

VIRTUAL VISITS

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR WEBSITE MANNER

For patients, interpersonal and communication skills are the primary indicator of the provider's competence and expertise. This Quick Guide outlines widely regarded best practices and resources for website communication.

WHAT IS "WEBSITE MANNER?"

Just as bedside manner describes the interpersonal and communication skills needed to explain and care for patients, website manner describes those same skills over digital platforms.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Effective communication is the foundation of trust. For patients, a provider's communication is the primary indicator of the provider's competence and expertise. In this article, we'll outline widely regarded best practices and resources for website communication.



Find the complete step-by-step guide online at: accelerate.uofuhealth.utah.edu/improvement/how-to-improve-your-website-manner

BEST PRACTICES TO MASTER

1 Bring the same humanity to a virtual visit as you would an in-person visit.

2 Professional presentation:

- Dress as you would for in-person clinic
- Keep a clean workspace
- Remove distractions
- Ensure audio and video privacy
- Center yourself on-screen (Graphic will display portrait standard)

3 Be mindful of virtual limitations:

- **Openly acknowledge multi-tasking.** With a limited view, patients can't tell if you are multi-tasking or just distracted. If you need to take notes or do some quick research, simply inform the patient of what you are doing.
- **Thank the patient for their patience.** You may have no idea how long a telehealth patient has been waiting. Acknowledge potential delays and thank the patient for their time.
- **Avoid using voiceless acknowledgments** like "Mh-hmm" and subtle head shakes/nods. Instead, reply to patients with explicit verbal statements like "yes", "no", or "I understand".

4 Technology Tips:

- **Audio** – use headphones to avoid feedback or "echo" issues.
- **Connectivity** – Connectivity problems may be a result of poor signal strength or insufficient bandwidth. When using a wireless network make sure you are in a location with a strong signal. If the Wi-Fi presents further difficulties try to establish a wired connection when possible. If you have a strong internet connection but a slow "speed" – try disconnecting unnecessary devices and programs using the same network.