

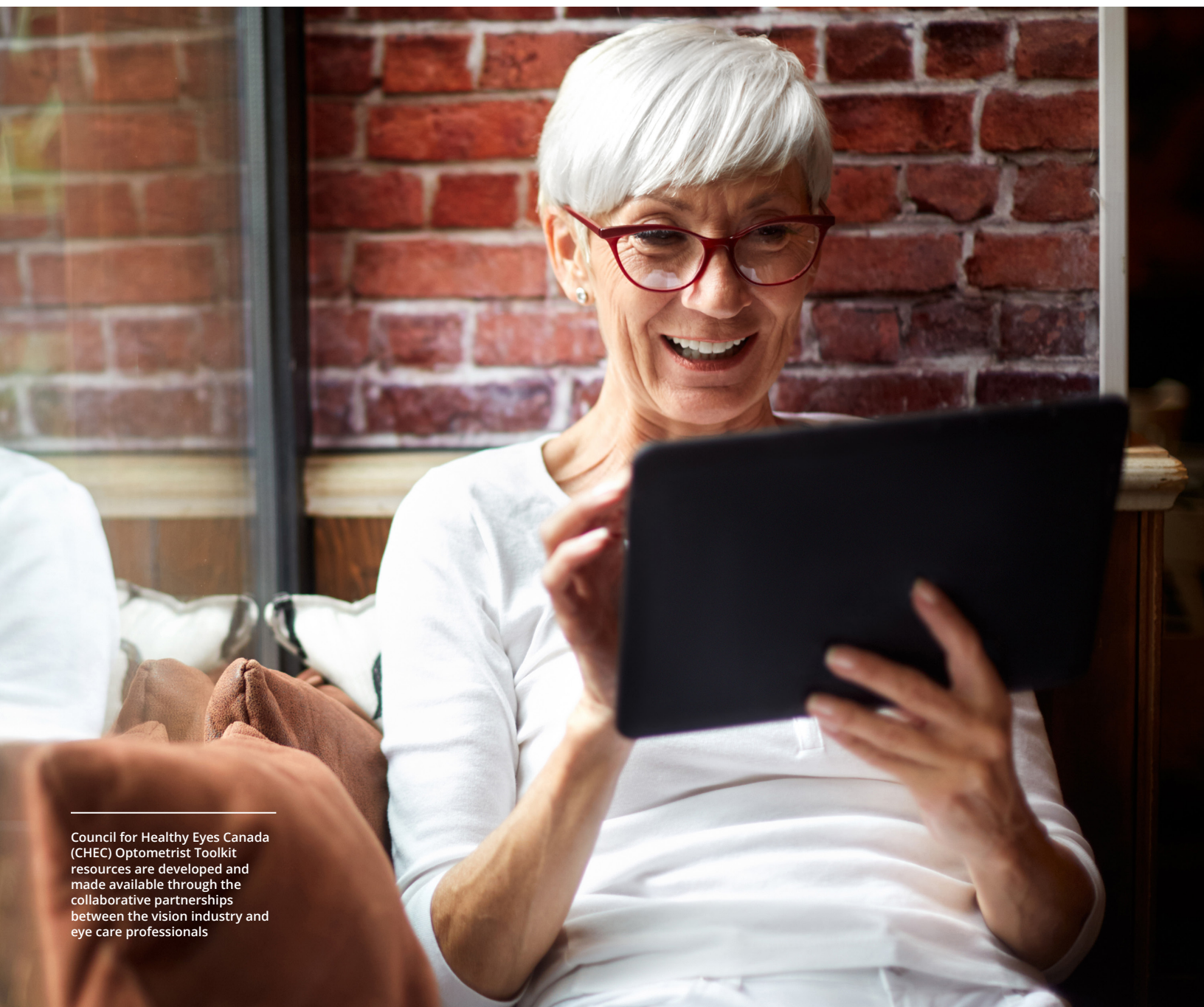
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COUNCIL FOR HEALTHY EYES CANADA (CHEC)

Covid-19 Toolkit for Optometrists

VIRTUAL PRACTICE



Council for Healthy Eyes Canada (CHEC) Optometrist Toolkit resources are developed and made available through the collaborative partnerships between the vision industry and eye care professionals

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Introduction

To help reduce the spread of Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19 or SARS-COV-2) and support social distancing, many Optometrists have shuttered offices and are shifting to remote/virtual services to continue caring for patients during the pandemic. This has changed how you care for patients during the lockdown, and as restrictions are lifted will continue to impact how you operate on daily basis to ensure the safety of patients and all Canadians.

