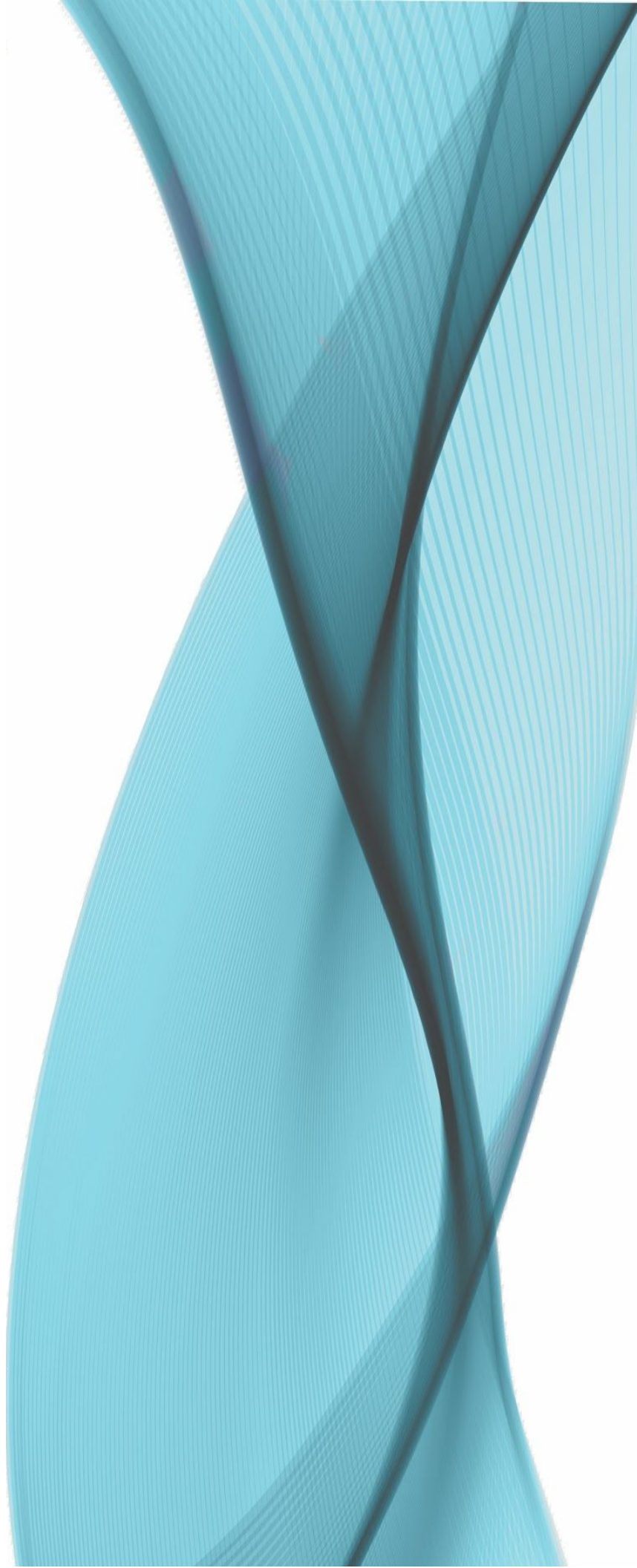


TELEBEHAVIORAL HEALTH™

I N S T I T U T E

21st Century Behavioral Health Strategies

30 Questions to ask Potential Video Vendors



30 Questions to Ask Each of Your Potential Video Vendors



TBHI Report

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Conducting Video Conferencing Platform Reviews

To help our trainees, we've developed a comprehensive list of questions below to help you have an informed conversation with any video vendor before starting.

We suggest that you:

1. Scan the list for those questions most relevant to your practice
2. Develop a grid to clearly list the responses you get from each company, and then
3. Make your choice based on how well each identified video conferencing company meets your particular needs

Better yet, send them the list of questions by email and see what you get back in writing... Compare the answers you get from one company to another.

Before you dismiss the need for taking these steps, think about the last time you rearranged the furniture in your office. How much clinical time was spent discussing the shift in your furniture?

Your patients may become reliant on a video conferencing platform to “frame” your entire relationship. Unfortunately, switching video conferencing services with a caseload of behavioral clients or patients is often so daunting that many clinicians simply stay with the first vendor they chose, despite their dissatisfactions.

TBHI's Questions to Ask When Conducting Your Own Video Conferencing Review

These below are questions that you may want to consider when comparing video vendors. When finalizing the questions of relevance to your work to ask potential vendors, consider these possibilities:

1. How long have you been in business and what are your funding sources? What, if any, are your consumer ratings? Example: Better Business Bureau or objective 3rd party review sites.
2. Is your system HIPAA-compliant and/or HIPAA-compatible? (If in a foreign country, does the system meet required levels of security and/or privacy in that country?)
3. Do you offer a Business Associate Agreement (BAA)? (Required by federal law if you serve US citizens. See our TBHI [webinar library](#) and [individual courses library](#) for training to help you understand and be compliant with these crucial mandates.)
4. Do you have a training video that is located on a dedicated page for my first-time clients/patients? If yes, does that video pitch your other products or services?
5. What are your most frequent questions from new purchasers?

