



## Orthotics Prosthetics Canada (OPC) General Statement on Virtual Care

Virtual care is defined as care that is delivered without the patient physically present in the same room as the O&P professional who is delivering their care. Examples of mediums of virtual care delivery are: telephone, video conferencing, SMS, and email.

OPC's position on virtual care is constantly changing as technology evolves. The requirements outlined in OPC's Canons of Ethical Conduct and Standards of Practice apply for virtual care in the same manner as in-person care. We encourage practitioners to use virtual care where appropriate. We also acknowledge that in many cases, our work requires the presence of a client for optimal outcomes. The primary focus must be to ensure that the client receives the most appropriate care with attention to the safety and health of all concerned.

Virtual methods may be used in conjunction with in-person treatment. Practitioners should consider the following items:

- Provincial or federal contracts with funding agents may preclude one from offering virtual care and put the member in breach of contract. OPC recommends any current contracts should be reviewed for clarity.
- Clients must be suitable for virtual care (available technology, candidacy, cognitive ability).
- Clients should be made aware of the limitations and potential risks associated with virtual care and that virtual care is not a replacement for in-person treatment.
- Virtual care must not impact quality of care.

Certified practitioners must remember that they are ultimately responsible for the outcome of each client in their care and must continue to practice within the guidelines of Orthotics Prosthetics Canada and their respective provincial guidelines.