

## Patient Agreement for Electronic Communication

Electronic communication may make healthcare more accessible to you. We will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of information sent and received using these services. However, we cannot guarantee the security and confidentiality of information sent using all methods because of the risks inherent to them. This document aims to provide information on the security limitations, our clinic's intended use of these services, and recommendations to decrease your risk.

If you have any questions about this agreement, please ask someone from our Spectrum team. It is our responsibility to inform you of any changes to these terms. You can retract consent from this agreement at any time.

# Agreement for Phone and Video Appointments

When I attend a phone or video appointment, I agree to:

**Treat my appointment like an in-office visit.** The full appointment time may be needed to obtain a complete history and set out a treatment plan.

**Be available at my scheduled time.** For phone consults I will wait for a call from my healthcare provider and attempt to secure a strong phone connection. For video visits, I will login to the video link provided at least 5 minutes before my appointment.

**Schedule a time when I can be in a private setting.** I will minimize the risk of others hearing my conversation about my confidential health information. I will inform my provider if there are other people present during my appointment.

**Minimize distractions during my appointment and conduct the appointment while it is safe to do so.** I will not be distracted by driving, work or other activities that may interfere with a proper medical assessment and consultation.

**Arrange an in-office visit if a full assessment cannot be completed remotely.** I understand that certain vital information may be missed over phone or video and a physical exam may be required to complete the assessment.

We work hard to stay on time but may occasionally run behind and call you later than scheduled. If we are unable to reach you during your scheduled time by phone and video, we will leave a message to ask you to reschedule your appointment.

**I agree with the above terms while attending phone or video appointments:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth (m/d/y)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (m/d/y)

## General Terms of Use for Electronic Communication

### **Urgent communication should not be sent by electronic means.**

- If you have an emergency, please call 9-1-1.
- If you have an urgent concern, please call the office at 604-681-1080. If it is outside of business hours, contact our on-call line to speak with a Spectrum Physician at 778-838-6500.

**We cannot guarantee that messages sent using electronic communication will be reviewed within any specific time frame.** Your healthcare provider will attempt to review and respond to electronic communication in a timely fashion. It is your responsibility to follow up with your provider if you have not received a response.

**Verify your identity:** Identify yourself by your name and date of birth when using electronic communication, particularly when using email and when speaking with a healthcare provider you have not seen before.

**Risk of 3rd party devices and online services:** Employers and online services may have a legal right to inspect and keep electronic communications that pass through their system. Do not use a work device or work email to communicate about your health.

**Protect your computer against malware and viruses:** Information may be vulnerable if stored on a computer or device that has been compromised.

**Maintain your online security:** Create strong passwords, use a secure Wi-Fi connection, enable loss/theft protection such as auto-lock or 'find my phone' functionality, use your device settings to control app permissions to minimize access to your data.

**Management of account Information:** It is your responsibility to monitor email, text messages, or messages sent through the patient portal received at the indicated accounts and to advise the clinic if any account information changes or should no longer be used by the clinic for communication. Only the accounts on file will be used by the clinic for electronic communication. Your personal information is stored within our secure electronic health record. Your information will never be given or sold to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties. If necessary, it may be sent to other health care providers in your circle of care.

**Records:** I understand and agree that individual care providers may make decisions about my treatment based on information I provide through electronic communications and that this information will form part of my health record.

**Sensitive topics:** Medical issues of a sensitive nature should be reviewed at a scheduled appointment rather than through electronic communications such as email.

**Disclosure:** Electronic communications are subject to the same disclosure conditions as office records, including the duty to report applicable to issues such as child maltreatment.

**Withdrawal of services.** Individual care providers may stop using electronic communication tools at any time. If this occurs, you will be notified of this decision in person, in writing, or by electronic communication.

## Intended Use of Electronic Communication

### **Patient Portal:**

Electronic communication through the patient portal is encrypted and more secure than the other methods below. The following are the intended use of this platform:

- Booking appointments
- Viewing lab results
- Publishing documents such as lab requisitions and imaging reports for you to download and view
- Direct messaging between you and your provider and/or allowing replies for non-urgent concerns

### **Email:**

Email is more likely to be misdirected and/or received by unintended recipients. The use of 3rd party services may result in your emails and health information being accessed unintentionally. Email is easier to falsify and it is more difficult to verify your identity. For these reasons, the following is our intended use of email at our clinic.

### **Direct email between you and your healthcare provider:**

Your provider may use email under exceptional circumstances for clinical care. Speak to your provider to clarify how it may be used for this purpose. Information shared

directly between you and your physician using a private email address may be delayed in being incorporated into your official health record.

### **Clinic email address:**

- Used to receive forms, photos and health information (i.e. home blood pressure readings) that are relevant to an upcoming visit.
- **Do not send clinical questions to this email address.**
- These emails are uploaded to your chart by our medical office assistants and become part of your official health record. All members of our clinic staff have signed an agreement for confidentiality of health information. This can be made available to you upon request.
- After emails are attached to your health record, they will be deleted from the email server.
- In exceptional circumstances, such as a patient being deaf or away without access to a phone, email may be used for additional purposes.
- **Guidelines for sending an email to our clinic:**
  1. Send to: [fax@spectrum-health.net](mailto:fax@spectrum-health.net)
  2. Only send from the email address we have on file for you
  3. Include an appropriate description in the subject. eg) form for visit
  4. Include your full name, date of birth and intended recipient
  5. When sending forms, please review in advance and complete the sections that are applicable to you, including signing if necessary.
  6. Review that the email address is correct prior to sending.

### **Mass emails to Spectrum patients:**

- Emails are sent using blind carbon copy. Your email address will not be shared with other recipients.
- We may send important updates about our clinic by email. The same information will also be posted to our website. We recommend checking your email regularly to stay updated. If you do not receive these emails, check if they have been sent to your junk email folder.
- Replies to this email address are not monitored and will not be responded to.

### **Text Messaging:**

Like email, texts are more easily misdirected, increasing the chances of a message being received by an unintended recipient. Texting may be easier to falsify than other forms of communications. Verifying the identity of the sender cannot be guaranteed. We

also cannot guarantee that only the intended recipient will read a text message after it is sent. Text messaging may be used when there is no alternative, such as sending and receiving vital information with the physician on call.

**Social Media:**

We do not use social media for any type of medical care or communication. Do not attempt to contact your provider through social media.

**I agree to the above general terms and intended use for electronic communication:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth (m/d/y)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (m/d/y)