
NSW Health Virtual Care Education Framework 2022-2026

Developed by the
Health Education and Training Institute

October 2022

heti.nsw.gov.au



Acknowledgements

This work was led by the Health Education and Training Institute in collaboration with the NSW Health Virtual Care Taskforce

Members of the Taskforce include:

Agency for Clinical Innovation
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Barang Regional Alliance
Centre for Aboriginal Health
Clinical Excellence Commission
Consumer Representatives
eHealth NSW
Health Education and Training Institute
Ministry of Health
NSW Ambulance
NSW Pathology
Nursing and Midwifery Office
South Eastern Sydney Local Health District
Southern NSW Local Health District
The NSW Health Virtual Care Community of Practice
Western NSW Local Health District
Western Sydney Primary Healthcare Network
Sydney Local Health District

HETI thanks external consultant Dr Debra Palesy (RN, MEd, PhD) for her contribution and role in leading the literature review and coordinating the Delphi process as part of the project.

A special thank you to the many clinicians, telehealth and virtual care managers and coordinators, members NSW Health Virtual Care Community of Practice and consumer partners for your commitment and contribution to developing this Framework.

Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Foreword	4
Introduction	5
The NSW Health Virtual Care Education Framework 2022 -2026	6
Domain 1: Compliance	8
Domain 2: Professional Practice	9
Domain 3: Patient Safety	10
Domain 4: Communications	11
Domain 5: Interprofessional Collaboration	12
Domain 6: Patient Assessment	13
Domain 7: Care Planning, Delivery and Coordination	14

Foreword

Secretary NSW Health

NSW Health has been integrating virtual care as a successful model of care in a variety of settings over several years. The COVID-19 pandemic saw the accelerated adoption of virtual care as an option for care delivery to maintain and in many cases increase access to high quality care in some of the most challenging circumstances. By connecting patients and clinicians remotely using digital technology, virtual care aims to optimise choice, quality and effectiveness of patient care through the use of a variety of modalities which can include videoconferencing and remote patient monitoring. The positive outcomes of virtual care for both healthcare providers and consumers are significant and highlight the importance of relevant clinician education and training using a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to virtual care education. This includes researched evidence in regard to the expected values, behaviours and skills required of clinicians for virtual care preparation and practice, and the need for education guidelines, frameworks and resources for building the confidence and capability of the workforce.

The NSW Health Virtual Care Education Framework 2022–2026, developed in alignment with the NSW Virtual Care Strategy 2021–2026, offers such an approach. Virtual care is not new, but what NSW Health is looking to do is harness the momentum currently unfolding across the NSW health system as the possibilities for virtual care grow. The Strategy's ambition is that virtual care is integrated as a safe, accessible option for service delivery across NSW. The Health Education and Training Institute (HETI), a Pillar of NSW Health, together with the Virtual Care Taskforce, has worked with other stakeholders to establish this Framework. It is designed to guide all current and potential education providers in building the capacity, skills and knowledge to support our current and emerging health workforce to confidently integrate virtual care into their practice. Working together in this way, our aim is to focus on

providing best practice virtual care experiences for both consumers and healthcare providers to achieve positive outcomes for the people of NSW.

In 2021 the NSW Health Virtual Care Taskforce (the Taskforce) was established with responsibility for the timely implementation of actions set out in the NSW Virtual Care Strategy. The Taskforce is the key to integrating our work together including the use of this Framework.

Membership of the Taskforce includes HETI, NSW Ministry of Health leads from a range of portfolios, the Agency for Clinical Innovation, eHealth NSW, the Clinical Excellence Commission, and representation from Local Health Districts, Primary Health and consumers is also included.

The Taskforce provides advice and direction on new approaches, trends, and possibilities in virtual care. Regular state-wide forums engage Local Health Districts and Specialty Health Networks to monitor progress of local initiatives, share innovative models and learnings, and review anticipated future changes in line with technology, industry, and health delivery changes as we move into the new frontiers that virtual care offers and achieve great benefits for the people of NSW.

I congratulate all involved in the development of this Framework and look forward to seeing evidence of how it is guiding our clinical practices in delivering health care into the future.



Susan Pearce,
Secretary NSW Health

Introduction

Chief Executive, Health Education and Training Institute

It is with pleasure that I introduce the NSW Health Virtual Care Education Framework which has been developed as part of the NSW Health Virtual Care Strategy Implementation Plan. Designed and developed in partnership with our Virtual Care Taskforce colleagues, key stakeholders and NSW Health clinicians, our Framework promotes a consistent, state-wide, multidisciplinary approach to virtual care education and training for the NSW Health workforce. Comprehensive and contemporary education and training enables our clinicians to provide safe and high-quality care with patient-centred care as the principal focus.

