MOBILE PHONE - MOBILE DATA USAGE

This is a guide to describe how mobile devices use data and the measures you can take to minimise data usage and avoid excess usage charges.

Smartphones and other internet enabled mobile devices are almost permanently connected to the Internet and therefore need data to run the internet based functions. We use data when we send or receive information over a 3G/4G connection.   High data usage can happen when WiFi is turned off.

➢ Minimise data usage by connecting to WiFi whenever possible. That way, your phone can use WiFi to send and receive data rather than 3G/4G.

➢ Restricting background data will restrict some functions to work over WiFi only, so will therefore save on data usage.

➢ Set data limits and alerts to give you a warning when you are reaching your monthly data usage allowance limit.

Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with your DHB's policies, guidelines and codes of conduct relating to mobile devices and the NRDHB and hA Acceptable Usage policy:

http://pulse.healthcare.huarahi.health.govt.nz/OurServices/InformationTechnology/MobileServices/PoliciesandGuidelines.aspx

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Emails & Attachments:
Sending and receiving emails uses data. The more attachments and photos you send and receive, the more data is used.

➢ Set your phone to only download emails when connected to a WiFi network or when you manually request the download.

➢ Limit the size of attachments downloaded.

➢ Do not add additional / personal email accounts to your phone as additional email accounts cause more data usage.

Maps:
Unlike satellite navigation systems, some navigation apps (Google Maps etc.) continuously load map details onto your device when you are using the navigation. As maps are likely to be used for long periods of time, they will therefore consume a lot of data.

➢ Only use Maps if you really need to.

Internet Browsing:
Websites need data to load their content. Browsing the net - **Google** searches, shopping online, **Trade Me**, booking travel and accommodation online, **online banking**, checking the **news or weather** etc. all needs data. Websites are growing in size as they become more feature and visually rich. The better quality the features, the more data it will use.

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Tethering to Personal Hotspots: Tethering allows you to share your phones data connection with other devices. Data sent to and from the connected device is routed through the phone to the Internet. Data used by devices connected to a Personal Hotspot counts against the monthly data usage limit, so can eat through data extremely fast, resulting in extremely high excessive data use charges. However, you have to be on a data plan that offers tethering to be able to use it.

Apps: Your device comes with pre-installed apps but downloading more from the app or play store will use up data. Apps also constantly use data to connect to servers in the background to keep their content updated.

> ➢ If you have installed apps on your phone that are not required for work purposes, uninstall them.

> ➢ Set your phone to auto-update Apps over WiFi only so as not to impact your data usage.

Many free apps come with those dreaded ads. Ad supported apps drain data and the battery by interrupting what you are doing and displaying the ads. (On some devices turning mobile data off or turning Airplane mode on before you open the app avoids those pesky ads.)

Streaming: Streaming is the term for transmitting audio and/or video data so that it can be processed to sound or pictures in a steady and continuous flow. When audio or video is streamed, the data is being continuously sent to your device. Apps and websites such as **Netflix, You Tube, Spotify, SoundCloud**, Radio etc. all use streaming and therefore LOTS of data. Also, the better quality the video or audio, the **more data** it will use.

Digital Media: Purchasing and downloading digital media (e-books, music, movies) from online sites such as iTunes, Amazon etc. contributes greatly to data usage.

Social Media & Chat: **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest** etc. all use chunks of data, particularly for uploading and/or sending/receiving photos and videos and opening links. Even sending messages with photos and videos via chat services such as **WhatsApp, Skype, Facebook Messenger, WeChat, Viber, Tango** and other **messenger apps** will use up data. **Data usage is especially high with video calling.**

File Sharing: Any file sharing application on your device makes it a host device for any files you have in that application, which means others will be able to download files from your device if the application is left running.   If this happens it will contribute hugely to your data usage as file sharing incurs both download and upload data usage. Downloading a file to a device will incur more data usage than the actual size of the file, as uploads to other users devices will also be taken into account. If a file is left in the programme to share with others, then the uploading of that file by others can continue to indefinitely use many GB of data. File sharing programmes being inadvertently left open is one of the most common causes of high levels of excess data usage.

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