



Virtual Program Developer Guide

Program Design

birch

Bundle of Interventions, Resources, and Culture Hub



PROGRAM DESIGN

This section describes elements of program design within virtual programming to support you to develop a virtual program.

Implementing a virtual program requires a cohesive and strategic framework. This guide will help you identify

- potential intended populations
- a platform to host your intervention
- program goals
- highlight additional considerations like budget, staffing, and long-term program sustainability



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In This Guide



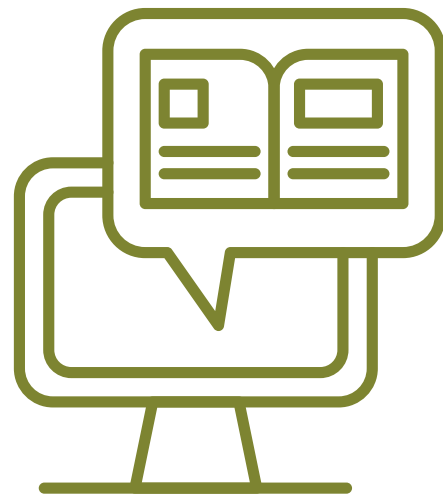


PROGRAM DESIGN

Some considerations during initial program design include:

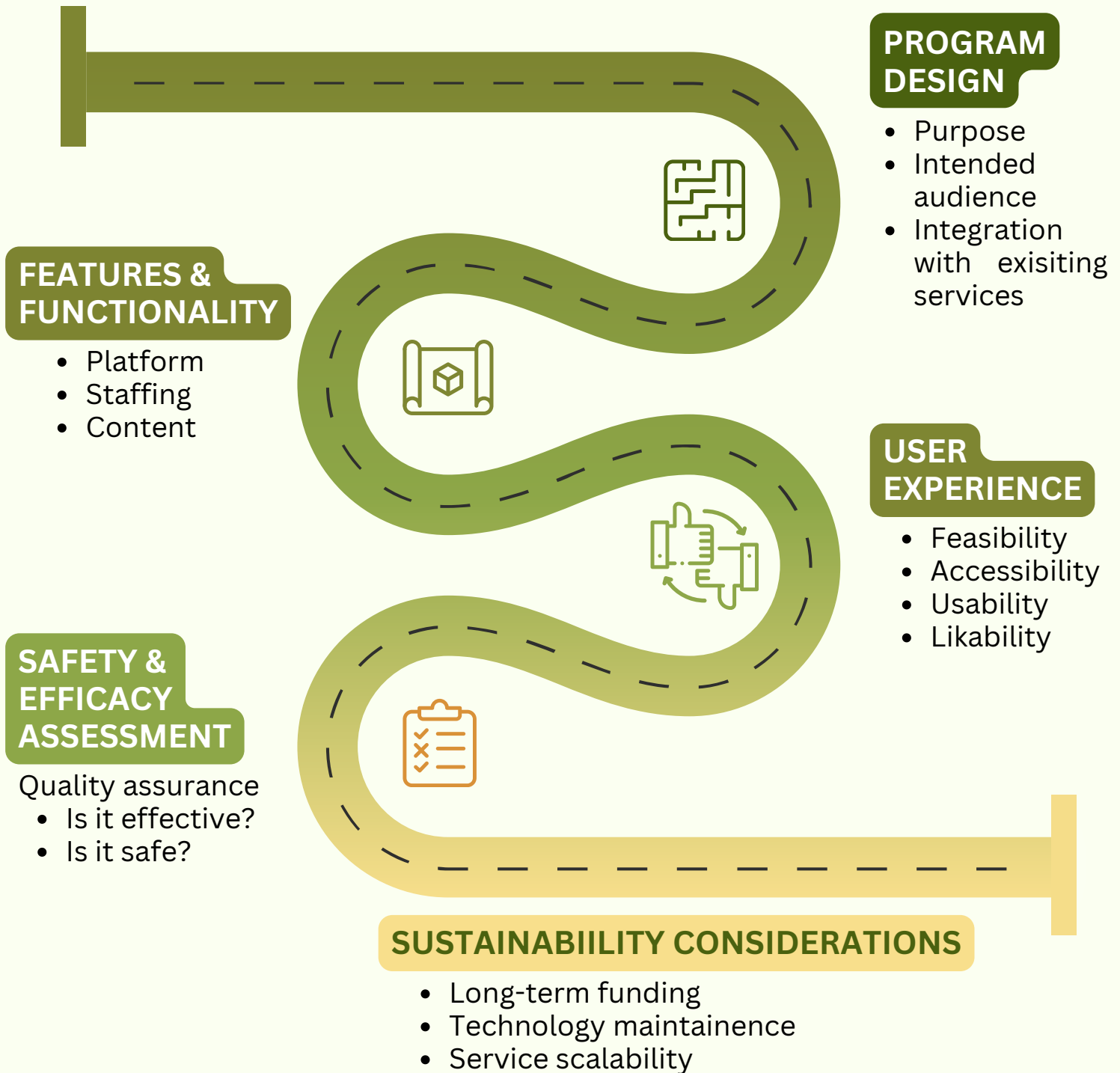
- Purpose & need assessment
- Defined target audience
- Integration with existing services

Be clear about the program you want to develop. **Think** about the strengths and limitations of these approaches, and how a virtual program can support your specific goals. **Consult** with your community and those who would be the target audience to share perspectives on what is needed in community.