The development of this Framework involved two phases of work. The first was a rigorous review of the literature to identify curriculum interventions and pedagogical approaches for virtual care, including education and training content, education guidelines, frameworks and resources for building virtual care capacity. This review concluded with seven virtual care education domains, each with a set of associated competency statements ready for evaluation as part of the next phase. These seven domains are the evidence-based overarching principles that should be used in the first instance to determine whether virtual care best practice is being enacted in an education program.

The second phase of this work aimed to achieve consensus on the domains and competencies comprising the multidisciplinary virtual care education framework. Medical practitioners, nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, administrators, educators, specialist telehealth providers and healthcare consumers from across rural, remote, regional and metropolitan NSW

provided input as part of a two-round, modified Delphi style process. I thank those who participated in this process, sharing with us valuable insights and feedback and ultimately shaping the Framework as it is presented here.

We remain committed to ensuring the currency of our work and endeavour to stay connected with emerging global thinking in education, training and health workforce learning approaches. This will be done through our continued partnerships and membership of the NSW Health Virtual Care Taskforce.

The Framework aims to guide all education institutions and providers in safe, quality, patient-centred virtual care provision, inform development and/or revision of healthcare curricula and professional development initiatives in virtual care delivery. The wider public may also use this Framework to understand what standards they should expect from health professionals in virtual care provision.



**Associate Professor Annette Solman,
Chief Executive, Health Education and Training Institute**

The NSW Health Virtual Care Education Framework 2022 – 2026

The NSW Health Virtual Care Education Framework (2022 – 2026) promotes a consistent, state-wide approach to support education providers in delivering safe, quality, patient-centred virtual care, with clearly defined domains and competency statements.

Implementation

It is important to note that this Framework is not a syllabus, program, curriculum, model or assessment tool, nor is it a detailed description of everything a health professional should learn or know about virtual care. It is a framework of domains and competencies based on the best available evidence, upon which different health disciplines may develop, revise or map new or existing education programs (including content and assessment items), or design professional development activities. As part of this mapping process, the Framework should also be aligned with any relevant national safety and quality standards that underpin specific healthcare settings.

The Framework is also intended to sit above generic competencies expected of health professionals providing care to any individual (for example, infection prevention and control), and should not be considered a substitute for competencies specific to individual disciplines and to specialists within these disciplines.

Domains

The Framework is organised in seven ‘domains’, each with an accompanying statement of intent. These domains are the evidence-based overarching principles that should be used in the first instance to determine whether virtual care best practice is being enacted in an education program.



Competencies

Within each domain are a varying number of statements, outlining what health professional should be able to do to be competent in virtual care provision. It is intended that the 58 multidisciplinary competencies within the Framework are seen as baseline competencies for all NSW Health clinicians working across a range of settings and with different patient cohorts. The competencies are sufficiently broad as to enable individual disciplines to determine the appropriate depth of knowledge and level of engagement with each competency, and upon which further discipline-specific and highly specialised competencies may be built.

Domain 1:

Compliance

Competencies in this domain are intended to enact safe, quality virtual care systems that promote the best possible outcomes for both care recipients and virtual health care professionals. This requires understanding and responding to the specific risks and conditions that may be encountered in the virtual care setting.

The clinician demonstrates the ability to:



Domain 2:

Professional Practice

Competencies in this domain are intended to foster development of personal and professional skills, and to acknowledge personal and professional accountability and responsibility in virtual care provision. The virtual health care professional who promotes evidence-based practice and professional development will contribute to quality in care provision.

The clinician demonstrates the ability to:

