

## Virtual Visits Verification for Everyone: Frequently asked Questions

In support of the province's Digital First for Health strategy, Ontario Health launched a provincial verification process by which clinicians and health care organizations will have access to expanded options of virtual care solutions that are aligned to provincial standards.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, OntarioMD, and other health care stakeholders, Ontario Health has developed virtual visit video and secure messaging requirements designed for solutions to support clinical encounters with patients and interoperable health information exchange.

For additional questions about virtual visits verification process, please contact [verification@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:verification@ontariohealth.ca) or visit the Verified Virtual Visit Solutions for Providers webpage(s).

### 1. What is the purpose of Ontario Health's Virtual Visits Verification Program ("the Program")?

The purpose of the Program is to ensure that virtual care solutions meet a provincial standard for privacy, security, technology, and functionality.

### 2. How will I benefit from using solutions that comply with provincial standards for virtual care?

- A. The [Verified Solutions List](#) is made available to support health service providers in making informed decisions regarding selection and procurement of the most appropriate virtual care solution for their practice. Health service providers using an Ontario Health verified solution will benefit through:
- Confidence in selecting a solution that meets provincial privacy, safety, interoperability, and technical requirements and aligns to provincial priorities such as Digital Health Information Exchange (DHIEX) legislation.
  - Safeguarding of patient personal health information (PHI)
  - Alignment with provincial initiatives in which use of an Ontario Health verified virtual visits solution is a recommendation or a requirement.

### 3. Is participation in the program mandatory for virtual care solutions?

- A. Participation in the Program is voluntary. However, Solution Providers should be aware, and take into consideration, if there are provincial initiatives recommending or requiring the use of an Ontario Health verified virtual visit solution.

### 4. What is the Program's scope in terms of virtual care modalities?

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- A. Program scope is limited to video and secure messaging. Solution providers may submit to become verified for video, secure messaging, or for both video and secure messaging.

## **5. How do we get started with the process of become verified?**

- A. The Program is open and accepting submissions from virtual care solution providers that are interested in verifying that their solutions are compliant with the Virtual Visits Solution Requirements (“the Requirements”) and to being listed on Ontario Health’s Verified Solutions List. To initiate the process of becoming verified, send an email to [verification@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:verification@ontariohealth.ca) confirming your interest in participating in the Program. Ontario Health will respond to your message with instructions and relevant materials. The submission package is not published online. Note that all submissions are processed on a first come, first served basis.

## **6. What guides eligibility decisions?**

- A. To become verified, solution providers must meet all mandatory requirements as specified in the requirements, and all program requirements as specified in the Virtual Visits Verification Program Terms and Conditions.

## **7. How long will the verification process take?**

- A. Submissions are processed on a first come, first served basis. While turnaround times are dependent upon the volume of submissions received, Ontario Health is generally able to return to Solution Providers with a Notice of Verification, or a Notice of Remediation, within 5 working days. Submissions that are found to be complete and in good order are published on the Verified Solutions List at the time of the Notice of Verification. Remediations can vary from minor to significant and as such can range in timeline from immediate term corrections to major remediations that can take months.

## **8. Are there any fees associated with participating in the Program?**

- A. There are no fees currently required. Solution Providers are however responsible for all costs associated with the preparation of their submissions, and for ensuring that their solution(s) and service(s) continue to meet all Mandatory Requirements.

## **9. Is there a window that Solution Providers are required to meet to become verified?**

- A. No. Solution Providers may submit to become verified at any time.

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## **10. What should Solution Providers prepare in advance of submitting for verification?**

- A. Solution Providers are required to sign an Attestation Letter that affirms that their solution meets all Mandatory Requirements. Up-to-date Privacy Impact (PIA) and Threat Risk (TRA) Assessment Summaries are required to be submitted. Solution Providers may submit a SOC 2 Type 2 audit report in place of a TRA if they so wish. PIA and TRA Summaries must include a table of contents from the full-length assessment, a risk table that classifies risks as high, medium, or low. Further information is provided in the submission package that Ontario Health shares with Solution Providers upon their confirmed interest in participating in the Program.