This document contains practical information for Canadian Optometrists related to the Covid-19 pandemic and virtual resources to consider for your practice. We have curated information from various sources including Federation of Optometric Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FORAC), Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) and various provincial associations.

As we all continue to navigate this ever-changing situation, we hope you find this toolkit and other resources developed by the Council for Healthy Eyes Canada (CHEC) helpful. Our goal to provide you with useful resources is made possible through the collaborations and relationships we've developed and continue to expand.

CHEC is grateful for the support from industry partners like Alcon, Essilor, Johnson and Johnson, Nikon and Shamir.

The Council for Healthy Eyes Canada (CHEC) very much appreciates ongoing leadership from our industry partners in helping to found the highly successful ThinkAboutYourEyes.ca (TAYE) integrated marketing, communications and data collection campaign. We also would like to thank Canadian eye care professionals such as Optometrists at this very challenging time.

The Alcon logo consists of the word "Alcon" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

About us

Organized as a collaboration between eye care professionals and industry, CHEC is a registered not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to improving eye health for Canadians through awareness and education initiatives. Through strategic partnerships and the guidance of our representative Board, we aim to increase awareness and eye care intentions of Canadians from coast to coast, subsequently leading to an uplift in the number of eye exams and vision treatments across the country.

ThinkAboutYourEyes.ca (TAYE) is a bilingual (English and French) integrated marketing, communications and data collection campaign organized annually by CHEC, which has increased foot traffic to Canadian Optometrists by well-over five percent (5%) each year and has successfully reached millions of Canadians since its launch in 2018. TAYE is a collaborative effort that is designed to educate the public about the benefits of vision health and promote the importance of annual comprehensive eye exams.

To learn more, visit:

<https://www.thinkaboutyoureyes.ca/>

<http://councilforhealthyeyes.ca/>

Disclaimer

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Virtual Practice

One of the most notable trends emerging with Covid-19 has been the shift to virtual business operations which impacts both team management and patient care.

Team collaboration

It's important to do what you can to keep staff informed about changes to your business, and to also to keep them motivated and on task.

Collaboration and communication tools go a long way, especially those that allow you to connect in meaningful and immediate ways – one-on-one and as a group.

First and foremost, consider how existing tools can be repurposed. For example, if you're already subscribed to [Office 365™](#), you may have access to [Microsoft Teams™](#) which includes video and messenger services.

- **Video:** A little bit of face time goes a long way to making staff feel connected and comfortable. Zoom™ is currently the most popular video conferencing option, with free options and is relatively easy to use. Here are a handful of resources to get you started:

- **Webinar:** [Zoom Meetings](#) for Healthcare (<60 minutes)
- **Blog:** Using [Zoom for Telehealth & Virtual Care](#) (1,150 words)
- **Zoom** for [Healthcare Brochure](#) (2 pages)

- **Instant messaging:** Quick and nimble communication amongst team members is essential for a productive virtual office. Most important are visibility and keeping inbox clutter to a minimum. [Slack](#) is currently the most popular messaging platform and has a free option for small teams.

Supporting patients with teleoptometry

Many Optometrists are using technology to provide eye health and vision care to support patients. The below information is intended to help should you pursue this route.

Regulatory guidelines

Teleoptometry is generally encouraged by Canadian regulators provided precautions are taken to ensure quality of care and protection of patient information.

The Federation of Optometric Regulatory Authorities of Canada ([FORAC Policy on Teleoptometry](#)) outlines standard business practices plus a handful of teleoptometry considerations, such as:

- Ensure digital health information is appropriately stored and protected.
- Comply with relevant legislation and regulatory policies as it applies to current and evolving technologies used in teleoptometry.

