



## **ACSEP Telehealth Options**

### **Introduction**

There is an increasing amount of telehealth guidance and information circulating as more Clinicians offer telehealth and video conferencing to patients. This document provides some guidance to using telehealth to provide consultations, some common platforms that are used, and some useful links to good guidelines for further reference.

Covered in the document are:

- Hardware requirements
- Software options
- Current New Zealand and Australian item numbers and rebates for telehealth
- Considerations when using telehealth software platforms and links to guidelines

### **1. What you need to set up telehealth**

#### **1.1 Internet connectivity**

The quality of the video consultation is dependent on the internet connection and high-quality internet connections provide better clarity and a lower possibility of the consultation being interrupted by a loss of connection.

Upload and download speeds should be considered and ideally require as a minimum, ADSL2 or equivalent in Cable Internet.

(Of course, this also requires the patient to have appropriate internet connectivity and this should be considered when discussing video conferencing with them.)

#### **1.2 Hardware**

This is the equipment needed to ensure you can undertake the video consultation.

It includes a good computer and screen, with a camera and mic in the computer or these can be purchased separately and added (such as a webcam).

The choice of computer screen should be made depending on the circumstance. Large screen displays allow a large image of the patient and the clinician to view/edit clinical information.

Most computers have reasonable cameras and mics embedded, however consider what you want to achieve during consultations (such as share X-rays or other images).

Importantly, perform a test run from both your side and the patient side.



### 1.3 Software

This is the interface or application between you and the patient.

Familiarity is important for you as the doctor and simplicity is important for the patient.

#### Available software platforms

Telehealth software platforms		
<b>Generic applications (commonly used and check to ensure encrypted which prevents unauthorized access/eavesdropping)</b>		
<b>Zoom</b> Video conferencing	Free version available	<a href="https://zoom.us/">https://zoom.us/</a>
<b>Skype</b> Video conferencing	Free version available	<a href="https://www.skype.com/en/">https://www.skype.com/en/</a>
<b>Goto meeting</b> Video and mobile conferencing	Free trial then \$20/month	<a href="https://www.gotomeeting.com/en-au">https://www.gotomeeting.com/en-au</a>
<b>Webex</b> Telehealth software	Free version available	<a href="https://www.webex.com/">https://www.webex.com/</a> <a href="https://www.webex.com/webexremotehealth.html#clinicians">https://www.webex.com/webexremotehealth.html#clinicians</a>
<b>Flock</b> Video conferencing	Free then \$6USD/month	<a href="https://flock.com/">https://flock.com/</a>
<b>Whatsapp (desktop)</b>	Free	<a href="https://www.whatsapp.com/">https://www.whatsapp.com/</a>
<b>Medical Specific applications</b>		
<b>Doxy.me</b> Secure telemedicine software	Free version and \$35USD/mth/user	<a href="https://doxy.me/">https://doxy.me/</a>



<b>Coviu</b> Telehealth	Free trial and \$29.95/mth	<a href="https://www.coviu.com/">https://www.coviu.com/</a>
<b>TheraPlatform</b> Telemedicine and practice management software	30-day free trial and \$29 USD/month	<a href="https://www.theraplatform.com/">https://www.theraplatform.com/</a>

## 2. Current New Zealand and Australia rebates

### 2.1 New Zealand

#### Clinical Services Contract

The Clinical Services Contract already allows consultations via Telehealth, with most consultations types able to be conducted electronically:

- These must be carried out according to the recommendations of the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) and any other relevant professional bodies. ACC's definition of Telehealth and its appropriate use will change as needed to align with the current stance of the MCNZ. At this stage this includes telephone consultations.
- Consultations provided via Telehealth will be paid at the same rate as the equivalent face to face consultation, using the same service codes.
- Medical Case Reviews (MCR) and Medical Single Discipline Assessments (MSDA) (service codes CSM1, CSM2, CSA1, CSA2) cannot be undertaken at this time. We will advise you when this is possible again.
- Link to current MCNZ guidelines may be found [here](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/standards/a914d05922/Statement-on-telehealthv3.pdf). (<http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/standards/a914d05922/Statement-on-telehealthv3.pdf>)

Email contact: [providerbusinesscontinuity@acc.co.nz](mailto:providerbusinesscontinuity@acc.co.nz)

