

NEWS

Govt Issues Telemedicine Guidelines For Virtual Consultations



Kritti Bhalla

Inc42 Staff

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- A patient can now consult doctors over text, video and voice call
- The doctors are also



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consultations



In order to assure steady and quick medical services as movement of people has been restricted in the 21-day coronavirus lockdown, the government of India has issued a set of guidelines for telemedicine or remote delivery of medical services. The guidelines have been issued by the ministry of health and family welfare (MoHFW), in collaboration with NITI Aayog and Board of Governors (BoG) Medical Council of India (MCI).

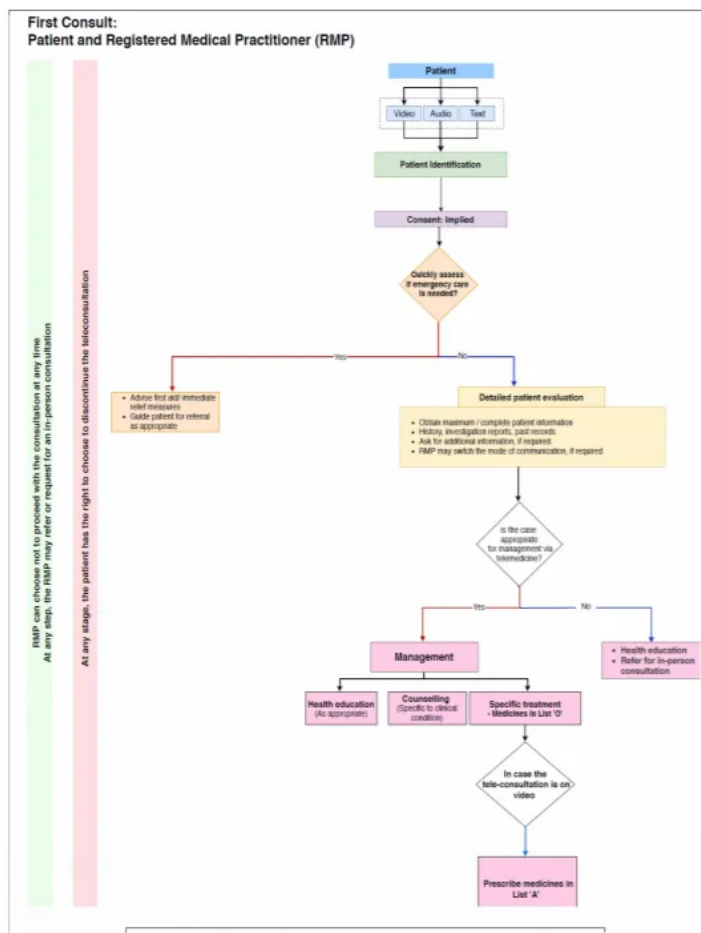
With the telemedicine guidelines in place, doctors will be able to write prescriptions based on telephonic, textual or video conversations — chat,



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which medical practitioners can evaluate and manage patients. A telemedicine visit can be conducted without exposing staff to viruses/infections in the times of such outbreaks,” the guidelines read.



The telemedicine guidelines have also added the following provisions:

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- Only medical practitioners, registered under the IMC Act 1956, are entitled to provide telemedicine consultation.
- The registered medical practitioners (RMP) are allowed to use text, video or audio-enabled solutions for consultations.
- Telemedicine consultations should not be anonymous, both patient and doctor should know each other's identity.
- RMPs have to verify the patient's identity by name, age, address, email ID, phone number, registered ID or any other identification.
- RMPs need to be sure about the patient's age before prescribing any medication. The practitioner can ask for the patient's age proof if in doubt.
- If the patient initiates the telemedicine consultation then their consent is implied.
- If a physical examination is critical information for consultation, the RMPs should not proceed until a physical examination can be arranged.

All registered medical practitioners (RMP) will have to complete a mandatory course within three years



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consultation, including texts.

There are also certain medicines listed in “List B” that can only be prescribed after a follow-up or in-person consultation. Meanwhile, List A has relatively safe medicine with low potential for abuse. These can be prescribed over video-consultations only and in a follow-up consultation for a refill.

The government has also listed out certain drugs that cannot be prescribed through telemedicine. This includes drugs listed under Schedule X of Drugs and Cosmetics Act and Rules, and any Narcotics and psychotropic substance listed in the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985.

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- The system will be available at the deputy police commissioner offices
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Taking a cue from Delhi government and after meeting with ecommerce, food, medicine, groceries and vegetable providers, Bhaskar Rao, Commissioner of Police-Bengaluru has finally announced that it will soon issue duty passes to those partners delivering essential services performers who may not have a valid ID.

It is worth noting that while Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a lockdown on March 24, in and around Bengaluru, Section 144 had already been put in place till March 31. Despite the government's repeated assurances that essential services delivery which included services by Zomato, Swiggy, BigBasket, local kirana and medicine stores would run, delivering agents have been facing the wrath of police force on the ground due to the Section 144 imposition.

Amid chaos, Walmart-owned ecommerce company Flipkart had suspended its entire operations for the time being which it resumed later partially



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Providers, we are starting a system of Duty pass issue at all our eight deputy commissioner of police, offices. DCPs East, West, North, South, Central, South East, North East and Whitefield. Your nearest police station will guide you to the DCP Officers.will update.”

Earlier, Rao had announced that people who are performing essential duties as per the government order, must travel in company vehicles, wear company uniform and carry ID. However, this was hugely criticised by many as local kirana stores, hawkers, and many others performing essential services don't have any of these on the ground.

While Kerala government has announced an INR 20,000 Cr fund to tackle Covid-19 and its aftereffects, Karnataka government recently announced an INR 200 Cr fund and has formed 100 teams, each consisting of one doctor, one staff nurse and one medico-social worker for contact tracing.

The state health department has created

temporary workrooms to fight Covid-19 and has also



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