## **11. Must all risks identified in the privacy and security assessments be mitigated by the date of submission?**

- A. It depends on the risk level. High risks must be mitigated by the date of submission. Medium risks must be mitigated within 6 months of the date they were identified and low risks may be mitigated at the Solution Provider's discretion.

## **12. Why is Ontario Health accepting SOC 2 Type 2 audits as an alternative to the requirement that Solution Providers perform Threat Risk Assessments (TRA)?**

- A. The purpose of a SOC 2 Type 2 audit is to assess a Solution Provider's ability to protect personal information and customer data based on five Trust Principles of which Security Common Criteria is one. Performed by an accredited auditor (CPAs or CPA firms) as defined by the American Institute of Certified Public Accounts (AICPA) Trust Services Principles and Criteria, SOC 2 is a highly accepted security standard and framework that is considered as equivalent to a TRA for the purpose of this Program.

## **13. Do the privacy and security professionals that support my organization to submit to become OH Verified need to be employees of my organization?**

- A. Not necessarily. Responsible privacy and security professionals may be employees, contractors, or third-party consultants.

## **14. What does it mean for solutions to become Verified?**

- A. Once Verified, solutions are published on Ontario Health's Verified Solution List to support Health Service Providers in making informed decisions regarding the selection and procurement of virtual care solutions that meet their practice needs. Visibility on the Verified Solutions List supports vendors in growing their businesses in Ontario.

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**15. What happens when a Solution Provider is successfully Verified?**

- A. When Solution Providers are Verified, they receive a Notice of Verification and their solution is published on the Verified Solution List.

**16. What does it mean for solutions to become Validated?**

- A. Solutions are required to undergo Validation testing and to submit substantiation materials within 12 months of the date they were verified. Once validated, solution listings are updated to reflect Validated status on the Verified Solutions List published by Ontario Health on its website ([ontariohealth.ca/verification](http://ontariohealth.ca/verification)). Solution Providers offering more than one solution will be required to verify each solution independently and each solution will be separately listed on the Verified Solutions List.

**17. What is involved for Solution Providers in the Validation phase?**

- A. Solution Providers must become Validated through scenario-based testing within 12 months of being Verified. When ready to initiate the Validation phase, Ontario Health refers Solution Providers to our Validation partner, OntarioMD. OntarioMD begins with an orientation session and shares information and required documentation with Solution Providers at that time.

**18. Is a unique instance of a solution required to become verified separately from solutions that are generally available in the marketplace?**

- A. It depends. If the solution is distinguishably customized for a given instance, then it would be a separate solution. Solution Providers should contact Ontario Health before submitting to be sure the parties are aligned on how a solution is categorized.

**19. If a solution has been successfully Verified can it be procured by any buyer in the province?**

- A. Verification does not replace procurement. Health service providers (buyers) are required to follow the legislative and broader public sector procurement requirements that are applicable to them.

**20. What happens if a Solution Provider's solution is not approved?**

- A. Solution Providers that do not meet all Mandatory Requirements, or do not fully complete the submission package, will be notified and invited to re-submit if or when they are ready.

**21. Do Solution Providers need to notify Ontario Health if changes are made to its software/platform? What sort of changes would warrant such a notification?**

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- A. It is the Solution Provider’s responsibility to inform Ontario Health of any system change that may affect its ability to meet all Mandatory Requirements. Solution Providers are not expected to notify Ontario Health of minor changes that do not impact their ability to meet Mandatory Requirements.

## **22. How can I ask questions about the program?**

- A. Ontario Health encourages Health Service Providers and Solution Providers to send questions to [verification@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:verification@ontariohealth.ca).

## **23. Will the Requirements change?**

- A. Yes. Requirements will evolve over time as virtual care technologies and solutions mature. Ontario Health will publish updated versions of the Requirements on [www.ontariohealth.ca/verification](http://www.ontariohealth.ca/verification). Verified Solution Providers will be notified of changes made to the requirements to which they have already attested to meeting. Where a requirement has changed and a Solution Provider is no longer able to attest that its verified solution meets that requirement, a remediation process will be initiated to ensure that the Solution Provider has ample notice and sufficient time to comply with the updated version of the Requirements.