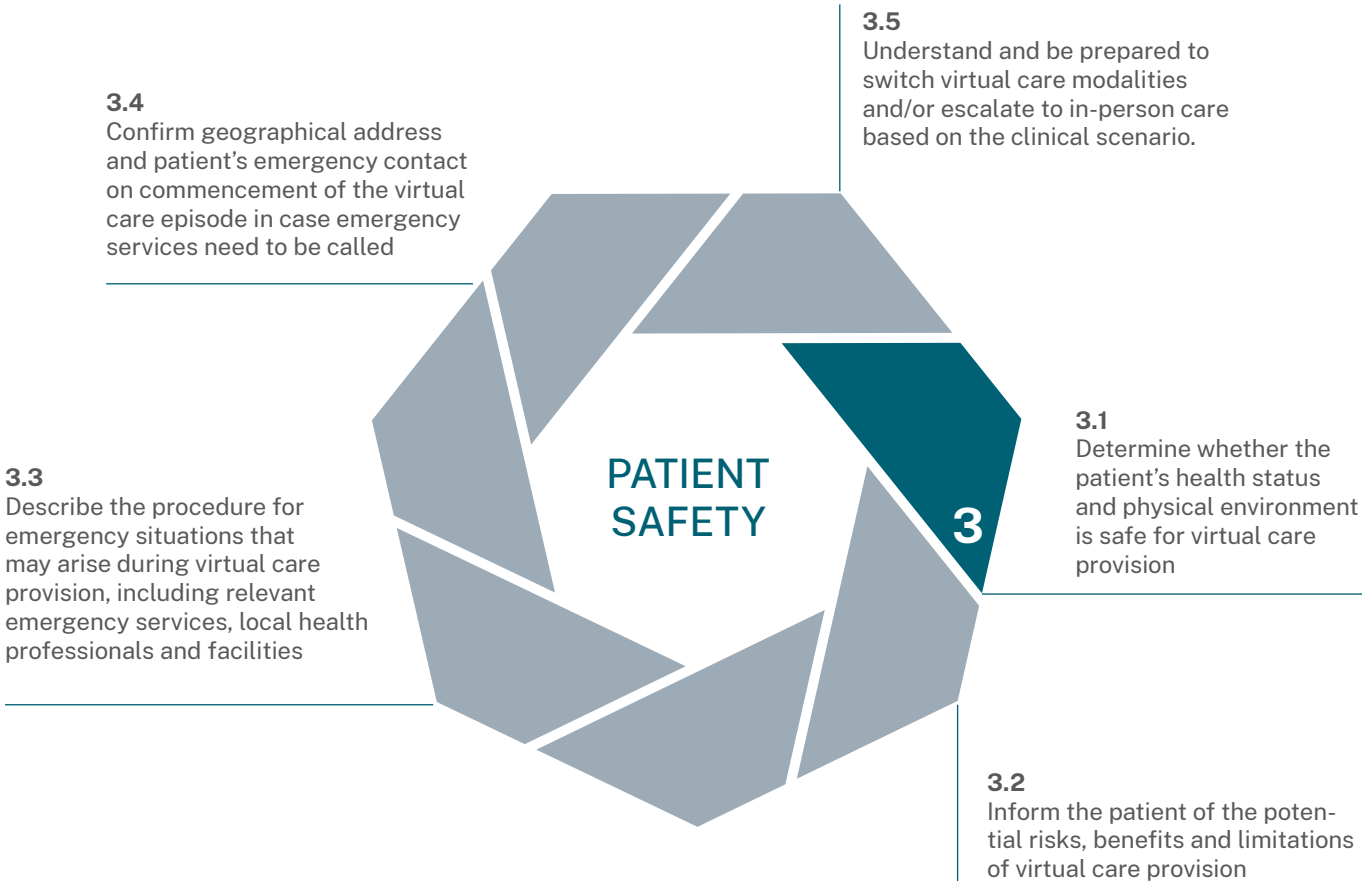


Domain 3:

Patient Safety

Competencies in this domain are intended to promote the safety of virtual care recipients. This requires understanding and responding to the specific risks experienced by specific patient cohorts in the virtual care setting, ensuring best possible health outcomes.

