

## ■ What can I expect?

You can expect to receive the equivalent standard of care that you would expect in a face-to-face consultation.

You can have an interpreter, health worker or a multicultural worker present if you wish. (However, please note that a Medicare claim cannot be made to cover this cost).

If during a Telepsychiatry consultation you decide you do not want to proceed with a video consultation you can request that the session be discontinued and a face-to-face consultation can be organised instead.

## ■ What about privacy and confidentiality?

The general practitioner will ask you to give your permission to share information with the psychiatrist.

The same privacy and confidentiality requirements that apply to face-to-face consultations apply to video consultations. The psychiatrist will not provide information to anyone other than those involved in your care.

If you are attending a video consultation from home, your psychiatrist will explain to you the IT format being used for the consultation and any potential privacy security risks.

Your consultation will not be recorded. However, if your psychiatrist thinks it would be helpful for your treatment to record your video consultation, he or she will first seek your written permission. The psychiatrist will also ask you to repeat your consent on camera at the beginning of the consultation.

## ■ What are the limitations of video consultations?

The service may unexpectedly drop out and another person may be called to reconnect the session.

### Further questions

If you have any questions about whether a video consultation may be suitable for you, please talk to your psychiatrist and/or your general practitioner.

For general telepsychiatry information, please visit



<http://www.ranzcp.org/Publications/guides-for-the-public/Telepsychiatry.aspx>



309 La Trobe Street, Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia  
T +61 3 9640 0646 F +61 3 9642 5652  
ranzcp@ranzcp.org www.ranzcp.org

# Telepsychiatry



# Information for Patients

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# What is telepsychiatry?

*Telepsychiatry is a consultation conducted by video or via a personal computer between you and your psychiatrist at a distant location. The consultation may occur at home, at your general practitioner's practice or in hospital.*

## ■ How does a telepsychiatry consultation work?

The psychiatrist will speak with you and ask you questions in the same way they would at a face-to-face consultation.

## ■ What are the benefits of using telepsychiatry?

Telepsychiatry improves your access to a psychiatrist and will reduce travel time and costs. It also means that you do not have to be away from work for long periods of time.

## ■ Who's eligible?

Everyone is eligible, however Medicare claims are only possible if you:

- live outside a major city and are more than 15km from the psychiatrist
- are not currently admitted in hospital.

People living in residential aged care facilities or receiving Aboriginal medical services anywhere in Australia are not affected by these restrictions.

Visit **Doctor Connect** to find out if you are located outside a major city.  
(you must not be located in RA1 code).

## ■ What preparation is required for a video consultation?

If you would like a family member or your carer present, let them know.

If you are having a consultation with your psychiatrist and general practitioner, arrive at the general practitioner's practice at least 15 minutes early to allow for preparation time.

## ■ Is using telepsychiatry compulsory?

No. If preferred, a face-to-face consultation can be organised and it will require you to travel.

There may however be a longer waiting time to see a psychiatrist.

A video consultation will only be offered if the psychiatrist and general practitioner consider it safe and suitable.

## ■ What if the appointment is cancelled?

Video consultations require significant coordination by the psychiatrist and/or general practitioner, so it is important to keep the video consultation appointment.

If you need to cancel, please let the psychiatrist/general practitioner know immediately, because rescheduling video consultations is more complicated than rescheduling a face-to-face appointment.

