



# Telehealth

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ISO 9001 Lic: QEC22546  
SAI Global

# What is Telehealth?



## ***Under the MBS Telehealth Initiative.***

A video consultation where a patient, accompanied by an eligible medical practitioner, undertakes a consultation via video conferencing to an eligible specialist, consultant physician or psychiatrist

There must be an audio and visual link between the patient and the eligible medical practitioner in order for the patient to claim for the telehealth rebate.

# Benefits



- increased access to health services locally
- improved quality, cost and timeliness of healthcare
- supporting the sustainability of the Australian healthcare system
- making better use of the contemporary specialist workforce
- reduced patient travel
- reduced need for patients to take extended amounts of time off work or make lengthy family or day care arrangements
- reduced patient time away from home

# Incentives



There are five types of incentives available for practitioners and RACF's:

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Telehealth On-Board:</b> one-off, lump sum payment for eligible practitioners who provide at least one telehealth service	\$6,000	\$4,800	\$3,900	\$3,300
<b>Telehealth Service (specialist):</b>	\$60	\$48	\$39	\$33
<b>Telehealth Service (patient-end):</b>	\$40	\$32	\$26	\$22
<b>Telehealth Bulk Billing:</b> paid each time a service is bulk billed	\$20	\$16	\$13	\$11
<b>RACF On-Board Incentive (one-off):</b> one-off, lump sum payment for eligible RACFs who provide at least one telehealth service. Must register with Medicare Australia	\$6,000	\$4,800	\$3,900	\$3,300
<b>Telehealth Hosting Service Incentive:</b> an ongoing, monthly payment based on total number of telehealth consultations hosted by the RACF over the preceding month.	\$60	\$48	\$39	\$33

<b>Medical Practitioner Incentives</b>		<b>2011-12</b>
<b>Telehealth On-Board:</b> one-off, lump sum payment for eligible practitioners who provide at least one telehealth service		\$6,000
<b>Telehealth Service (specialist):</b>	an ongoing, quarterly payment based on # of telehealth consults hosted during a quarterly period	\$60
<b>Telehealth Service (patient-end):</b>		\$40
<b>Telehealth Bulk Billing:</b> paid each time a service is bulk billed		\$20

# MBS Item Numbers

- 23 new item numbers are now available for online consultations, particularly in rural and remote areas, aged care and AMS's, across a **range of specialties**
- Rebated consults for General Practice are those between a patient and specialist, consultant physician or consultant psychiatrist where the patient is **accompanied** by a
  - Medical Practitioner
  - Practice nurse
  - Aboriginal health worker
  - Nurse practitioner

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/telehealth.jsp>

# Medicare / MBS Web Pages

- Medicare Australia 1800 222 032
- Telehealth Incentive Payments  
<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/telehealth.jsp>
- Telehealth MBS item numbers (search under 'T' for Telehealth) [www.mbsonline.gov.au](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au)
- MBS Telehealth Webpage  
<http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/mbsonline-telehealth-landing.htm>

