

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS		
Standard Operating Procedures		
Functional Area: Facilities Division	Reference Number: IIA12-0001 (208.02)	Revises Previous Effective Date: 8/15/01
Subject: Telemedicine		
Authority: Bryson/Jacobs	Effective Date: 04/22/15	Page 1 of 7

I. POLICY:

The Facilities Division supports and will establish, in concert with the GDC Office of Health Services, multiple statewide remote telemedicine sites strategically located at selected prisons which will serve as an adjunct to the existing health care delivery system and support the provision of quality medical clinic services while also realizing a reduction in transportation costs. A transportation routing system, which incorporates the primary concern of security while addressing telemedicine site delivery efficiency, will utilize a coordinated system of inmate/probationer drop-off, pick-up, and delivery to remote telemedicine sites within each of the Division's regions. Each Region will have, at a minimum, one remote telemedicine site which will provide medical consultation capabilities for selected inmates and thus will reduce the former level of dependency to physically transport all inmates to the Augusta State Medical Prison for consultation services.

II. APPLICABILITY:

All State Prisons, Transition Centers, and Probation Detention Centers, County Correctional Institutions, Diversion Centers; privatized facilities and women's facilities are excluded.

III. RELATED DIRECTIVES:

- A. GDC Rules and Regulations: 125-2-4.
- B. Standard Operating Procedures: IIB01-0006, IIB01-0013, IIB01-0028, IIA07-0007, (Transfer Officer Post Order), GDC Health Services - VH17-0003, VH30-0002, VH36-0001, VH36-0002, VH82-0002.
- C. ACA Standards: 3-4182

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DEFINITIONS:

- D. Telemedicine - An interactive voice and color video communication system integrated with biomedical science.
- E. Remote Telemedicine Site - A prison selected within a catchment area responsible for sending medical information to the clinical provider located at the hub site utilizing interactive video equipment. Selected inmates/probationers are transported to this site for consultation.
- F. Hub Telemedicine Site - Augusta State Medical Prison (ASMP) will serve as the hub site where the primary medical providers via electronic video equipment will interact with medical staff and the inmate/probationer at the remote telemedicine site. Responsible for sending and receiving medical information required by the medical providers in regards to providing health care services to the inmates/probationers located at the remote telemedicine site.
- G. Catchment Area - A grouping of facilities within general proximity to each other identified for transportation purposes. It will include originating facilities which provide the vehicles and transportation staff, drop-off facility sites, facility pick-up sites, and the remote telemedicine site. (Attachment 1)
- H. Home Facility - inmate's/probationer's permanent prison/center assignment.
- I. Remote Telemedicine Site Coordinator- Serves as the individual responsible for facilitating and coordinating systems operation with the hub site and designated facility catchment areas. This individual will serve as the site contact for security staff (Transportation Officer).

IV. ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1- Remote Telemedicine Sites and Catchment List

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V. PROCEDURE:

A. Overview:

1. Selective telemedicine clinics will be conducted at multiple sites within the state, which include but are not limited to, Georgia Diagnostic & Classification Prison, Men's State Prison, and Georgia State Prison. These remote telemedicine service sites will serve as an adjunct to the existing health care delivery system. Medical staff located at ASMP will conduct the consult in concert with medical providers at the remote telemedicine site.

B. Regionalized transportation plan of facility vehicle starting points, inmate/resident drop-off locations, pick-up location, and destination points (remote telemedicine sites) will be developed and distributed by the Facilities Division Director.

1. Transport vehicles will meet all requirements mandated in the applicable SOP.

2. Staffing levels for transport purposes will comply with the applicable SOP.

3. All inmates/residents being transported will be restrained in accord with the applicable SOP.

4. In-route radio contacts will be initiated as mandated by the applicable SOP.

5. The highest level of inmate security being transported will dictate the level of security applied to all transportees.

6. Considerations will be applied to inmate/probationer mix in transport to assure the safety of all concerned (youthful offenders, protective custody, etc.).