Virtual programs are often one option of many. Consider how virtual programs can fit into your existing service model. Good programs are those which link to other services.

VIRTUAL PROGRAM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS





PROGRAM DESIGN

SERVICE INTEGRATION

- Integrating your eHealth program with other services can help your participants move from one service to another.
- Decide if your program is the starting point, a stop along the way, or a follow-up to other treatments.
- This clarity helps you design a program that complements and strengthens your services, ensuring participants have a seamless and supportive experience across all your offerings.

Define Target Program

SMART GOALS



S

SPECIFIC

Clearly define what you want to achieve, including who is involved, where it will happen, and what it entails

M

MEASURABLE

Include specific criteria that allow you to measure progress and determine when the goals have been achieved.

A

ACHIEVABLE

Ensure the goal is attainable with available resources and time.

R

RELEVANT

Make sure the goal is worthwhile and matches your program's mission and the needs of your target population.

T

TIME-BASED

Set a realistic deadline by which the goal should be achieved.

Who is Your Program For?



Starting a great eHealth program is like preparing for a community gathering.

First, you need to know who's coming to the circle - those are the folks you're helping and who may be the intended participant of your program.

You need to understand what they need, what they like and the wisdom they carry. You listen to their stories, talk with them, and learn about their journeys.

This way, you can create a gathering space that feels welcoming and respectful to everyone.

By shaping this digital gathering place with care and attention to everyone's unique paths, you make it a place where people can share, learn, and support each other.

This approach helps weave stronger connections and trust, making the eHealth program a comforting fire where everyone feels they belong and stay warm together.

WHO IS YOUR PROGRAM FOR?



Know your community: Virtual programs may not be suitable for everyone.

01. Access to Tech

Think about individuals who already have access to the technology or already know how to use the intervention platform

02. Safety Needs

Those who have increased risk for safety concerns may not benefit. Often, virtual programs are designed for those with mild to moderate needs.

03. Open to Process

Think about individuals who may be more open to a technology based intervention. What processes can be put in place to reduce concerns with this process?

04. Service Needs

Think about how you will recruit participants to your intervention and how to best encourage people to participate. What are the gaps in existing services?

Consult with individuals in your community who you are aiming to support with your program.



SAFETY & EFFICACY

Programs are only useful when they share skills that work.



- Culture as treatment
- Community as culture
- Trauma informed

Participants must be safe when they are accessing content.



- Knowledge protection
- Participant health data
- Technology safety

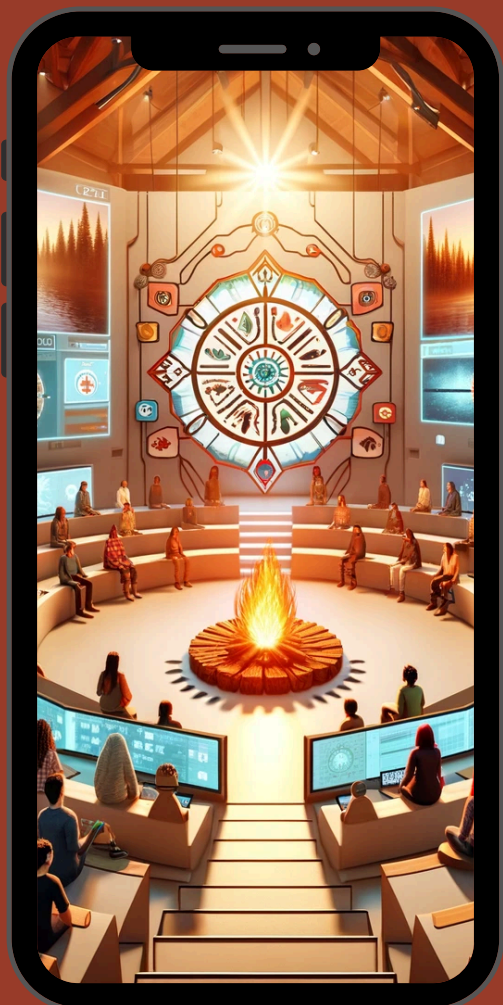
Participant safety and program efficacy must be consistently assessed throughout program development and ongoing implementation.



