

Audio and Video Recording Devices in Resident Rooms:

Information for Healthcare Providers



Alberta Health Services (AHS), in partnership with residents, families and facility operations leaders, has developed the Audio and Video Recording Devices Guideline for continuing care homes. The guideline supports healthcare providers, the resident and their family when an audio and video recording device is being considered, or is in use within a resident's room.

Key Messages

- Audio and video recording devices can support essential social connections between residents and their families and friends, when used appropriately.
- The Audio and Video Recording Devices Guideline supports residents and their families to use audio and video recording devices to stay connected, while also protecting the privacy of other residents and ensuring a safe environment for healthcare providers to deliver care.
- Continuing care homes are committed to fostering safe and respectful workplaces for healthcare providers that are free from [harassment and violence](#).
- When families use audio and video recording devices for ongoing monitoring, written consent is required. '*Ongoing monitoring*' refers to situations when a resident or their family plan to use an audio and video recording device to intentionally monitor the activity in the resident's room on a regular or intermittent basis. For example, the resident's family may use the audio and video recording device to check on how the resident is doing. Healthcare providers or other individuals in the resident's room may not always be aware this is happening at that moment.
- Written consent is also required from other residents or healthcare providers present in any recorded content before sharing online (e.g., on social media, email or other websites).
- Healthcare providers can connect with the manager if they have any questions.

What is an Audio and Video Recording Device?

These include devices that can capture pictures, video and/or sound, such as cameras, voice recorders, or mobile devices (e.g., tablets, smart phones). *Streaming* allows the viewer to watch or listen to content in real-time, as it happens.

What can I do if a resident or family tells me they would like to use an audio and video recording device?

If a resident or family expresses interest in using an audio and video recording device, please let your manager know. The manager can follow up with the resident and family to understand the need for the device. If there is a care issue, they can provide support to resolve the issue. The manager will also support the family to ensure they are taking the appropriate steps to protect the privacy of residents and ensure a safe and respectful environment to deliver care.



Why would a resident or their family use an audio and video recording device?

Family members are sometimes not able to visit their loved one as frequently as they would like. There may be times when visitor restrictions are implemented (e.g., due to an infectious disease outbreak) at a care home to protect the health and safety of residents, families and healthcare providers. Residents and their families and friends may wish to use technology devices to stay socially connected (e.g., video or voice calls over the internet). An audio and video recording device allows them to check in on the resident to see how they are doing.

"I enjoy being able to talk with my daughter every day."

"Mr. Chu seems to feel so much better when he can see his daughter, Mary, on screen in the evening. It really helps with his night routine."

Can a resident and their family use an audio and video recording device for ongoing monitoring of activity in the resident's room?

The resident or their family may use an audio and video recording device for ongoing monitoring of activity in the resident's room on a regular or intermittent basis. For example, the family may use the audio and video recording device to check on their loved one's daily activities and general wellbeing. These devices can be controlled by the resident's family and as such, the resident or other individuals in the room may not be aware when the device is in use.

The manager will provide information to the resident and their family to support the appropriate use of an audio and video recording device for the purpose of ongoing monitoring of activity in the resident's room (e.g, appropriate positioning of the audio and video recording device to prevent capturing nudity). The manager will also ensure written consent is obtained from the resident and their authorized decision maker (and roommate and their authorized decision maker if applicable). The manager will also inform the healthcare providers that the resident and their family wish to use an audio and video recording device in this manner.

What can I do if a resident would like help with their audio and video recording device?

In general, healthcare providers should not participate in the purchase, installation, maintenance or removal of an audio and video recording device. However, healthcare providers may provide support with the device when requested by the resident or family, if able. For example, the resident may ask for assistance with making a video call (e.g., using Skype or Zoom) to their family or friends. Healthcare providers should not interfere with a device to stop recording, unless asked by the resident or their family.

What can I do if I find an audio and video recording device in a resident's room?

Tell the manager and provide a device description and location. The manager will follow up with the resident and their family.

Can the resident or family post recorded content online?

The resident or family can share recorded material online (e.g., social media, email). However, if there are other individuals in the recorded content (e.g., other residents, healthcare providers), the resident and family must ensure that those individuals have provided written consent before sharing the recorded content online. The manager will support the resident and their family with obtaining written consent from those individuals present in the recorded content.

What can I do if I discover recorded or streamed content online?

Share the information with your manager. The manager will follow up to ensure written consent was obtained.

How do I respond when a resident or family shares a concern about recorded content?

You should ask the resident or family to discuss their concern with their patient care manager. You should also follow up with your manager directly. If a care issue is identified, the manager will work to have it addressed.

What can I do if I feel worried about audio and video recording devices being used in my workplace?

Understanding you are in the client's home, continue to offer the care services as you normally would. If you have specific concerns, discuss them with your manager. If there is a care issue as a result of staff error, remember [AHS supports a just culture](#).

A just culture is an environment where everyone feels safe, encouraged and enabled to discuss quality and safety concerns. Despite our best efforts, there is always the potential for something to go wrong. When that happens, you will be supported and treated with care, compassion, respect and dignity.

In accordance with AHS' [Respectful Workplaces and the Prevention of Harassment and Violence Policy](#), continuing care homes are committed to fostering safe and respectful workplaces for healthcare providers that are free from [harassment and violence](#). This means that audio and video recording devices or recorded/streamed content cannot be used to threaten or harass a healthcare provider.

What can I do if I have more questions?

Talk with your manager about any questions you may have.