enter date here.

enter your name here.

enter your title/position here.

enter your clinic name here.

enter your clinic address here.

enter city, state, postcode here.

enter email address here.

enter phone number here.

enter politician’s name here.

enter title/position here.

enter address here.

enter city, state, postcode here.

enter MP’s email here.

Dear enter politician’s name here.

**RE: Assignment of benefit and signature requirements for bulk billed telehealth services**

I am writing to express my deep concern and frustration with the updated assignment of benefit requirements for bulk billed telehealth appointments. These requirements will make it cumbersome and administratively unviable for general practitioners (GPs) to bulk bill telehealth appointments and will **further contribute to declining rates of bulk billing.**

I am a GP working out of enter name of practice text. in enter suburb here. where I provide critical healthcare for around enter XX here. patients. In addition to primary care, my practice provides essential services such as enter mention specific services like vaccinations, chronic disease management, or preventive care here. that significantly contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of people living in enter insert electorate name here..

**Background**

* When Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) telehealth items were introduced at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, GPs were advised that consent for bulk billed telehealth services could be provided verbally and documented in a patient’s clinical notes.
* An update to the [Services Australia website](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/changes-to-mbs-items-during-coronavirus-covid-19-response?context=20#requirements) on 21 September 2023 has outlined that this is no longer sufficient. While providers can still obtain verbal consent to bulk bill telehealth consultations, this consent must now be documented via one of two approved forms.
* The forms do not integrate with existing practice software or other national digital initiatives such as My Health Record. In some cases they will have to be printed and mailed to patients who are unable to receive an electronic copy. **This is a 20th century approach to 21st century healthcare that is inefficient and cumbersome.**

**Recommendations**

* Verbal consent for telehealth should be retained permanently.
* A digital solution to recording patient consent, fully integrated with existing clinical information systems and utilising existing data, is a sensible way forward to support current workflows and minimise complicated red tape.

Minister Butler has advised that he has asked his department to provide options to address concerns about the assignment of benefit for Medicare bulk billed claims, including legislative amendments. The department has informed the Minister that until these changes are made, there are no plans to pursue any broad punitive actions on this issue unless it relates to fraudulent claims against Medicare.

I am urging you to raise this issue with the Health Minister to ensure a quick resolution to this issue, and ensure the people of enter insert electorate here.can continue to access the bulk billed telehealth services that are essential to their health. **It is critical that we do not undermine genuine improvements and reforms in our health system by unnecessary, outdated and inefficient bureaucratic requirements.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

enter your name here.

enter your title/position here.

enter your clinic name here.