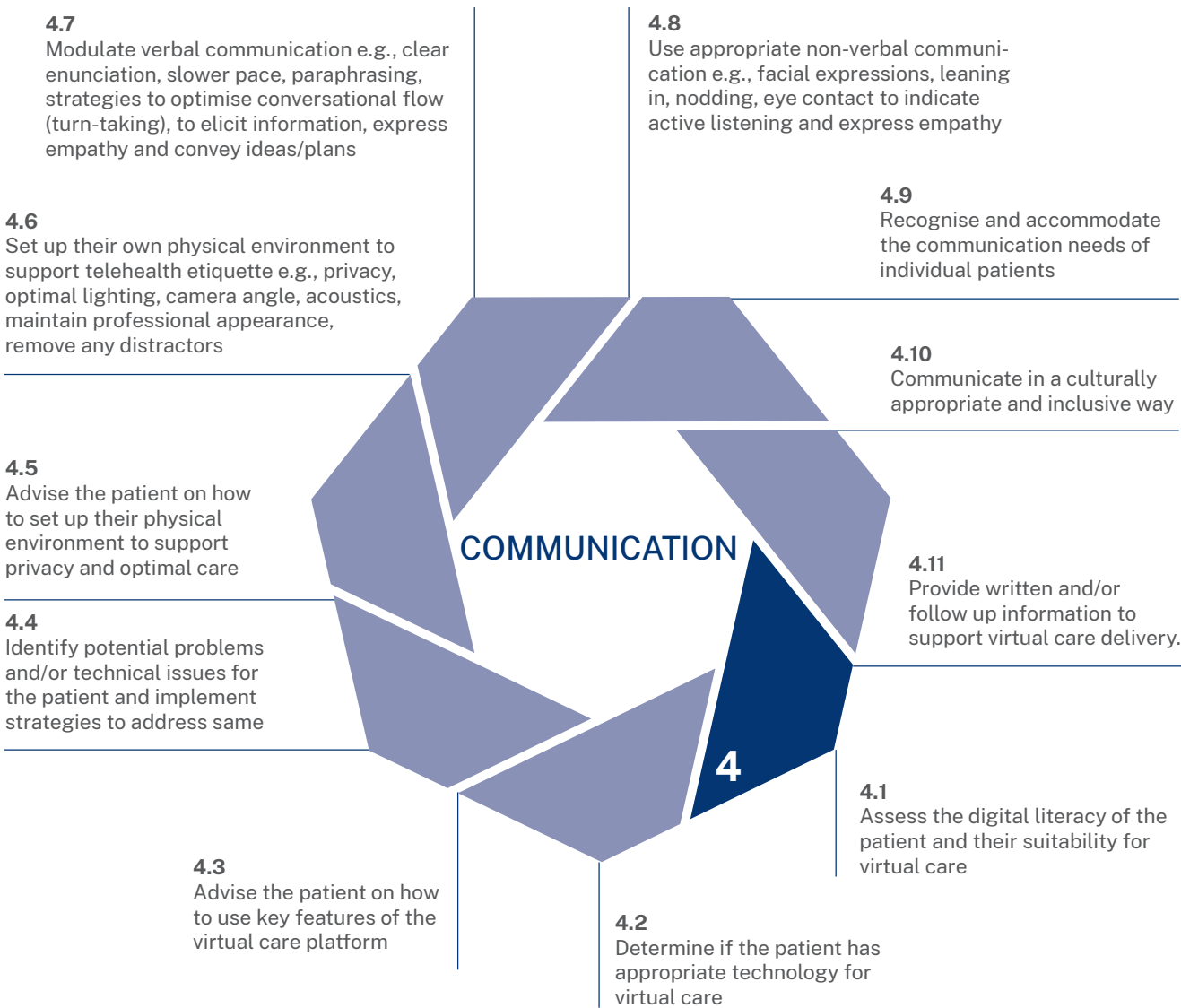
The clinician demonstrates the ability to:



Communications

Competencies in this domain are intended to promote quality in communication with virtual care recipients across the spectrum of communication modalities. Communicating in a manner appropriate to, and respectful of, the care recipient’s individual needs, ensures person-centred inclusive care provision and a positive virtual care experience.

The clinician demonstrates the ability to:



Domain 5:

Interprofessional Collaboration

Competencies in this domain are intended to promote an interprofessional team approach for safe, quality virtual care. This requires recognition and understanding of group dynamics and partnerships, and an appreciation of the skills and knowledge other disciplines can contribute to the virtual health care team.

The clinician demonstrates the ability to:

5.3

Contribute, through referral, handover and other communication, to effective interprofessional, integrated virtual care

5.4

Collaboratively promote, establish and foster ways of working as a health care team to optimise virtual care experiences and outcomes

5.5

Create rapport, build relationships and work effectively with interprofessional team members to achieve safe and coordinated care for patients

5.2

Describe the benefits and need for interprofessional collaborative and coordinated care

5.1

Adopt a person-centred approach, acknowledging the role, scope and competence of other disciplines in virtual care

