Electronic Devices

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/if-hp-ipc-cleaning-disinfection-info.pdf>

Poster: Steps for Disinfecting Telehealth Equipment and Peripheral Devices

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/if-hp-telehealth-equipment-cleaning-disinfection-poster.pdf>

Connect Care Manual: Mobile Device Hygiene

<https://manual.connect-care.ca/Mobility/mobile-hygiene>

Connect Care Cleaning and Disinfecting of Mobile Electronic Devices Information Sheet <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-bpg-connect-care-cln-mobl-elect-devices-info.pdf>