

What are Virtual Clinics?



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- A Virtual Clinic is a consultation with a patient that takes place by phone or video instead of a face-to-face clinic in a health facility or hospital.
- It may also be called telemedicine, telehealth or videolink

Who will conduct the Virtual Clinic with me?



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- Virtual clinics are conducted by the Health Professional responsible for your care, such as a doctor, nurse or pharmacist
- A Virtual Clinic is normally set up by appointment for the purposes of checking your clinical condition or providing advice to you
- Calls made to you by the secretary or administrative staff are not Virtual Clinics

Why am I being offered a Virtual Clinic?



Why am I being offered a Virtual Clinic instead of a face to face clinic?

- Some services and/or clinics are suitable for Virtual Clinics
- If you are being contacted now, it is because your health service thinks that a Virtual Clinic is suitable for you and your condition
- Virtual Clinics reduce the need for patients to visit a health facility or hospital.
- Some services not normally provided as a Virtual Clinic may be provided virtually to minimise your risk of infection during outbreaks such as the Covid-19 pandemic

Benefits



What are the benefits of a Virtual Clinic?

- It can save you time, stress and the expense of travelling
- It will help with physical distancing

Before the Virtual Clinic



Before the Virtual Clinic

- You will generally be asked face to face if you would like the option of a Virtual Clinic.
- You may also be contacted by phone, letter or email in exceptional situations, for example, during the Covid-19 outbreak
- You will be provided with a written description of the Virtual Clinic and asked for your consent to have the clinic this way
- You may need to attend a health facility or your GP for tests before the Virtual Clinic (for example a blood test)

Your appointment



How will your appointment for a Virtual Clinic be made?

The following details will be provided to you about setting up the appointments:

- How the appointment for Virtual Clinics will be communicated to you, for example by letter, text, phone, instant messaging or email
- The date and time of the Virtual Clinic and the expected duration (if known)
- Any flexibility to change the appointment date or time
- Details of who will be conducting the clinic
- Details of any applications you may need to install on your computer or smart phone

Preparing for the Virtual Clinic

Your preparation for the Virtual Clinic

- You should be in a private area or room which is quiet and where you will not be disturbed
- If you prefer, you can arrange for a friend or relative to be with you for the virtual clinic appointment.

What equipment do you need?

What type of equipment do you need for a virtual clinic

- For a clinic that is done by phone only you will need access to a phone
- For a clinic that is being done by video conference you will need access to a computer which has a camera, microphone and a speaker or to a smart phone
- You may need to install an application on your computer or smart phone
- The hospital staff will let you know what you need to be able to participate in the virtual clinic

What happens during a Virtual Clinic

What will happen during a Virtual Clinic?

- The health professional (such as a doctor or nurse) will introduce themselves and carry out the following:
 - **Confirm your identity by checking your date of birth**
 - **If the patient or service user is a child, will confirm the identity of the child, as well as the identity of the parent(s) or guardian(s)**
 - **Will explain the format of the Virtual Clinic to you**
 - **Confirm your consent for the Virtual Clinic**
 - **Speak to you about your condition and inform you about any treatment or advice, including any next steps or further referrals**
- You will be given an opportunity to ask questions or to ask the health professional to repeat anything you did not understand
- You will also be provided with a phone number if you have any questions or queries after the Virtual Clinic

What if I don't speak English?

What if I don't speak English?

- If you need an interpreter to translate for you, please let us know when we contact you about a Virtual Clinic.

Key Contacts

HOSPITAL INFORMATION

PHONE NUMBERS

CONTACT NAMES

We try to provide a positive and supportive experience for people using our service

Your hospital must follow the requirements of the EU General Data Protection Regulation and Irish Data Protection. We welcome your comments, suggestions and complaints. Please give feedback by talking to a member of staff or filling out a 'Your Service, Your Say' leaflet, phoning the HSE Information Line on 1850 24 1850, emailing your comments to yoursay@hse.ie or visiting www.hse.ie.