



State of Alaska – Department of Health and Social Services – Senior and Disabilities Services

## **Telehealth Video-Teleconferencing Requirements**

### **I. Technical Standards per API Tele-behavioral health policy and procedures.**

a. Video-teleconferencing equipment. Video-teleconferencing cameras and screens shall be in operational condition and functioning properly at the time of the encounter.<sup>4</sup> API cameras shall be fully capable of pan, tilt, and zoom.<sup>4</sup> Cameras must present on screen error messages when network conditions occur, possess a “picture in picture” capability, and can be software upgradable. Resolution shall match as closely as possible the resolution of the image being displayed.<sup>8</sup>

At minimum, the camera codec audio system shall operate at least at 7 kHz full duplex with echo cancellation with an easy to use mute function and volume adjustment.<sup>8</sup>

Videocameras shall be easy to operate and TBH providers will make efforts to instruct new originating site how to connect.

Sufficient redundant systems shall be in place to ensure availability of connectivity for patient encounters.<sup>4</sup>

Equipment shall be properly maintained through ongoing maintenance.<sup>4</sup>

Video-conferencing equipment shall be kept and maintained in a locked, secure room. Video-teleconference TBH encounters shall never be recorded and electronic transmissions shall be secure and encrypted.

TBH shall have the ability to display static pictures, diagrams, or objects, view and share a computer desktop or applications, play CDs so originating site personnel can see and hear them, and share information via encrypted computer files.<sup>8</sup> API shall possess two cameras that are capable of displaying website information through the “presentation” mode. Encrypted email, encrypted website programs or confidential fax machine shall be used to share documents.

Gaze angle shall be optimized by placing the camera as close to the monitor as possible. (A gaze angle of 5-7 degrees is imperceptible.) The camera shall be placed on top of the monitor to simulate looking directly into the eye.<sup>(8)(9)</sup>

b. Network. The API video-teleconferencing network shall be a stand-alone network independent of the State of Alaska network in order to maintain security of transmissions. The reason for a private Wide Area Network is to guarantee a high quality of service will be provided to video traffic. Additionally, the API private WAN shall not have a firewall, thus allowing immediate



access to API TBH through live video-teleconferencing for organizations that firewall their networks.

Preferably, connection bandwidth shall be high definition (786 kilobytes per second or higher). A Bandwidth of 384 is the minimal acceptable bandwidth allowed.<sup>8</sup>

Network and software security to protect client privacy and confidentiality shall be provided including appropriate user accessibility and authentication protocols. Measures to safeguard data against intentional and unintentional corruption shall be in place during transmission. Video sessions shall be encrypted.

Connectivity shall be established with originating sites through Telecommunications Company Video-Teleconferencing Networks.

If a patient encounter is disrupted all attempts will be made to reconnect. The patient will be asked if an Information Technology individual can assist in making the connection if needed. If a connection cannot be made, the encounter shall be completed by POTS.

c. TBH Rooms. Client rooms at the distant site and the originating site shall be considered a patient examination room and maintain audio and visual privacy. No unauthorized access shall be permitted. All persons in the exam room at both sites shall be identified prior to the session. The client must agree to have visitors or clinicians to be present in the room, for example, any medical students that may be participating in the encounter.

Room lighting shall be well lit, (at least 150 ft candles). Florescent day-light bulbs shall be used and mirror the same visibility that would occur in an actual face-to-face encounter.<sup>8</sup>