Use these tips to help develop and maintain a professional videoconferencing image and prepare for clinical telehealth consultations.

Preparing a Professional Space (as available):

Lighting

- Face into the brightest part of the room (keep the bright light on your face).
- Avoid bright windows behind you or next to you. Although not ideal, cover any windows with blinds or curtains.
- Add lamps to create bright and diffuse lighting throughout your room.

Background

- What does the background say about you? Adjust your permanent background to the professional image you want to display.
- Keep the background behind you as simple as possible. Pick up clutter.
- Adding some depth between you and back wall can improve lighting and sound.
- Again, avoid windows in the background when possible.

Sound

- Select a quiet room with a door you can close.
- Avoid added sounds that your microphone might pick up, such as a fan, keyboard, open window, or someone else in the room.
- Keep the microphone as close to you as possible (or in the middle of a group).
- Consider adding an external microphone or use a headset for better sound quality.

Camera and Monitor

- Position your camera as close to the top of the screen as possible.
- Add distance between you and the camera. Increasing this angle can add the illusion that you are looking into the camera & minimize dramatic movements.
- Adjust the height of the camera and monitor so that the top of your head is level with the camera (avoid having the camera look up or down at you).
- On group calls, position the camera so that everyone in the room is visible.

Testing

- Remember to test your setup by video to see what you will look like on a call.

Continued
Maintaining a Professional Call:

- Consider what you wear. Shirts with stripes and checkers can cause visual “vibrations”.
- Close other computer programs to ensure you have enough computing resources and avoid distracting alerts.
- Test the call in advance, especially if you are using a new program. A download may be needed.
- Avoid using wifi when videoconferencing. Using a wire (Ethernet) will provide a more stable connection.
- Add your full name and organization when logging on (applicable for some videoconferencing software).
- If you have a camera, use it (no need to be shy).
- Make eye contact with the camera while talking.
- Make sure to introduce everyone joining the call in your room. Avoid people lurking in the background who are not introduced.
- Know how to mute your microphone. Keep your microphone muted when not participating during a group call.
- Prepare for unexpected phone calls, either on a desk phone or your mobile phone, and respond accordingly.
- Avoid typing while you are unmuted.
- Mute your video if eating, taking another call, leaving the room, etc...
- Give your name each time you speak during a group meeting (may be less important for a videoconference depending on the scenario).
- Utilize chat features to avoid interrupting speakers.
- Slow down a little. You may experience some latency issues with audio and/or video. Adding space while speaking can help improve the flow of the conversation.
- Keep an eye on your own video to see how you present during the call.
- Don’t be afraid to address technical issues, but don’t make a big deal out of it.

Facilitating a Call:

- When sending an invitation, include instructions on opening the videoconferencing program for new users.
- Don’t forget to send a reminder about your videoconference or webinar.
- Review the features of the videoconferencing program when beginning a call with new users, including how to mute microphones and video.

Tips adapted from Jonathan Neufeld, PhD, and Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center Telemental Health Toolkit.

This publication was made possible by grant number G22RH30352 from the Office for the Advancement of Telehealth, Health Resources and Services Administration, DHHS.