6. What type of recording sessions services do you offer? Where are those recordings stored? For how long? Extra fees? Who will have access to those files?

7. How many parties can connect with me during a session (i.e., if different family members want to connect from 2-3 different location)?

8. Can I broadcast out to a group? Will I see everyone in the “room” or just the broadcaster? (In one-to-many video broadcasting, all peers are directly connected with broadcaster. They're not connected with each other. Broadcaster can see/talk with everyone.) If I see everyone, how many people can I “tile” on my screen? Will they be voice enabled as well?

9. Can I show my desktop to my client/patient? What type of desktop sharing solution do you use? Does it prevent accidental information exposure to my client/patient? How does this particular sharing solution allow me to simultaneously view what is being shown?

10. What is your mobile compatibility? What mobile devices are supported? What are the limitations to using such a device?

11. Do you offer a user-friendly online booking calendar and appointment scheduling software for my use? What type? What is the granularity of that feature (i.e., does it segment time hourly, on the half-hour, quarter hour?) Can I launch my video session from within that calendar?

12. Are you set up to work with Electronic Health Records (EHRs)? If yes, which one(s)? Extra fees?

13. Do I need to purchase an outside service to securely send and receive secure email, or is secure email built into your platform? (See [TBHI list of independent email vendors](#).)

14. What type of internal, HIPAA-compliant text-messaging service do you offer for my use in a session? (Often used to type numbers or other detailed instructions for clients/patients who may not have understood. See [TBHI list of text-messaging vendors](#).)

15. Who will have access to my patient files? What are your personnel screening procedures (i.e., to avoid hiring people with past felony convictions)?

16. What is your policy regarding subpoenas? When and how will I be contacted if you get subpoenaed to hand over my records and/or files? How much prior notice will I be given?

17. With which company do you carry liability insurance? What are the limits of benefits? Is a copy of the facesheet available for my viewing?

18. Is there a download to get into your platform? (WebRTX?) How many clicks are required by a client/patient to get started with your system the first time?

19. Which type of technology training options are available to me as your client?

20. Which forms do you provide for my use with my clients/patients? Who developed your forms?

21. Which type of audit trails do you provide? How do they work? How can I access them? How often? Is there a charge for access?

22. Which type of breach notification tools do you provide, and how do they work? How is the notification sent? Example: email, text message, phone call. How long after an event will it take for me to be notified?

23. Do you provide a virtual waiting room for clients/patients to “sit and wait” before I enter the treatment room?

24. Do you provide any “branding” of my URL or other aspect of what my clients/patients will see (i.e., my logo, insert images, color selection, etc.)?

25. Does your system allow me to conduct webinars as well as individual sessions?

26. What is the average response time needed from your technical support team if I have a problem with your system?

27. What's the quality of your connection versus your competitors (i.e., audio, video)?

28. What has been the company's "downtime" in the last 3 months? In the last year? What is the industry standard for downtime? What percentage of the time is your signal choppy? What's your video "lag?"

29. Do you offer real-time technical support if your system fails in a live session with a client/patient? If yes, what real-time technical support do you offer? How can I contact your support desk?

30. What is your process for making system-wide changes based on customer complaints or suggestions? How often do you update or upgrade your system?

Lastly, call the video company's customer service line and see who answers. If you reach an answering service, how long it takes to get a response? Similarly, if you send an email, see how many business days it takes to get an answer.

Remember, if you are in a session with a difficult client or patient and the system goes down, how long do you want to wait before your new video conferencing company to get back to you?

More Resources for You

- If you want to see a list of videoconferencing companies that TBHI has found, see [TBHI's list of video conferencing platforms here](#).
- If you want more personalized help selecting your HIPAA-compliant platform or are the point person for a group of clinicians seeking broader video conferencing consultation, see our [consulting options](#) or [fees for brief consults](#).
- Bookmark [our blog](#) for updates, and [sign up for our free weekly newsletter](#) to keep abreast of what's happening in telebehavioral health.) Please comment below if you think of any other "crucial" questions to add to our list.
- Here are the links from the questions, for your convenience:
 - TBHI Webinar Library: www.telehealth.org/webinar
 - TBHI Individual Courses Library: www.telehealth.org/individual
 - TBHI List of Email Vendors: www.telehealth.org/email
 - TBHI List of Text-Messaging Vendors: www.telehealth.org/texting
 - TBHI List of Videoconferencing Vendors: www.telehealth.org/video