

## Emailing or Texting your Health Care Provider

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and Providence Health Care (PHC) staff and physicians are committed to communicating with you about your care while protecting your privacy and personal information. Email and text communication however, comes with risks and limitations that you should be aware of.

### What you need to know:

- Detailed clinical discussions, counselling or crisis-related support will not be provided by VCH or PHC staff or physicians through email or text messages.
- Emails and texts are not an appropriate substitute for in-person or over-the-telephone communication, clinical examinations or for attending the Emergency Department when needed.
- Personal information that you send in email or text messages could be at risk if an email account and/or device is compromised. It is your responsibility to protect your accounts and devices from inappropriate access and/or loss.
- There is no guarantee that VCH or PHC will receive or be able to respond to emails or texts in a timely manner; therefore, email and text messaging should not be relied upon in urgent or emergency situations.

If you send an email or text to a VCH or PHC staff member or physician expecting a reply and do not hear back within a reasonable time period, it is your responsibility to follow up with that person regarding your care and/or appointments.

### Contact Information

We welcome your comments and questions regarding emailing and texting between patients and VCH and PHC care providers. If you have questions, please contact us at the following:

#### [VCH Information Privacy Office](#)

Phone: (604) 875-5568

Email: [privacy@vch.ca](mailto:privacy@vch.ca)

#### [PHC Information Access and Privacy Office](#)

Phone: (604) 806-8336

Email: [privacy@providencehealth.bc.ca](mailto:privacy@providencehealth.bc.ca)