These aspects must be centred in program design.

SELECTING YOUR PLATFORM

Choosing the ideal virtual platform is like finding the perfect meeting place. It's crucial to think about what makes a space right for your needs.



The platform acts as your central hub, a digital home where all your content lives.

Weigh factors like

- security features
- confidentiality
- ease of navigation
- tools you may need
 - video sessions
 - resource sharing
 - one-on-one consultations

Be thoughtful when selecting your digital meeting place.

Ensure that everyone involved can connect and engage effectively, and you are able to showcase the benefits of your program using the platform you select.

SELECTING YOUR PLATFORM

The key is to match the platform with your program's specific requirements, your organization's workflow and style, and importantly, your privacy and security standards.

Slack

- ✓ Real-Time messaging in channels
- ✓ Integrated with many third-party apps and services

- ✗ Limited storage for free plans
- ✗ Learning curve for some features

Basecamp

- ✓ Excels in project management tools
- ✓ Document and file storage in visually appealing ways

- ✗ Limited integration options
- ✗ Learning curve

Zoom

- ✓ Widely used
- ✓ User-friendly
- ✓ Screen sharing and recording features

- ✗ Limited meeting duration
- ✗ Security may not comply with provincial health data needs

Dropbox

- ✓ Integrated with various software
- ✓ Rapid file sharing and storage
- ✓ Free version

- ✗ No video conference or messaging options

Microsoft Teams

- ✓ Integrated with other Microsoft software
- ✓ Video conference and chat features
- ✓ Collaborative document editing

- ✗ Significant computing resources (CPU and memory)
- ✗ Learning curve

Google Classroom

- ✓ Integrated with other Google software
- ✓ Assignment and project creation
- ✓ Collaborative document editing and marking

- ✗ Primarily focuses on education (limited non-educational features)

Trello

- ✓ Easy-to-use task management
- ✓ Manage multiple projects
- ✓ Fairly integrated with third-party apps and services

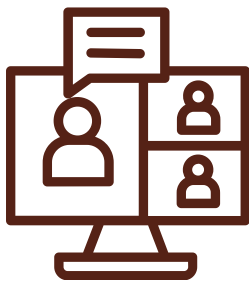
- ✗ Limited complex project management tools

Always research and explore the many platform options that exist. Look for reviews, case studies, or testimonials from similar organizations to gauge their effectiveness and user satisfaction.



FEATURES & FUNCTION

Virtual programs can show content in many engaging ways:



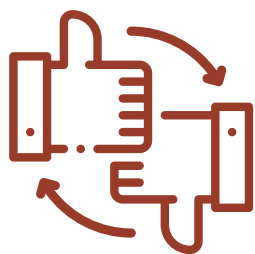
- Videos
- Live stream seminars & discussions
- Audio recordings

What are the ways you want to share your information?

Determine the process you want to share information and this can help you decide the technology platform you call home

Technological requirements for participants can include:

- Access to internet
- Cell or home phone number
- Computer with microphone, camera, and/or speaker
- Email address
- Processing power to play videos



USER EXPERIENCE

Engagement

- Ways to engage participants throughout the program
- Incorporate cultural and community knowledge
- Interactive lessons to build skills
- Create opportunities to practice new skills

Accessibility

- Create simple, easy to read content
- Use language that is easy to understand
- Considerations for colour-blindness and other visual processing differences

Participation

- Ability to provide real-time feedback and support
- Personalize content to individual needs
- How to encourage each participant to complete all aspects of the program

Engaging content creates better programs

PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY



Long Term Planning

Develop detailed plans outlining tasks, expectations, responsibilities, and timelines to ensure smooth coordination and execution of program activities. A well-structured work plan provides clarity and direction for the stakeholders involved, from recruiting and training staff, updating content, and maintaining technology used to share the program.



Outreach and Recruitment

Virtual care can allow providers to a broader reach and can extend teachings to more people with relatively less demands on program providers. This reach can be done in a relatively cost-effective way when compared to other types of mental health program formats. Think about how you will continue to recruit and promote your program long-term.



Financial Support

Budgeting can maintain a successful virtual program. This includes long-term costs like program design and platform acquisition and recurring costs like staff salaries, platform maintenance, user support, and promotional activities to keep the program visible and engaging.



Staff Considerations

Ensure all staff involved in virtual content creation and management are adequately trained and equipped for their roles. This includes not only technical skills but also an understanding of the sensitivities involved in virtual care. Recognize that creating and managing virtual content often comes with other duties. Establish realistic timelines for content development and maintenance, factoring in staff members' existing demands.

Thank You

for your continued support of the BIRCH program.

We hope you find this resource guide useful.



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