NEEDS ASSESSMENT & TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS
ATA GUIDELINES

Needs Assessment

☐ Visit sites to develop relationships with staff & community
☐ Check insurance coverage for different types of child, adolescent, and family sessions
☐ Use programmatic, process, and outcome data to make a case for telemental health services among local insurance companies

Technology Considerations

☐ Sufficient bandwidth
  - Accurate visual, auditory, and interactional cues
☐ Microphones
  - Sensitivity to auditory range of adults' adolescents' and children's voices
  - Placement close enough to detect voices but not irrelevant noise
☐ Cameras
  - Pan-tilt-zoom capabilities
  - Limited eye contact may represent technical limitation or clinical impairment
APPROPRIATENESS FOR TELEMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
ATA GUIDELINES

Patient and site considerations
☐ Resources at patient site can manage potential risks to patient, others, or the equipment
☐ Roles of provider and site personnel are clear
☐ Ensure privacy, especially in school settings
☐ Youth and parent preferences
☐ Developmental and diagnostic considerations
☐ Referral question
  ▪ Some telemental health assessments may not be appropriate in unsupervised settings, such as patient's home
  ▪ Consult ATA guidelines for more on best practices

Cultural competence
☐ Consider patients' unique needs
☐ Draw on site coordinator to learn about family's community
  ▪ Develop rapport and therapeutic alliance
  ▪ Avoid overgeneralizing about rural communities
☐ Culturally sensitive protocols

Provider considerations
☐ Appropriate skills for patient population

Adapted from the ATA's Practice Guidelines for Telemental Health with Children & Adolescents.
For more information, visit: www.AmericanTeleMed.org

DEVELOPED BY
Telehealth ROCKS
Rural Outreach for the Children of Kansas
LEGAL, REGULATORY, & ETHICAL ISSUES
ATA GUIDELINES

Legal and Regulatory Issues

Review:
- Legal & regulatory requirements at patient & provider locations
- Jurisdiction’s requirements of provider’s mandated reporting
- Confidentiality requirements of the clinic and school setting

Verify:
- Professional liability insurance covers activities in all sites of telepractice
- Written or verbal consent for recording

Consult:
- ATA guidelines for more information on recommendations for informed consent with legal guardians and youth

Ethical Issues
- Incorporate organizational values & ethics
- Formal process for resolving ethical questions & issues
- Eliminate conflicts of interest
- Inform patient of their right to refuse telemental health services

Adapted from the ATA’s Practice Guidelines for Telemental Health with Children & Adolescents. For more information, visit www.AmericanTeleMed.org
YOUTH TELEMENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS
ATA GUIDELINES

General Considerations

- Reliability and validity of testing instrument
- Local telepresenter responsibilities
  - Ensure privacy
  - Help with room entry
  - Assist with participation in the session
  - Appropriate training depending on type of session
- Documentation of treatment efficacy, complications, & decision-making process
- Coordination of care among PCPs, clinicians & case managers

Pharmacotherapy

- Review federal and state guidelines regarding prescription of controlled substances
  - See ATA guidelines for discussion of the Ryan Haight Online Pharmacy Consumer Protection Act of 2008
- Communicate about initial prescriptions, refills, and reporting adverse effects
- Train staff at patient site in assessing effects of pharmacotherapy

Psychotherapy Approaches

- Adapt empirically supported treatments for videoconferencing
- Seek input from youth & parent about service delivery via videoconferencing
- Monitor outcomes in ways consistent with patient’s site
- Discuss needed level of parent participation

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TELEMENTAL HEALTH PRACTICES WITH YOUTH
ATA GUIDELINES

☐ Room requirements
  • Large enough room for 1-2 adults
  • Decrease distractions
  • Accessibility
  • Lighting
  • Selection of toys in the room

☐ Announce all parties present

☐ Utilize the Presenter/Telemedicine Coordinator
  • Establish a safety protocol
  • Alert staff at patient site if any there are any risks to youth’s safety
  • Communicate information about local community that provider may not know

☐ Culture & Individualization
  • Consider patients' unique needs
  • Understand site culture
  • Learn about the family’s community, values, and resources
  • Avoid overgeneralizing about rural communities
  • Outline roles of local providers & telemental health clinician

☐ Sharing patient information securely between providers
  • Follow legal & regulatory requirements and best practices
Mental Health Emergencies with Youth
ATA Guidelines