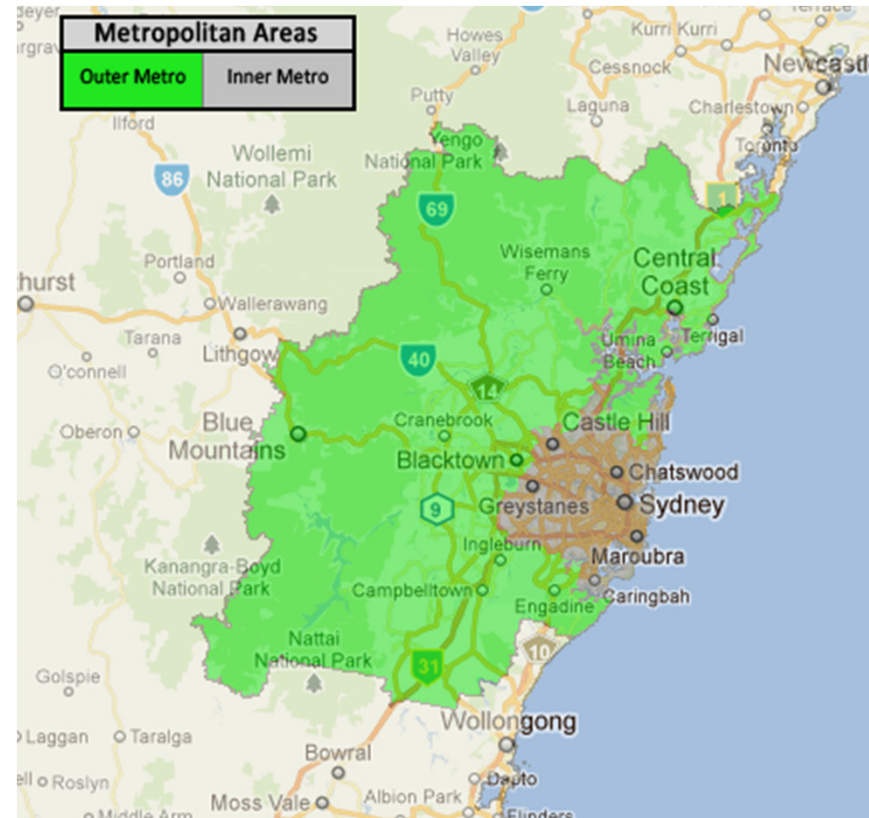

# Area Eligibility

**Geographic Information**

Address: 80 Clarence St, Sydney NSW 2000  
Longitude, Latitude: 151.205059, -33.867298  
Urban Classification: Inner Metropolitan  
Further Information: [More Doctors For Outer Metropolitan Areas](#)

**Telehealth eligibility classification**

Telehealth Classification: Not MBS Telehealth Eligible  
Further Information: [www.mbsonline.gov.au/telehealth](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/telehealth)



<http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/Publishing.nsf/Content/locator#metro>

# Medical Practitioner attendance at consulting rooms



For a patient participating in a video consultation with a specialist or consultant physician who is:

- a) located outside an inner metropolitan area, who is not an admitted patient;
- b) at an AMS

Item Number	Level	Rebate	Time*
2100	Level A	\$21.60	>5 mins
2126	Level B	\$47.10	< 20 mins
2143	Level C	\$91.35	> 20 mins
2195	Level D	\$134.40	> 40 mins

\* whether or not continuous

# Medical Practitioner attendance other than at a consulting room



For a patient participating in a video consultation with a specialist or consultant physician who is:

- a) located outside an inner metropolitan area, who is not an admitted patient;
- b) at an AMS

Item #	Level	Rebate	Time*
2122	Level A	Item 2100 (\$21.60) + \$24.50 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$1.85 per patient	>5 mins
2137	Level B	Item 2126 (\$47.10) + \$24.50 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$1.85 per patient	< 20 mins
2147	Level C	Item 2143 (\$91.35) + \$24.50 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$1.85 per patient	> 20 mins
2199	Level D	Item 2195 (\$134.40) + \$24.50 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$1.85 per patient	> 40 mins

\* whether or not continuous

# Medical Practitioner at a Residential Aged Care Facility



For a patient participating in a video consultation with a specialist or consultant physician and is:

- a) a care recipient receiving care in a RACF (not a self-contained unit)
- b) at consulting rooms in an RACF where the patient is a resident (excl. a self-contained unit)

Item #	Level	Rebate	Time*
2125	Level A	Item 2100 (\$21.60) + \$44.05 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$3.15 per patient	>5 mins
2138	Level B	Item 2126 (\$47.10) + \$44.05 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$3.15 per patient	< 20 mins
2179	Level C	Item 2143 (\$91.35) + \$44.05 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$3.15 per patient	> 20 mins
2220	Level D	Item 2195 (\$134.40) + \$44.05 / number of patients seen (up to 6). For $\geq 7$ patients item 2100 + \$3.15 per patient	> 40 mins

\* whether or not continuous

# Nurse /Aboriginal Health Worker at a Residential Aged Care Facility



For the purpose of these item a practice nurse means a registered or enrolled nurse who is employed by, or whose services are otherwise retained by a medical practitioner or their practice.

Item #	Rebate	Location
10983	\$31.20	Outside an inner metropolitan area or at an Aboriginal Medical Service
10984	\$31.20	At a residential aged care facility

# Bulk Billing



- For the next 12 months, a Bulk bill incentive of \$20 per service will be applied to any Medical Practitioner telehealth item numbers
- For subsequent years the incentive decreases incrementally

# Example



## 25 minute consult via videoconference by GP

2143 Level C Telehealth Consult	\$91.35
+ Telehealth Bulk Bill Incentive	\$20.00
+ Telehealth Service Incentive	\$40.00 (paid quarterly)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$151.35</b>

# Finer Details



- Duration of attendance
- Restrictions
- Record Keeping
- Eligible Geographic Areas - determined by location of the patient service
- Billing a face-to-face consults on the same day a video consultation

# RACGP



- RACGP engaged by DoHA to develop standards for GP
  - Will be an addendum to the 4<sup>th</sup> edition standards
  - Covers safety and quality of VC, not technical
  - Due out in October 2011
- RACGP also developing Implementation Guidelines
  - Due out in 2 weeks
- Watch the RACGP Friday Facts
- RACGP's advice is to delay purchases until their resources have been developed