Provincial associations with teleoptometry policies can be found here:

- [Alberta College of Optometrists' Clinical Practice Guideline for Telehealth](#);
- [College of Optometrists of British Columbia Teleoptometry Policy](#);
- [Nova Scotia College of Optometrists Policy on Teleoptometry](#);
- [Ontario Telehealth Policy for Optometrists](#); and,
- [Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists' Teleoptometry Standards of Practice](#).

The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) defers to provincial and the previously mentioned FORAC policy if provincial guidance is not available. The [CAO Statement on Teleoptometry](#) also recommends that Optometrists should:

- Purchase cybersecurity insurance;
- Ensure professional liability insurance covers teleoptometry; and,
- Implement secure patient communications. (i.e. email encryption, secure file exchange)

Teleoptometry options

The [CAO Teleoptometry During Covid-19 Guide](#) provides detailed information to help Optometrists set-up a virtual practice. Options summarized within this section aims to help you make technology decisions based on the needs of your business, patients and employees.

Telephone and email

While telephone and email are easiest, keep in mind that neither phone or email are PIPEDA or HIPAA compliant for teleoptometry.

Secure online portals

Various online portals offer secure video, correspondence and other built-in features designed to support patient and practitioner needs. Below is a summary of such services.

Method	Eyecare Live Portal	LiveCare Portal	Doxy.me Telemedicine	Zoom for Healthcare	Vidyo for Telehealth	Poly Solutions for Healthcare	VSee Telehealth
Security	HIPAA compliant	Secure end-to-end encryption of messages	HIPAA, GDPR, PHIPA/PIPEDA, & HITECH compliant	HIPAA and PIPEDA/PHIPA compliant	HIPAA compliant	HIPAA compliant	HIPAA compliant
Cost	Monthly fees TBD; \$750 (USD) onboarding fee waived	\$50 - \$150 (CAD) per month	Free for basic option (video calling only); \$35-\$50/month (USD) for premium options	\$200 (USD) per month per account	Contact sales team	\$1,000 -\$3,000 (USD) for videoconferencing products	\$50 (USD) per month for a basic account; custom pricing for an enterprise account
How it Works	App based experience	Web based experience	Web based experience (ex. doxy.me/YourDrsName)	Web or app-based experience, like Zoom	Contact sales team	Contact sales team	Web or app-based experience
Video Calling	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sending and receiving messages	•	•	•		•		•
Reminders and notifications	•	•	•				•
Online waiting rooms		•	•	•	•		•
Screen sharing			•	•	•	•	•
File sharing (photos, videos, documents)	•	•	•			•	•
File annotation				•			•
EMR and healthcare application integration (ex. Epic, Strmr, Intake Q, Practice Better, Cerner, etc.)	•	•		•	•	•	
Prescribing prescriptions	•	•					•
Payment integration	•	•	•				•
Diagnostic tool integration (ex. digital stethoscopes, point of care cameras, far end PTZ camera control, etc.)	•	•		•	•	•	•
Vision/Eye Test integration (Acuity and Dry Eye SPEED tests, etc.)	•						
Reporting Capabilities	•						
Shortcomings	Lack of some useful features such as screen sharing and online waiting rooms.	Many of the features, such as Live Diagnostic Video and other medical device integrations, require the telehealth stations, which aren't practical given social distancing directives.	No EMR or diagnostic tool integration – PHI is not saved in this platform. No data is saved from meetings. Many of the features, such as screen sharing and file transfers require a premium account.	Higher ongoing costs every month compared to other telehealth solutions. Set-up and registration may also be more difficult for patients and doctors compared to other options.	Lack of publicly available information. Requires connecting with a sales associate and study suggests Vidyo difficult to set up and access for patients.	Very high costs compared to other options. Lack of publicly available information requires meeting with sales team to get up and running. Patients may have trouble logging in according to a study .	Lack of EMR integration. Many of the features, such as screensharing, annotation, payment integration and more require the custom enterprise account.