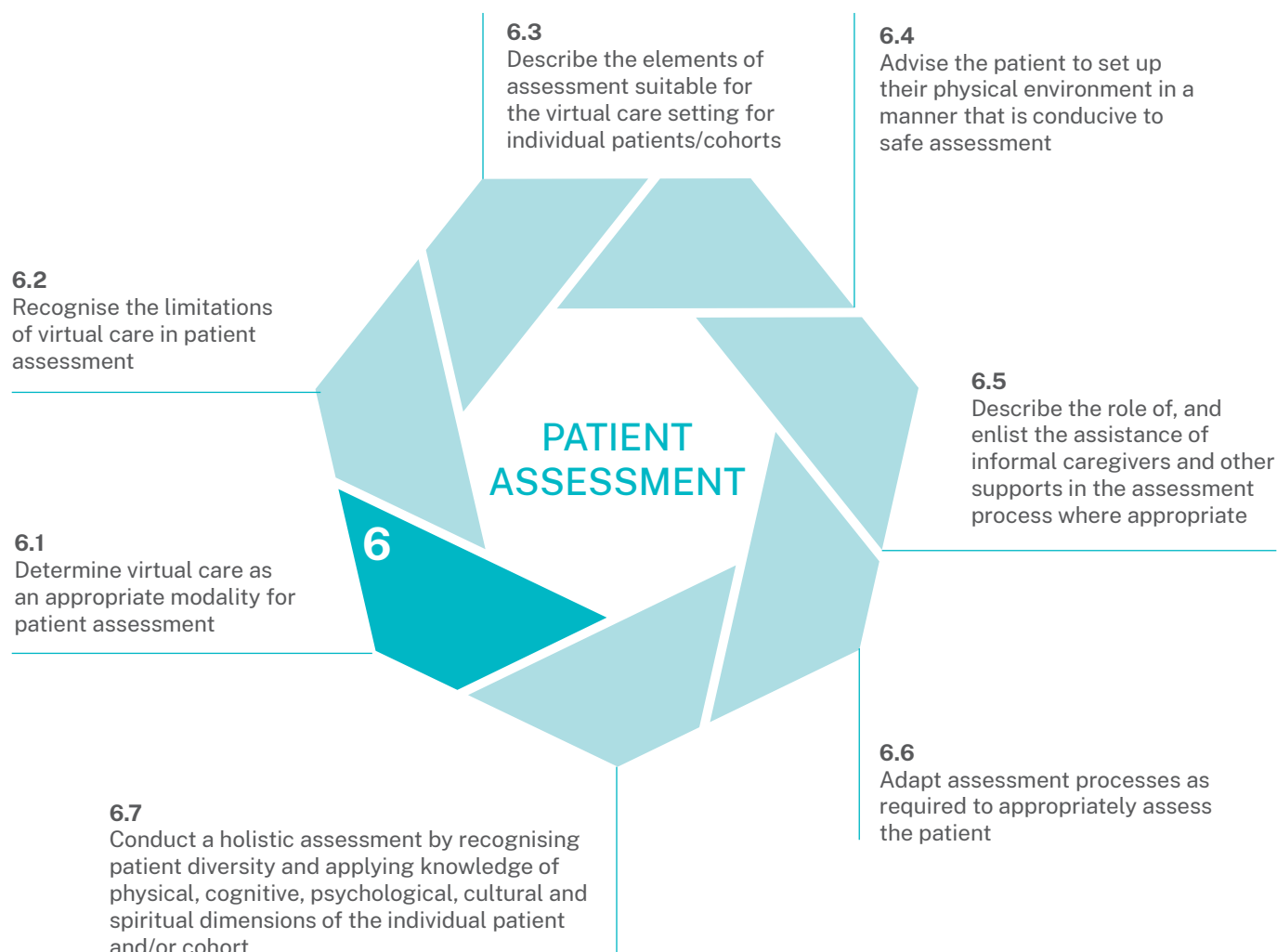
INTERPROFESSIONAL
COLLABORATION

5

Patient Assessment

Competencies in this domain reflect a holistic, person-centred approach to assessment, which includes the informal caregiver, apply appropriate/validated tools as required for assessment and understands the role of other disciplines in the assessment process.

