



American College of
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

POLICY STATEMENT

Approved June 2016

Ethical Use of Telemedicine in Emergency Care

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Telemedicine as related to emergency medical care uses real-time audio or video transmissions to provide information, advice and orders for diagnostic and treatment interventions between a distant site (e.g., healthcare facility, ambulance, ship, airplane, rescue location) and an emergency department or its telecommunication hub. Practitioners use telemedicine to assess patients and their diagnostic results, monitor ongoing clinical interventions, and interact with the patient's on-site clinicians.

ACEP believes that emergency departments using telemedicine should make this form of care accessible regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, location, or ability to pay.

ACEP believes that emergency departments and hospitals should ensure that their telemedicine systems and practices provide patients with at least the privacy and confidentiality required under HIPAA. This includes assuring that their equipment and technology are up-to-date and secure.

ACEP believes that telemedicine decisions relating to patient care, referrals and transfers should be based on the patient's healthcare needs.

ACEP supports the establishment of standards for telemedicine practitioners and development of related quality assurance and educational programs to develop the discipline.

ACEP supports legislative efforts that would allow for single-state licensing being sufficient for telemedical practice throughout the United States.

ACEP believes that all aspects of the telemedical consultations between advance medical practitioners (i.e. physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) are subject to the same informed consent and refusal standards as are face-to-face medical encounters.