# RACGP Support Materials



1800 257 053

[www.racgp.org.au/telehealth](http://www.racgp.org.au/telehealth)

[www.racgp.org.au/ehealth](http://www.racgp.org.au/ehealth)

[www.racgp.org.au/standards/telehealth](http://www.racgp.org.au/standards/telehealth)

Email: [telehealth@racgp.org.au](mailto:telehealth@racgp.org.au)


Staff of the RACGP e-health unit:

- Judy Evans, Manager e-health
- Camilla Preston, Senior Project Officer (Telehealth Standards project team)

# Internet Connection

- Aim for a minimum of 1 Mbps
- You may need a dedicated ADSL for video conferencing
- It is important to test
- ADSL2 connections are not created equal

```
speed (kbps):  DS Channel1  DS Channel0  US Channel1  US Channel0
                0           6472         0           1040
```



**It's the uplink speed that matters**

Extract of ADSL status from a Cisco 877 router

# Skype



- The big question on everyones lips
- Approach with caution, unlikely to be supported by the RACGP
- Skype provides a way to test at minimal cost
- Skype could change greatly following it's acquisition by Microsoft

# What's wrong with Skype and other free solutions?



- The session is encrypted, but data relating to the session is not encrypted (eg: address book and call history )
- Despite encryption, no ISP will guarantee it's clinical safety
- Traffic could be routed overseas
- Not interoperable with other services
- Potential for spam video calls
- No support
- Does not meet clinical standards

# Questions to ask

## When considering a VC Vendor



- What platforms and technologies can you connect to?
- What type of internet connection do you need?
- Can the GP install the equipment themselves?
- Is the call and all data relating to the call encrypted?
- Who can view the call log and phonebook?
- Does this equipment allow me to commence other Telehealth programs, ie: home monitoring, recent hospital discharges, chronic disease

# Questions to ask

## When considering a VC Vendor



- Does the practice network wiring need to be modified?
- What happens if you what to move the VC to another room or a patients home?
- What are the ongoing support/maintenance costs?
- What does support include?
- How is video internet traffic routed (does it go overseas)?
- How can you manage the calendars between participating practitioners?

# Hardware Ideas



**The following pages show examples of today's Video Conferencing Hardware.**

- Practices should use due-diligence when selecting a product
- National / State bodies may also provide packages

# Polycom HDX4500



## Advantages

- All-In-One
- Suitable for a GP desktop

## Price

- Price ~ \$8,399 (includes support)
- Annual support ~ \$1,499



# Lifesize Passport



## Advantages

- Can connect to Skype
- Suitable for a GP desktop



## Price

- Price ~ \$4,000, plus monitor and trolley
- Annual support ~ \$500

# Vidyo



## Advantages

- The simplicity of Skype with enterprise capabilities
- Connects to iPads, tablets, Androids
- HD video
- Technology more durable to regional ADSL connections
- Able to connect to other devices, ie: Polycom (additional cost)

## Price

- Price ~ \$18,000 - \$20,000
- Annual support ~ \$2 – 3,000

# Vidyo



- Medicare Locals are well placed to broker a system similar to Vidyo
- For 10 practices, it drops the upfront cost to about \$2K per practice.
- Includes ability to install in 100 practices
- 5 simultaneous video conferences
- There are other costs to consider

Camera and Microphone per practice \$700

Data housing costs for the Vidyo router

# VitelMed

medtech\*



- Synchronising the appointment book between GPs and Specialists
- Uses a portal called “Manage My Health” (MMH) for patient scheduling
- VitelMed’s plan is for GP Divisions to maintain a directory of GPs and SBO’s and coordinate Specialists interested in Telemedicine
- VitelMed will use MMH to do appointment set-up and notification using a combination of Telephone calls, emails and SMS confirmations for a service fee
- Each party can use their existing PC’s with Desktop PMS.
- Manage My Health could be used by GP Divisions to run a virtual practice for Telemedicine using more comprehensive EHR

# Wait



## Environment

- RACGP Standards and Implementation Guidelines yet to be released

## The Strategy is

- Wait – now is not the right to make a substantial purchase
- Use this time to research suitable offerings
- Look at options like Vidyo that create a VC network through your Medicare Local at cheaper upfront and improved support over a longer period.

# Opportunities for Medicare Locals



- Brokering a Medicare Local wide Videoconferencing Network
- Encouraging practitioners to spend upfront funds on effective telehealth equipment
- Acting as central hub for home monitoring devices (possibly not under the current MBS program)