#### From SEM specific clinical services contract:

These assessments may be undertaken by electronic means ("telemedicine") where clinically appropriate and in accordance with the standards set for such telemedical assessments by the Medical Council of New Zealand and other relevant professional bodies,



**Table 1 – Clinical Service Assessments (no prior approval required)**

Procedure	Code	Definition	Treatment Provider	Payment (incl. GST)
Simple Assessment (Initial)	CS100	Simple Assessment (First assessment only) – per consultation	Specialist or Registrar	\$200.09
Complex Assessment (Initial)	CS200	Complex Assessment (Initial) – per consultation	Specialist or Registrar	\$306.57
Second Opinion Assessment (Simple)	CS400	Second Opinion Assessment (Simple) – per consultation	Specialists Only	\$200.09
Reassessment	CS500	Reassessment – per consultation	Specialist (same specialist who provided initial assessment or supervised the Registrar who provided the initial assessment)	\$200.09
Subsequent Assessment (Simple)	CS61	Subsequent Assessment (Simple) – per consultation	Specialist or Registrar	\$135.52
Subsequent Assessment (Complex)	CS62	Subsequent Assessment (Complex) – per consultation	Specialist or Registrar	\$200.09
Second Opinion Assessment (Complex)	CS900	Second Opinion Assessment (Complex) – per consultation	Specialist, Anaesthetist	\$306.57



## AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SPORT AND EXERCISE PHYSICIANS

### Cost of Regulations

ACC have agreed to temporarily allow providers to complete ACC18 and ACC45 forms via telehealth. These updates are continually changing. To check the current regulations please refer to the ACC website here (<https://www.acc.co.nz/covid-19/providers/?smooth-scroll=content-after-navs>).

There are also non-contract codes for specialists that can be used during the COVID-19 crisis.

Consultation	Telehealth code	Rate (excl GST)
New patient	MST1	\$75.03
Follow up	MST3	\$37.52

### Southern Cross Insurance

During the COVID-19 crisis Southern Cross insurance has agreed to cover telehealth medicine consults for patients who have Southern Cross insurance cover.

### 2.2 Australia

Australia has a number of different approaches to billing for telehealth outlined in the table below:

Consultants	
Private telehealth appointments	Cost is determined by the consultant and the patient pays privately without any rebates
Existing telehealth medicare item numbers <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>These are dependent on regional eligibility and require referral</li></ul>	Item 104 plus 99 Item 105 plus 99
Covid-19 medicare item numbers ( <b>temporary</b> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Patients must be bulk billed</li><li>Currently, Fellows need to apply for these provider numbers online – this may change soon as further telehealth initiatives are implemented</li></ul>	video consultation: 91822 telephone consultation: 91832  video consultation: 91823 telephone consultation: 91833



Registrars	
<p>Existing medicare item numbers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This is currently a reasonably restrictive area and will be updated as more information becomes available</li></ul>	<p>53 Video cons number 91803 telephone number 91797</p> <p>54 Video cons number 91804 telephone number 91813</p> <p>57 Video cons number 91805 telephone number 91814</p>

From 30 March 2020, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health, [announced](#) that the Government will enable all vulnerable general practitioners and other vulnerable health professionals who are currently authorised to use telehealth item numbers, to use telehealth for all consultations with all their patients.

**The situation and rebate discussion in Australia change frequently therefore please review the current status via this link**

<http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/Home>

It is expected a more comprehensive telehealth whole of population model of care and the detail of telehealth operations via phone and video will emerge quickly

### 3. Key considerations when using telehealth and useful links

#### This section Includes

- Legal requirements prescriptions, diagnostic tests, referrals
- meet applicable laws for security and privacy
- consent
- guidelines for how to run a telehealth session/info sheets/templates

#### 3.1 Requirements for prescriptions, diagnostic tests, referrals

Make sure you have a system to allow you to provide referrals for various services. If you are working remotely, you can use you phone camera or a free app such as 'turboscan' to send a pdf copy of whatever form or note you handwrite.



## AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SPORT AND EXERCISE PHYSICIANS

### Australia

#### **Prescriptions**

Pharmacists may dispense a prescription that has been faxed or scanned, provided that they are satisfied the prescription is bona fide and in accordance with State and Territory legislations. However, the prescriber must send the pharmacist the original prescription for their records in accordance with poisons legislation.

