

Sunday 16 January 2022

RACGP welcomes government announcement for increased funding to telehealth and provision of PPE

Dear Member,

This morning, Health Minister Greg Hunt and Regional Health Minister David Gillespie announced a range of measures to give GPs and other specialists more flexibility to support patients, including:

- an additional \$24 million for temporary changes to telehealth to give GPs and other specialists more flexibility to support patients, including the continued supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and online support.
- the introduction of temporary specialist inpatient telehealth MBS items (video and phone) and initial and complex specialist telephone consultation items, including longer telephone consultations for GP's (level C) until 30 June 2022. These services will be available nationally, rather than targeted at Commonwealth hotspots.
- expanding the MBS item for GPs caring for COVID positive patients in the community through face-to-face consultations to include patients that have tested positive through a rapid antigen test (RAT).
- packages of personal protective equipment (PPE) to GPs, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and GP Respiratory Clinics to support GPs providing face-to-face care. Over 20 million units of PPE will be provided for primary care over the next three months, including nine million p2/n95 masks for GPs.



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- Healthdirect will develop a national assessment, triage and notification infrastructure to connect people who test positive with the care they need and advice, based on the [guidelines](#) we developed (soon to be available in multiple languages). This is expected to commence in Queensland on 17 January 2022 with other states to follow.

Earlier this week I met with Health Minister Greg Hunt and Regional Health Minister David Gillespie, along with presidents from the AMA, ACRRM and RDAA, to discuss the issues GPs are facing on the frontline. These changes are the direct result of sustained advocacy from your RACGP. We continue to advocate for better support for our GP members in this challenging practice environment.

Read the full media release [here](#)

We're here to help

If you need more information:

- keep an eye on [newsGP](#)
- visit the RACGP's regularly updated [COVID-19 resources webpage](#)
- review state/territory-specific information on the RACGP [COVID-19 information for GPs webpage](#).

Take care out there and thanks for the amazing work you're doing for your communities.

Dr Karen Price

RACGP President