

EDITION 20-03: June 24, 2020

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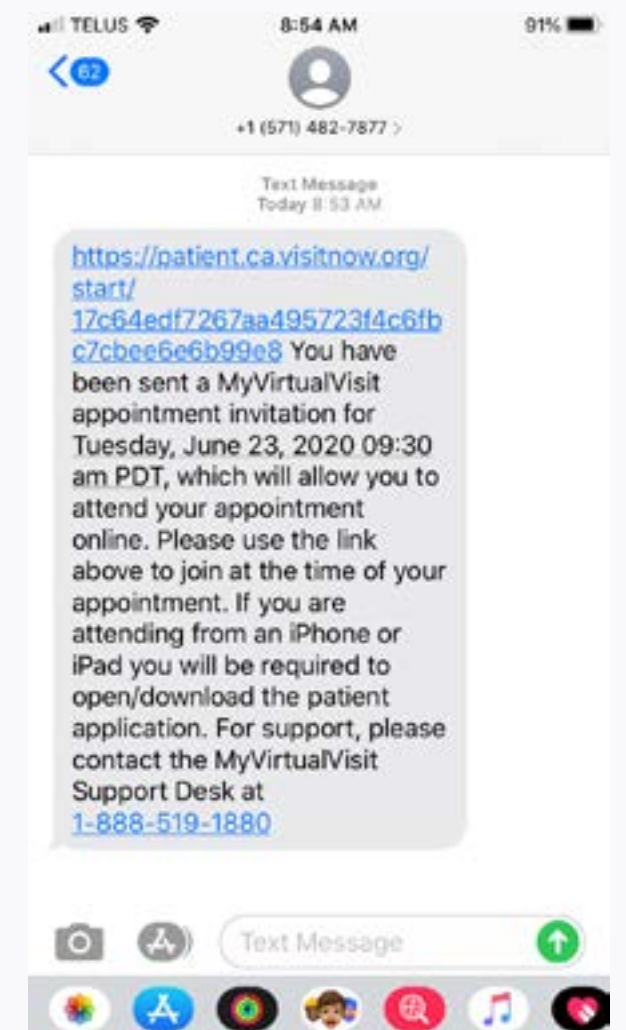
SMS Notifications Are Being Automated

On Tuesday, June 30, a new automatic SMS (text message) notification feature will be enabled. This will allow for automatic distribution of patient notifications (i.e., invitations and reminders) via SMS, so the scheduler no longer has to manually click send on the scheduling page.

Once the change is implemented, the automatic patient communications will include the following:

- If a patient has an email and a mobile phone number on their MyVirtualVisit Profile, they will be sent an invitation by text message and email at the time of scheduling.
- If a patient has a mobile phone number and no email on their profile, they will be sent an invitation by text message only at the time of scheduling.
- If a patient has an email and no mobile phone number on their profile, they will be sent an invitation by email only at the time of scheduling.
- All reminders will automatically be sent by both email and text, if both are available in their profile.

If your program or clinic would like to opt out of automatic SMS messaging, or you would like to change the timing of patient reminders, please contact telehealth@viha.ca.



Updates to the Patient Email Invitation

Some programs reported that their patients were confused by the self test process and were getting stuck in the self test waiting room. Based on this feedback, as well as input from our patients partners, we have updated the patient email invitation to provide more clarity about what to expect, what apps are required, and how to complete a successful self test.

Patient Feedback Highlights

The Virtual Care team regularly reviews feedback from patients (gathered via the survey provided at the end of each consultation). Here are just a few of their comments:

- “I was nervous about this, because I am not tech savvy. But this was very easy.”
- “This is my third appointment with this platform, and every one is getting better.”
- “This was far better than just a phone call, and, because of the pandemic, far safer than in person. Audio was clear, and image was fine.”
- “This was a great tool that allowed me to feel safe and also saved me travel time. Very satisfied!”
- “This is an easy platform to use and I would continue to prefer this as an option even when in-person visits are more viable again.”

Provider Experiences: Dr. Attwell-Pope

Dr. Kristen Attwell-Pope, Medical Chief, Neurology, has conducted nearly 200 consultations using MyVirtualVisit. She offered some insights into how using MyVirtualVisit has impacted her practice:

“[MyVirtualVisit] has proven to be a very useful tool. Our Neurologists are using it in all of our outpatient clinics. [It has] gone beyond just giving us the ability to continue to provide care during the pandemic—we think we have actually improved care! Our waitlist [for acute neurology clinics consults] used to sit at an uncomfortable 5 weeks. We are now sitting at less than 2 weeks and we are seeing more patients!

In this age of PPE, we have found that we prefer to meet with a patient over MVV first. We find it hard to have difficult discussions with patients when we are masked. In our MS Clinic, we are choosing to meet our patients virtually first before we meet them masked for an examination. Another advantage during the pandemic is that our patients can have family with them for their virtual visit. If we were to bring them into the hospital, there would be limits on visitors and this is not ideal during discussions where family would be very helpful to have present.

Our patients find it very convenient. I have consulted with many people who are at their work desk or in the break room at work—no more sick days to drive and attend appointments! I have had virtual appointments while people are exercising on an exercise bike while we chat. I have met with people who are out of town and staying off the Island. I have patients who live in remote BC communities and now they don't have to fly down to see me (at great cost) every 6 months. Furthermore, I love the environmental benefit of all the cars that didn't drive down the Island for an in-person visit. And, I have had my patients volunteer the chance to virtually meet dozens of family pets, children, been shown gardens and had hobby demonstrations. When offered, I have been given a window into my long-time patients' worlds that I have not been able to see before. I think my patients have enjoyed this and I know I have.”