


POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY TITLE: Guidelines for Use of Telehealth by ACT Teams	POLICY #: DSAMH056
PREPARED BY: Jessica Crumbacker	DATE ISSUED: 8/30/2023
RELATED POLICIES: DSAMH040 Telemedicine Requirements	REFERENCE:
DATES REVIEWED: 8/30/2023	DATES REVISED: 8/23/2023
APPROVED BY:  DATE APPROVED: 9/1/2023 7:34 AM PDT	NOTES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> DSAMH Internal Policy <input type="checkbox"/> DSAMH Operated Program <input type="checkbox"/> DSAMH State Providers <input type="checkbox"/> Delaware Psychiatric Center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted Use Policy (Defined in scope)

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish processes and guidelines for use of telehealth by prescribers and master's level clinicians in organizations providing ACT services. All other services must be provided face-to-face by the ACT team.

II. POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to require that all DSAMH-contracted service providers adhere to the guidelines set forth in this policy regarding the utilization of telehealth services. This policy applies to providers contracted by DSAMH to provide ACT.

III. DEFINITIONS:

"ACT" means Assertive Community Treatment.

"PROMISE" means Promoting Optimal Mental Health for Individuals through Supports and Empowerment. PROMISE is a comprehensive individualized behavioral health program for adults 18 and over, designed to provide specialized-recovery oriented services for this specific population.

"Telehealth" means the use of information and communications technologies consisting of telephones, remote patient monitoring devices or other electronic means which support clinical

health care, provider consultation, patient, and professional health-related education, public health, health administration, and other services as described in regulations per "The Adult Behavioral Health Services DHSS Certification and Reimbursement Manual."

"TMACT" means the Tool for the Measurement of ACT. This is the tool used to measure fidelity to ACT standards, developed by the University of North Carolina and used nationally with the compliance reviews of ACT teams. TMACT is required by Title 16 to be used in compliance reviews by the State.

"Vital signs" means the measurement of blood pressure, heart rate, respiration rate, temperature, height, and weight.

IV. SCOPE: This policy applies to any provider that has contracted with DSAMH to provide ACT services.

V. PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. As ACT teams engage with individuals in the community with the highest level of need, the expectation is that clients are seen primarily in-person in the community. As such, telehealth should be used sparingly. Per the ACT fidelity measurements of TMACT, only face-to-face contacts shall be counted toward the intensity of service score.
- B. Per DSAMH, the only appropriate uses of telehealth include:
 - 1. Appointments with prescribers with prior approval from the PROMISE Care Manager.
 - a. If appointments with the prescribers are only being provided through telehealth the ACT team must ensure that all vital signs are being recorded and provided to the prescribers by the ACT nursing staff at least monthly.
 - b. Prescribers must document all lab orders and the review of the lab work when lab work is required.
 - 2. Therapy with a master's level clinician with prior approval from the PROMISE Care Manager.
 - 3. Audio and video communication during every telehealth visit, unless otherwise approved by the PROMISE Care Manager. Audio-only calls should be used only in rare instances when clients do not have access to video.
- C. Requests for telehealth will be reviewed and approvals will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The following process must be adhered to for requests and approvals for use of telehealth:
 - 1. Need for therapy must be clearly documented, including goals and frequency of sessions.
 - 2. Teams should demonstrate via progress notes that at least three documented attempts to engage the client via in-person therapy have been made. Notes should also include reasons the client is not willing to participate via in-person sessions, their agreement to telehealth therapy, and the benefit to the client to have this arrangement.
 - 3. Information submitted will be reviewed and corroborated with the client by their PROMISE Care Manager.
 - 4. Requests for telehealth usage for therapy need to be pre-approved by the assigned PROMISE Care Manager or Clinical Services Administrator and approvals will be documented in the client's electronic health record (EHR).

5. Once approved, recovery plans for both PROMISE and the provider need to be updated to include the use of therapy services.
 6. The use of telehealth services must be recertified by the ACT team and PROMISE annually in the client's recovery plan.
- D. The ACT team must develop a telehealth agreement to be signed by the client and either the prescriber or the master's level clinician depending on the telehealth service. If the client receives both allowable telehealth services, there must be separate copies signed for each service. If the client wishes to resume services face-to-face at any time, the ACT team must accommodate this request immediately.
1. An agreement to the use of telehealth must be signed in the client EHR and the client must verbally agree at the time of each contact.
 2. All telehealth progress notes shall document that the client was seen via telehealth, the client's identity was confirmed via two identifiers at the time of each service such as name and date of birth, and the note must indicate that video and voice communication was used.
 3. If telehealth is used to provide coverage in a singular event, the provider must document all efforts made to contact the PROMISE Care Manager and document the attempts to notify prior to the session occurring.
- VI. **POLICY LIFESPAN:** This policy will be reviewed annually from date of issuance. This policy does not replace any requirements in Delaware State Code. Policy may require revision periodically beyond annual review if State and/or federal regulations are updated.
- VII. **RESOURCES:** N/A