Pharmacy Board of Australia, Guidelines for dispensing of medicines.

<https://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/documents/default.aspx?record=WD10%2F2951&dbid=AP&chks um=WMyYdhKfX3%2BWGPiGUClsMw%3D%3D>

#### **Ordering tests and telehealth**

There is no difference between a video and face-to-face consultation in terms of ordering pathology and diagnostic imaging tests. In practice the arrangements for these tests could vary between email, fax, mail and/or in consultation with the supporting practitioner.

Australian Government, MBS Online: Specialist video consultations under Medicare

<http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/connectinghealthservices-patients-QA#q29>

### New Zealand

#### **Prescriptions**

Faxed or telephone prescriptions are permitted, but only in cases where the prescriber requires a medicine to be dispensed urgently. In such cases you must forward the original prescription to the dispensing pharmacist within 7 days unless the faxed prescription has been generated by a system that is connected to the New Zealand ePrescription Service (NZePS), contains the NZePS barcode and is signed by the prescriber. Prescriptions communicated by telephone, fax or email for controlled drugs must be written on a triplicate form and received by the dispensing pharmacist within 2 business days.

Where an electronic system is used for any aspect of prescribing, it must comply with relevant standards pertaining to electronic prescribing in the location where the prescription will be filled.

Medical Council of NZ (2016), Good Prescribing Practice.

<https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/standards/eccbbf5a1/Statement-on-good-prescribing-practice.pdf>

Medical Council of NZ (2016). Statement on Telehealth.

<http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/standards/a914d05922/Statement-on-telehealthv3.pdf>

### **3.2 Meet the applicable laws for security and privacy**

Please see information provided via links:

Australia [link](#)



New Zealand (<http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/standards/a914d05922/Statement-on-telehealthv3.pdf>)

### **3.3 Consent**

Consent is appropriate and follows any clearly outlined guidelines (i.e. NZ ACC requirements)

#### **New Zealand**

The ACC is requiring practitioners to read out the statement below to get consent for ACC telehealth consults when a new ACC45 form is being completed.

#### **Patient consent for Telehealth consults**

Providers must obtain verbal consent from patients, where permitted to carry out Telehealth consults. Please read out the following statement to your patient and record your patient's response in their clinical record:

- Do you declare that you have provided true and correct information and you will tell ACC if your situation changes?
- Do you authorise me as your (name of health profession: GP, physiotherapist, etc) to lodge your claim with ACC?
- Do you authorise your record to be collected or disclosed to ACC to help determine cover for your claim, determine what you will be entitled to, or for research purposes (like injury prevention, or assessment, and rehabilitation)?

In more general terms, patient consent should be taken at each consultation and documented in the patient's record, including that the session was done by telehealth/video conference.

#### **Australia**

Patient consent to the health assessment should be taken verbally at each consultation and documented in the patient's record, including that the session was done by telehealth/video conference. You should inform the patient that the consultation is not being recorded.

### **3.4 Resources for commencing telehealth/guides to good practice**

The College has an education module on telehealth that can be found in the LMS

Australian specific guides

[RACGP telehealth guide](#)

[RACGP template – Telehealth video consultation specialist checklist](#)

[Medical Board of Australia technology-based consultations - guidelines](#)

[Medical Board of Australia technology-based consultations – information sheet](#)



New Zealand specific guides

NZ telehealth forum and resource centre <https://www.telehealth.org.nz/>

Other

[NHS guidelines – video consultation guide for GP's](#) (excellent infographic)

#### **4. Final considerations**

Telehealth consultations will be new to you and there is a relatively steep learning curve. Staying calm, trying to keep a positive outlook and having a 'plan B' are all important considerations.

The technology will let you down at times, accept that this is out of your control. Remember that you can always pick up the phone and continue the consultation if your online platform lets you down.

Also remember to set yourself up well. Make sure that your background/backdrop looks professional and that you spend some time making sure that your computer's setup is optimised. Also consider how you will share documents and make sure that you have a secure process for this.

Finally, while it is important that you are able to run your clinical consultation it is also very important that your clinic's administrators have a clear process including how to book your telehealth consultations, how to bill them and how to let your referrers and patients know that you are offering this service.