Become familiar with patient site's emergency procedures:

- Local emergency resources and phone numbers
- Location of nearest emergency department capable of handling psychiatric emergencies
- Patient's support contact information
- Contact information of local organizations if local referral is needed
- Knowledge of local civil commitment law, procedures, and resources

If patient is in the home or location without clinical staff:

- Informed consent includes documentation and discussion of emergency procedures
- Release of information to contact a family or community member who can provide support in an emergency
- Provider is available to emergency responders to facilitate evaluation and planning

Consider:

- Transportation or other logistical challenges
- Physical environment risks and other youth in the home
- Possibility of delay in emergency response due to location
# ATA GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

## Needs Assessment
- Visit sites to develop relationships with staff & community
- Check coverage for different types of child, adolescent, and family sessions
- Use programmatic, process, and outcome data to make a case for telemental health services among local insurers

## Legal, Regulatory, & Ethical Issues
- Review legal & regulatory requirements in effect at patient & provider locations
- Be aware of jurisdiction’s requirements of provider’s mandated reporting
- Verify that professional liability insurance covers activities in all sites of telepractice
- Abide by confidentiality requirements of the clinic and school setting
- Disclose and obtain written consent for recording of any telehealth encounters
- Incorporate organizational values & ethics statements into policies & procedures
- Provide patients, parents, and providers with a formal process for resolving ethical questions & issues
- Eliminate conflicts of interest
- Consult ATA guidelines for more information on recommendations for informed consent with legal guardians and youth

## Technology Considerations
- Use bandwidth sufficient to detect accurate visual, auditory, and interactional cues
- Ensure that microphones are sensitive to auditory range of adult’s, adolescents’, and children’s voices and that they are placed close enough to detect children’s vocal range but not too close so as to pick up irrelevant sounds
- Consider using cameras with pan-tilt-zoom capabilities at both sites
- Determine whether apparent decreased eye contact represents a technical limitation or clinical impairment by asking the child and parent as needed
## ATA GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

### Telemental Health Practices with Youth

- Communicate specific room requirements to patient sites: a room large enough for at least 1-2 adults to attend and be included on screen.
  - Consider minimal décor to decrease distractions, accessibility for individuals with motor challenges, lighting and windows, selection of toys in the room, and room to move around.
- Announce all parties present in the respective rooms
- Consider how to best utilize the Presenter/Telemedicine Coordinator onsite
  - Collaborate with the presenter to establish a safety protocol
  - Alert staff at patient site if any there are any risks to youth’s safety
- Understand site culture and outline roles of local providers and telemental health clinician
- Consider patients’ unique needs based on age, sex, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status with adaptation to telepractice
- Consider learning about the family’s community, their values, and resources to develop rapport and avoid overgeneralizing about rural communities.
- Follow legal & regulatory requirements and best practices to share relevant patient information between organizations and providers

### Appropriateness for Services

- Assess youth’s accompanying adult to determine whether they can safely participate in sessions and follow treatment recommendations.
  - Homes with a history of maltreatment may not be appropriate for treatment delivered in the home
  - Child custody assessments, investigations of allegations of abuse or neglect, and other contexts where youth may not feel comfortable being open about the situation may not be appropriate for service delivery through videoconferencing
ATA GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

Telemental Health Interventions with Youth

- Consider reliability and validity of testing instrument in telemental health context

- Pharmacotherapy

- Psychotherapy approaches
  - Adapt empirically supported treatments for videoconferencing, seek input from youth and parent about strengths and challenges of delivering services over videoconferencing, monitor outcomes in ways consistent with patient’s site, and discuss needed level of parent participation

- Consider training needs of telepresenter (i.e. for an anger management group)

Mental Health Emergencies with Youth

- Become familiar with patient site’s emergency procedures or help the facility to establish basic procedures, which would include:
  - identifying local emergency resources and phone numbers
  - location of nearest ED capable of handling psychiatric emergencies
  - patient’s support contact info
  - contact information of local organizations if local referral is needed

- If patient is in the home or location without clinical staff:
  - emergency procedures should be discussed as part of informed consent and should be documented
  - plan should include a release of information to contact a family or community member who can provide support in an emergency
  - consider transportation or other logistical challenges
  - consider physical environment risks and other youth in the home
  - consider possibility of delay in emergency response due to location
  - remain available to emergency responders to facilitate evaluation & planning