

How will it work?

A GP treating a patient in an eligible area can refer the patient to a specialist for a consultation via telehealth.

During the consultation, the patient and specialist will be able to see and hear each other via video conferencing technology.

The GP or another health professional may also be at the patient-end of the consultation to provide clinical services.

Mary lives on a dairy farm in NSW, twenty minutes drive from Bega. Mary's local GP is Dr Sharma, who detected Mary's respiratory disorder in 2010.

Dr Sharma referred her to Dr Brown, a specialist based in Sydney, and she has recently finished her treatment. She should now see Dr Brown every second month for a follow up consultation.

However, Mary finds it difficult to find the time and money to travel to Sydney. At Dr Sharma's suggestion, and with Dr Brown's agreement, Mary begins attending consultations via telehealth. A practice nurse attends each consultation, on Dr Sharma's behalf, to provide clinical assistance.

Mary is bulk billed by Dr Sharma and Dr Brown. In this case, each practitioner receives MBS rebates and financial incentives from Medicare Australia.

Who can provide telehealth services?

Medicare rebates for specialist consultations are available across the full range of medical specialties. Rebates for patient-end services are available for services provided by:

- » medical practitioners;
- » nurse practitioners;
- » midwives; and
- » practice nurses and Aboriginal health workers providing services on behalf of a medical practitioner.



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

MEDICARE REBATES

For Specialist Video Consultations



Where do I find out more?

To learn more about the telehealth program and video conferencing technology visit:
www.mbsonline.gov.au/telehealth

For more information about eligibility and payments contact Medicare Australia:

 1800 222 032

 telehealth@medicareaustralia.gov.au

www.health.gov.au

All information in this publication is correct as of May 2011

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FROM 1 JULY 2011

Medicare rebates will be available for video consultations with medical specialists

From 1 July 2011, Medicare rebates for video consultations will:

- » link specialists and consultant physicians with patients in remote, regional and outer metropolitan areas, and in eligible aged care facilities and Aboriginal Medical Services throughout Australia;
- » be available across the full range of medical specialties; and
- » be available for services provided by a health professional located with the patient.



Eligible Areas

The Government is making Medicare rebates available to patients in:

- » remote, regional and outer metropolitan areas (the boundaries of eligible areas are based on the More Doctors for Outer Metropolitan program); and
- » residential aged care facilities and Aboriginal Medical Services throughout Australia.

Further details on patient eligibility are available from www.mbsonline.gov.au/telehealth

MBS Items

New items will allow a range of existing specialist consultation items to be provided via video conferencing.

Higher schedule fees will apply to the new specialist items, recognising the increased complexity of providing a service to a remote patient.

New items will enable medical practitioners and other health professionals to provide assistance, where clinically appropriate, to the patient during a video consultation with a specialist.

Fees for these 'patient-end' items recognise the time, complexity and administration involved in these services.

Telehealth MBS items can be found at www.mbsonline.gov.au/telehealth



Financial incentives for telehealth services

The Government is encouraging the uptake of telehealth MBS items through financial incentives, in addition to the MBS rebates.

PRACTITIONERS

An On-Board Incentive for eligible practitioners who make the necessary investment to provide at least one telehealth service:

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
\$6,000	\$4,800	\$3,900	\$3,300

Telehealth Service Incentives, paid each time an eligible practitioner provides a service:

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Specialist services			
\$60	\$48	\$39	\$33
Patient-end services			
\$40	\$32	\$26	\$22

Extra Telehealth Bulk Billing Incentives, paid each time a practitioner bulk bills a service:

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
\$20	\$16	\$13	\$11

RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES

Residential aged care facilities may claim a RACF On-Board Incentive once they begin to host patients participating in telehealth consultations:

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
\$6,000	\$4,800	\$3,900	\$3,300

They may also claim a Telehealth Hosting Service Incentive each time they host a telehealth consultation:

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
\$60	\$48	\$39	\$33