

Date: September 11, 2017
To: All VCH Community Clinicians
From: VCH Community Clinician Cell Phone Deployment project team
cc: Mary Ackenhusen, President & CEO, VCH
Re: Update on smart phones

In mid-July, we announced our commitment to get smartphones and role-appropriate data plans for community-based employees who need them. And we're making progress!

What's new that you need to know now?

- Eventually, every community-based employee who needs a smartphone (as determined by your manager) will get an Apple iPhone.
- Those currently without any kind of phone/data combo will get the new data-enabled smartphones first (iPhone 7S). Over time, others with slightly older technology, such as Blackberry, will get upgraded through regular renewal cycles. We know everyone would love a new phone ASAP, but this approach allows us to level the playing field and focus first on the folks who do not have phones with data. (Stay tuned for details on how to check your individual renewal date.)
- We'll start distributing the new phones via site coordinators in early October 2017.
- Regular updates will follow to keep you up-to-date on everything you need to know.

What can you do while you wait?

- **Learn about your phone**
Getting new tools and technology is exciting – and sometimes a little scary. The project team is pulling together useful education resources to help ensure you feel comfortable using a smart phone to support client care. This won't be a one-time offer; as new applications become available and approved, we'll roll out additional support resources.
- **Understand VCH policies and procedures**
Between now and October while phones are being ordered, we encourage you to familiarize yourself with VCH's existing policies for secure [acceptable use of technology](#), as well as the policies for [texting](#) and [email](#) practices. Staying on top of the rules and knowing what you're accountable for will help you more confidently incorporate a smartphone into your client care routine.
- **Provide feedback on how the phone will improve your work**
Through your feedback, we know that having phones with data will offer many benefits. For example, they will support you in being safe and delivering the best possible care, and provide you with instant access to relevant clinical information while in the field. Over time, the benefits will grow and you'll be part of identifying new opportunities for efficiencies in service delivery, workflow improvements, and more. Already, we've received ideas related to improved calendar management to better respond to client needs, mileage apps to improve travel time, and virtual care options to increase overall client capacity. As with the introduction of any new technology, our use of smartphones will lead to new policies and procedures, some of which will require changes in workflows.

As we proceed, acting on your input is critical to "getting things right". With this in mind, we invite you to take a short, [5-minute survey](#) to let us know what smartphone functions and applications might be useful in your clinical practice, as well as what support you might need along the way. You could win one of 25 \$10 Starbucks gift cards! Please complete the survey by **Friday September 15th** for your chance to win!

It's a brave new world

Getting smart phones and data plans into the hands of community-based employees is the right thing to do, but using smartphones to support clinical practice is new for all of us – frontline staff and leaders alike. We'll all have questions and we may have to find the answer together so let's stay in touch. You can submit questions and suggestions to smartphonedeployment@vch.ca, visit the cell phone project webpage on [VCH Staff Hub](#) to review updates and education resources, and, as always, talk to your local leadership.