The clinician demonstrates the ability to:

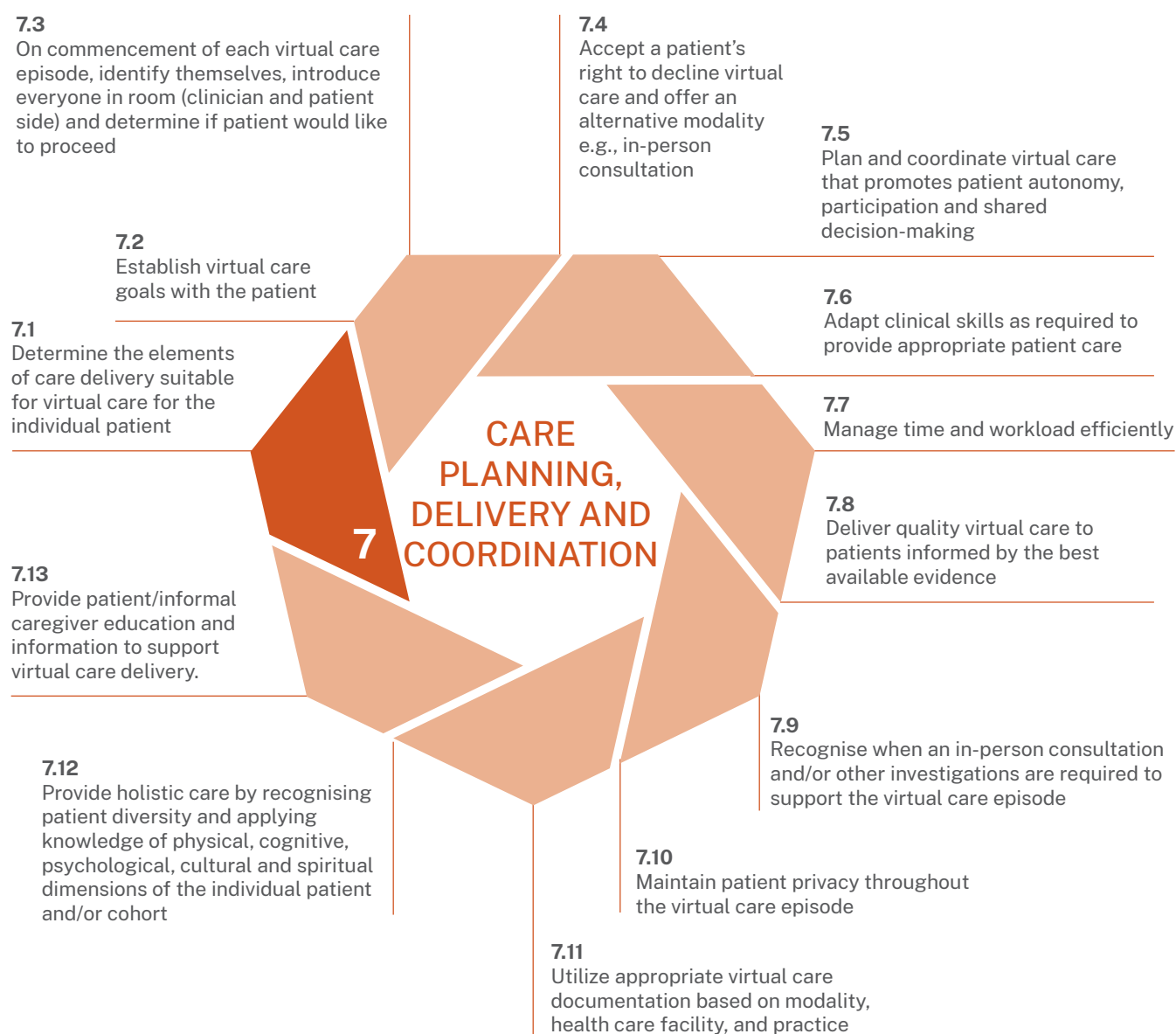


Domain 7:

Care Planning, Delivery and Coordination

Competencies in this domain relate to person-centred care planning, delivery and coordination. The virtual care health professional recognises the importance of care coordination across the care spectrum. Ensuring a positive experience at the point-of-care is also fundamental to enhancing the virtual care experience.

The clinician demonstrates the ability to:





Health Education and Training Institute (HETI)

Tel. (02) 9844 6551

www.heti.nsw.gov.au

heti-info@health.nsw.gov.au

This work is copyright. It may be reproduced in whole or in part for study or training purposes subject to the inclusion of an acknowledgement of the source. It may not be reproduced for commercial usage or sale. Reproduction for purposes other than those indicated above requires written permission from the NSW Ministry of Health.

The NSW Ministry for Health acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands across NSW. We acknowledge that we live and work on Aboriginal lands. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal people.

Further copies of this document can be downloaded from the NSW Health webpage www.health.nsw.gov.au and www.heti.nsw.gov.au

Title: NSW Health Virtual Care Education Framework 2022 -2026 -Version 1

© Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) October 2022