

Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada

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Telemedicine

FMRAC Policy on Telemedicine (updated June 2010)

FMRAC Definition of Telemedicine

“Telemedicine is the provision of medical expertise for the purpose of diagnosis and patient care by means of telecommunications and information technology where the patient and the provider are separated by distance. Telemedicine may include, but is not limited to, the provision of pathology, medical imaging and patient consultative services”.

Each Medical Regulatory Authority should:

1. publish its requirements for the provision of telemedicine services into their jurisdictions;
2. inform its members and the public of its mandate to investigate a complaint in regards to telemedicine services received in its jurisdiction or for services provided by a physician on its register;
3. make it known to its members that it expects registered physicians to comply with the licensing or registration requirements of any jurisdiction into which they provide telemedicine services; and
4. take steps to ensure that the delivery of teleradiology and telepathology services is subject to qualified local medical direction and control.
5. take reasonable steps to know of the existence of telemedicine services provided in its jurisdiction by physicians from outside the province or territory.

In addition, FMRAC recommends that:

6. Where a medical regulatory authority does not currently assess the qualifications of physicians providing telemedicine services from outside jurisdictions, the Medical Regulatory Authority should assist healthcare institutions offering telemedicine services by physicians from outside the province or territory to ensure that the qualifications of those physicians are equivalent to those required for licensure in the province or territory.

7. Where a medical regulatory authority has authority or influence over healthcare institutions offering telemedicine services, the medical regulatory authority should require that all physicians from outside the province or territory are registered and licensed to practise medicine in at least one Canadian province or territory.
8. Where a medical regulatory authority has authority or influence over healthcare institutions offering telemedicine services, the medical regulatory authority should require that each patient is informed of:
 1. the location of the physician;
 2. how complaints about the care provided by a physician from outside the province or territory will be addressed; and,
 3. how the privacy, confidentiality and security of the patient's personal health information will be assured.

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