A telehealth video consultation is a consultation between a patient and their GP (or practice nurse/Aboriginal health worker) at one location and a specialist located at another location.

***Advantages of telehealth video consultations*** Every patient’s situation is different but in general, the benefits of this service include:

* improved access to specialist care
* reduced waiting time to see your specialist
* reduced travel time and costs
* reduced absence from work.

# How can I have a telehealth video consultation with my specialist?

To have a telehealth video consultation with your specialist, you must be referred by your GP and the clinicians must consider it safe and suitable for you. Not all specialists offer telehealth video consultations

– your GP will discuss options with you.

# Do I have to participate?

No. You are able to attend a face-to-face consultation with your specialist if you prefer. A telehealth video consultation will only happen if your clinicians consider it safe and suitable and you are happy to participate in a telehealth video consultation.

# Where are they provided?

You can participate in a telehealth video consultation from our practice.

# Who will arrange it?

We have a telehealth video consultation coordinator who arranges telehealth video consultation with specialists.

***What if I need to cancel my appointment?*** Telehealth video consultations require a lot of coordination at our end and at the specialist’s end, so please try to keep you telehealth video consultation appointment.

If you need to cancel, please let us know immediately, because rescheduling telehealth video consultations is more complicated than rescheduling a face-to-face appointment.

You can help get the best from a telehealth video consultation by following these simple steps:

* arrive at least 15 minutes early to allow for preparation time
* avoid wearing brightly patterned or reflective clothing as this may not show up well on camera
* switch your mobile off or to silent mode
* speak clearly so your voice can be picked up by the microphone
* look at the camera so you can achieve good eye contact with the specialist
* if you have a question or need help during the telehealth video consultation, just ask.

# What happens at the telehealth video consultation appointment?

You and a support clinician from our practice and the distant specialist will be on a TV/video or computer screen at each end of the telehealth video consultation.

At the start, everyone will introduce themselves and the reason for the consultation will be explained. You will be asked some identifying questions such as your name, address, and date of birth to make sure the right patient, right doctors and right health records are present. The specialist will speak with you and ask you questions in the same way as they would at a face-to-face consultation.

# Who will be present?

You, your GP and the specialist.

As with a face-to-face appointment, your spouse, partner, family or friend may accompany you if you wish.

# What if I want to have a private discussion with my specialist?

You may ask your GP (or another support clinician from our team) to step out of the telehealth video consultation at any time if you wish to have a private discussion with the specialist and they will do so provided they think your safety is not at risk.

The same privacy and confidentiality requirements that apply to face-to-face consultations apply to telehealth video consultations.

# What if I need to be examined?

The specialist may ask your GP or support clinician to examine you on their behalf. This may or may not be on camera. We will respect your privacy and a private area or gown will be provided if you need to remove clothing for an examination.

# What if I have special needs?

If you have special needs such as an interpreter or a wheelchair, please let our telehealth video consultation coordinator know and they will make a note of these when your consultation with the specialist is confirmed.

# Will the telehealth video consultation be recorded?

No. Our practice does not record telehealth video consultations and we do not give patients permission to make their own recordings of a telehealth video consultation. If your specialist or your GP thinks it would be helpful for your treatment to record particular images during your telehealth video consultation, they would first seek your written permission to do so and they would ask you to repeat your consent on camera.

# What if I feel I can’t continue?

Most patients feel a little nervous at the beginning of their first telehealth video consultation because it’s a new way of seeing a doctor. However, most patients soon feel very comfortable with this kind of consultation. It’s very unlikely you’ll feel unable to continue with a telehealth video consultation. If this does happen, you can leave although consultation fees may still apply.

Generally, you will receive two bills for the telehealth video consultation – one from your general practice and one from the distant specialist. Our normal billing process will apply.

If there are likely to be any other fees associated with the telehealth video consultation, we will let you know in advance.

# Am I eligible for a Medicare rebate?

Medicare rebates for telehealth video consultations are available to patients from remote and regional areas, as well as patients of residential aged care facilities or Aboriginal health services anywhere in Australia. If you fall into one of these patient categories and are privately billed, you will be eligible for a Medicare rebate.

There is a requirement for the patient and specialist to be located at least 15km apart, at the time of the consultation.

# How can I provide feedback?

We are keen to get your feedback so we can continue to improve our video consultation services. Our reception staff will be able to provide you with a patient feedback form. We will ask for your permission to share your feedback anonymously with other healthcare professionals and our practice team. You can choose for your feedback to remain confidential.

If you have any questions about whether a telehealth video consultation may be suitable for you, please talk to your GP.

If you have any general questions about how telehealth video consultations work, please talk to our telehealth video consultation coordinator.

*Telehealth video consultation – patient information*

October 2017

# Where can I get more general information about telehealth video consultation?

**For more information about patient eligibility and payments:**

**Medicare Australia**

1800 22032

*telehealth@medicareaustralia.gov.au*[*www.humanservices.gov.au/health-*](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/health-) *professionals/services/medicare/mbs-and-telehealth*

**MBS online – Connecting Health Services with the Future:**

**Overview for Patients** [*www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.n*](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/mbsonline-telehealth-landing.htm)[*sf/Content/mbsonline-telehealth-landing.htm*](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/mbsonline-telehealth-landing.htm)

**Questions and Answers for Patients** [*www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.n*](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/connectinghealthservices-patients-QA)[*sf/Content/connectinghealthservices-patients-QA*](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/connectinghealthservices-patients-QA)



Practice contact details –