

## How to Help Your Patient Connect With Loved Ones During COVID 19 Pandemic: Tips and Ideas for Virtual and Non-Virtual Connection

Isolation, whether a patient has COVID-19 or not, can have a significant impact on a patient's emotion, spiritual and psychological health. Connecting with others eases loneliness, lifts spirits, and generates a sense of belonging.

### Virtual Tips and Ideas

#### Video Chatting Apps:

**Zoom:** Video conference with up to 100 people for 40min. You can also share your screen (ie. play an online board/card game together)

**Skype:** A free app that allows for group video chat with up to 40 people Free Microsoft app, similar to Facetime. Allows for group video chats and can share your screen. Can call into a mobile phone or a landline, \$5-10/month for unlimited calling in North America

**WhatsApp:** Free to use, can text, send pictures, voice and video call. Only requires wifi, no data charges, can install on any smart phone/tablet/etc. Can do group texts of any number, or video calls with up to 3 people. Cannot call a landline, or call a phone/device without the app installed

**Google Duo:** For android or iPhone. Video chat with up to 12 people at a time. Cannot call a landline, or call a phone/device without the app installed.

**FaceTime:** Built into apple devices. Allows iPhone users to connect face to face with up to 32 people. Only for apple devices. Cannot call a landline, or call a phone/device without the app installed.

#### Voice Recording Apps

**VoiceMemo:** already built into Apple devices, similar apps available for other devices. Allows someone to record a message that can be sent and played at another time. Ideal for situations where the person who wants to send the message is unable to call/connect at a particular time, or if you want the ability to replay the message. Good option if the patient would like to record something for their family (ie. reading a story for a grandchild)

#### Social Media

Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram all have direct messaging capabilities that allow for text conversation as well as the sharing of photos or videos. Send a direct message through Facebook Messenger, Twitter or Instagram to start a conversation. Facebook Messenger even has capabilities for video chat!

#### **Does your patient need support with leaving a legacy message or saying goodbye virtually? Here are some resources that may help:**

**RecordMeNow:** A free app that can be downloaded onto a smart device or laptop for [recordmenow.org](http://recordmenow.org). Provided guided questions and records answers to allow people to leave an emotional legacy message for their loved ones.

**Saying Goodbye to Dying Family Member Over the Phone: Conversation Script** – <https://www.capc.org/toolkits/covid-19-response-resources/>

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No access to virtual devices? That doesn't mean connections can't be made between your patient and their loved ones. Here's some ideas you can provide to you patients or their families/loved ones.

### Non-Virtual Ways to Reach Out

- Schedule phone calls often
- Bring in photos to put up in their room
- Have a CD player or iPod to play their favorite music
- Watch the same movie at the same time
- Read the same book
- Send handwritten cards or letters
- Crafts from kids/grandkids:
  - Get children/grandchildren to "Make a Hug":  
Take a light coloured bed sheet, lie it on the floor and lie down on top of it with your arms outstretched (like a snow angel). Trace out the arms with a thick marker, get up and you will be left with an outline of two arms that are not attached. Use the marker to attach the two arms making one really long arm with hands at each end, this is now a "hug" that can be wrapped around your loved one. You can decorate each "hug" with drawings, writing, poems, etc.
  - Handmade cards, pictures, cards etc.
- Modified Visit ideas (if possible/permitted)
  - If able, family can stand outside patient's window to connect though the glass or on a balcony if there is one
  - Sing a song through an open window
  - Talk on the phone while being able to see each other
  - Press hands against the same window pane



"LOVE HUG"