

August 19, 2022

The Ministry of Health's Ontario Virtual Care Program (previously called the Telemedicine Program) will be extending the time-limited exception for rural patients to the telemedicine premium removal.

Telemedicine Premiums

The telemedicine premiums were discontinued by the Ministry of Health as of **April 1, 2020** for Hosted Video Visits. The telemedicine premium was introduced over 10 years ago when physicians were required to travel to an Ontario Health (OTN) virtual care (telemedicine) site to deliver a video visit.

Given the maturation of video visit technology, use, and access – especially physicians' ability to conduct a video visit from their own computer or smart phone – the telemedicine premiums are no longer serving their original purpose.

Physicians will now be paid on par to in-person care for services delivered via video visits within the Ontario Virtual Care Program.

In order to ease the transition from the telemedicine premiums and maintain patient access to care, a time-limited exception to the premium removal was enabled for rural patients. **This exception will be extended for another year to expire on March 31, 2022** (i.e. instead of ending March 31, 2021). Over the coming months, Ontario Health (OTN) will be implementing a number of changes that will reduce the time required with scheduling virtual visits through telemedicine host sites and improve overall user experience. It is expected that with these changes, and the extension to this exception, it will pave the way for a smooth transition for both patients and health service providers.

For **billing related inquiries**, please contact the Ministry of Health's Service Support Contact Centre at: 1-800-262-6524 or SSContactCentre.MOH@ontario.ca.

For specific questions about **conducting video visits**, please contact: info@otn.ca.

Resources

To sign up for virtual care services through Ontario Health (OTN) please visit the [OTNhub Sign Up page](#).

For additional resources on delivering virtual care, visit the [OTNhub Support](#).