

## **PATIENT GUIDE TO VIRTUAL CARE**

### ***Responding to COVID-19***

#### **What is a virtual care appointment?**

A virtual care appointment helps you meet with your health-care professional through secure messaging, phone or video on a mobile or a web application. This service is being offered during the COVID-19 pandemic until March 31, 2021 to support you with receiving necessary medical care in a safe way while social distancing measures are in place.

You will use the Maple platform to access an online health care provider. It is a secure web-based service that can be used on your computer, smartphone, or tablet. You will be able to see, hear and talk with a health-care professional from a private location of your choice.

#### **What do you need?**

- Smartphone/Tablet & free Maple App (download from Google Play or Apple App Store) or
- Computer/Laptop (with webcam and microphone)
- Internet Browser with High-speed Internet or 4G LTE connection

The link to the Maple registration page is included in your invitation email/letter.

If you are not using Wi-fi, you are responsible for any charges related to data usage. Video streams can require significant data.

#### **What types of health issues can be dealt with virtually?**

Not all care is appropriate to do by video or phone. The health-care professional will review your case and if they feel an in-person appointment is required, he/she will direct you to where in person health services can be accessed. If you are not comfortable with a virtual option, you can continue to access health care as you had previously. It is your choice.

#### **What are the possible risks of a virtual visit?**

As with any technology, there is a potential risk for equipment failure. If this occurs, you and the health care provider will talk about other options, such as:

- Continuing the appointment by telephone
- Rescheduling the virtual visit to a later date or arranging for an in-person visit at a walk-in clinic.

While all efforts are made to protect your privacy, there are some risks, including:

- Confidential conversations being overheard if you are in a public location

If you or the health-care provider feel the virtual visit is not meeting your needs, the appointment can end and other arrangements will be made. At any time, you can choose not to have a virtual visit.

### **What should I do before the call?**

Prepare for your appointment as you would an in-person meeting to be ready to talk about your health-care needs. Download the free application Maple (download from Google Play or Apple App Store) to become familiar with it and test the sound and video. Alternatively, you can also use access Maple from your computer (laptop/desktop).

### **What about my privacy?**

Health PEI, Maple and health care providers providing virtual care are committed to protecting the privacy of your personal health information by following the *Health Information Act*.

It is important to note that your information is personal. When you use Maple for virtual care visits, your data is protected with a comprehensive security infrastructure and stringent data policies to ensure it stays private and secure. Each consultation is always delivered by a PEI licensed physician who is required to maintain your confidentiality, just as they would in their office.

You are responsible to choose a private place for your virtual visit. If you do not feel the health care provider is in a secure location, you can ask for the visit to stop.

If you have any questions about privacy, please visit *Privacy and Your Personal Health Information* at [www.healthpei.ca/yourprivacy](http://www.healthpei.ca/yourprivacy) or contact us at [healthprivacy@ihis.org](mailto:healthprivacy@ihis.org).

If you have any questions about virtual care, please contact [HealthPEIMaple@ihis.org](mailto:HealthPEIMaple@ihis.org)