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C. Notification of inmate/probationer appointments:

1. Augusta State Medical Prison (ASMP) Appointment Clerk will fax to all facility and center Wardens/Superintendents and Health Services Administrators within the catchment areas, a list of inmates/probationers scheduled for telemedicine clinics at least 48 hours in advance of the appointment date. This will include the inmate's/probationer's name, State ID number, the home facility name, the date and time of the consultation, and the name of the telemedicine clinic. *See number 5 below*
2. The Wardens/Superintendents of the home facilities will designate an individual responsible for transportation routing system coordination.
3. It is the responsibility of the facility to have the inmate/probationer prepared for transport to the telemedicine site on the date specified. This will include verifying if any medications (with instructions) need to accompany the inmate/probationer, medical records to be transported to the site, if the inmate/probationer requires any special security considerations, or other information relevant for the Transportation Officer's safety or the safety of the inmates/probationers making the trip.
4. All telemedicine consultation appointments will be scheduled on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.
5. At the originating transport vehicle starting points, the designated Transportation Officers will review the telemedicine faxes and identify the necessary route stops required in accordance with the GDC routing system (Routing Maps available through Facilities Division Regional Offices).

Identifying a more effective process

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6. In cases where medical personnel must cancel a scheduled consultation at a telemedicine remote site, ASMP will be notified at least 24 hours preceding the consultation and will in turn notify those affected facilities. Likewise, if an inmate/probationer is precluded from attending the consultation, the home facility will contact ASMP, the Remote Telemedicine Site, and their Originating Vehicle Facility at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled clinic so that this information can be processed.

D. Responsibility of the home facility prior to pick up of their scheduled inmate/probationer (this includes inmates/probationers being transported from their assigned facility as a drop-off to a pick-up site awaiting subsequent transport to the telemedicine site, or inmates/probationers located already at a designated pick-up location awaiting transport to the telemedicine site):

1. All scheduled inmates/probationers will be thoroughly searched to preclude any unauthorized items from entering the transport vehicle and subsequently the remote telemedicine site.
2. No personal property will be allowed to accompany the inmate/probationer on the vehicle transporting them to the medical appointment. This does not exclude prescription eyeglasses, dentures, medications, or other medically approved prosthetic devices.
3. Staff will verify the identity of the inmate/probationer just prior to departure and assure that picture photo identification is available and accurate.
4. If prescribed medication is required to be taken during the inmate's/probationer's absence from their home facility, and its' need is supported by medical staff it, along with appropriate instructions, will be provided to the Transportation Officer.

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Inmates/probationers will be allowed to bring authorized self-administered medications.

5. The home facility will ensure that the individual inmate's/probationer's medical records or necessary documents are placed in a sealed envelope with their name, State ID number, and the home facility name printed on the front. This envelope will be surrendered to the Transportation Officer for delivery to the Remote Telemedicine Site Coordinator.
 6. The home facility will provide a pack-out lunch/beverage for inmate/probationer with their name printed on the bag, which will be secured on the vehicle and later distributed at the appropriate meal time.
 7. Any special security instructions or intelligence information regarding an inmate/probationer will be prepared and provided to the Transportation Officer.
 8. For those facilities who earlier delivered inmates/probationers to a drop-off point, they will, upon return of the inmate/probationer from the telemedicine appointment, pick them up and return to their home facility. To expedite the return process, the Transportation Officer will via radio, or other approved method, contact the inmate's/probationer's home facility with an ETA to the drop-off point so that when they arrive at that location the home facility will be there to accept the returning inmate/probationer.
- E. Responsibilities of Transportation Officer(s) upon arrival at the remote telemedicine site:
1. Escort inmates/probationers to the telemedicine exam room and insure that security is maintained among those awaiting their appointment as well as the individual being seen in the clinic. Restraints may be removed only when the individual is being seen in the clinic exam room by medical personnel and when

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medical staff concurs with the removal of the restraints. All medical records/documentation transported will be surrendered to the clinic personnel.

2. Should the inmate/probationer being seen begin to act out or act inappropriately and this behavior is perceived as a posed or probable security risk or risk to the safety of staff, the Transportation Officer(s) shall enter the exam room and secure the situation immediately. An incident report will be completed.
3. At any point from arrival at the telemedicine site through the conduct of the actual appointment, should the inmate/probationer refuse medical services, the issue will be reported to the Remote Telemedicine Site Coordinator for appropriate action and documentation in accordance with policy.
4. Should the inmate/probationer become physically aggressive towards medical staff or others in the exam room, or become destructive towards the physical plant/equipment, they will immediately be controlled and restrained. The appointment will be terminated and an incident report will be completed. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and restitution for damages will be pursued.
5. Some situations may require the presence of the Transportation Officer(s) to be present during the telemedicine exam with the request generated from the medical staff in charge of the consultation. Other situations may necessitate the Officer's self-initiated presence because of unique knowledge he/she has regarding the inmate/probationer being examined. Whatever the basis for their presence, every attempt should be made to ensure the inmate's/probationer's privacy (refer to SOP VH30-0002) while balancing the concerns of security.