

Mental health services and digital telehealth

An upgraded Digital Telehealth Network is being introduced to enhance access to mental health services with more than 100 new video conferencing units providing improved call and image quality across over 80 health services sites.

What is digital telehealth?

Digital telehealth is a general term describing the delivery of health services via telecommunications technologies.

The updated technology includes new video conferencing units located across the Country Health SA Local Health Network that enable communications so that consumers can talk to a mental health clinician without the need to travel too far from home.

When is digital telehealth useful?

The Digital Telehealth Network provides a different option for you to access mental health services in a more convenient way, saving time travelling to a different location and providing direct access to a leading mental health clinician.

Is digital telehealth only recommended for mental health services?

No. Digital telehealth can be used for various health needs including oncology, rehabilitation, diabetes, chronic pain management, and much more.

What are the limitations of digital telehealth?

Just like any new technology, there may be some teething problems. The service may unexpectedly drop out and another person may be called to reconnect the session. If there is a problem with the connection, this will be logged and monitored so that necessary improvements can be made to the system.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

Similar to any normal face-to-face consultation with a doctor, 'private' or 'sensitive' issues about your treatment can be discussed during a video conference consultation.

Please be aware that:

- > Your privacy and confidentiality are maintained.
- > You can expect to be informed if anyone else is in the room with the clinician. No one else will be in the room without your consent.
- > Your consultation will not be recorded.

What happens in a digital telehealth consultation?

- > When you arrive for your appointment, you will be shown into a private room where the video conferencing equipment is set-up.
- > If you are in a hospital bed at the time, your appointment may occur either by the bedside or in a nearby interview room.
- > You will be asked to sit in front of a camera and will be shown how the equipment works (the clinician will operate the equipment).
- > You will see yourself and the clinician on the plasma screen, and your local mental health clinician or local doctor will be in the room.
- > You can request to have the image of yourself removed from your screen, so that you only see the clinician. The clinician will still be able to see you.
- > You will be able to talk to the clinician exactly as if you were talking to them in person.



How does the process work?

Before your appointment

- > Your local mental health clinician or local doctor will discuss the reasons that digital telehealth could be a suitable technology tool to use as part of your treatment, and answer any questions.
- > If you agree to participate your local mental health clinician or local doctor will book the consultation just like any other appointment, and will attend the consultation on the day.
- > You may also like to have a family member or carer with you during the consultation.

During your appointment

- > You may ask to stop at anytime and restart when you are ready.
- > You can also end the consultation at any time.
- > Changing your mind about the type of service does not affect your rights to access any health service in the future.

After your appointment

- > The clinician will confer with your local doctor or mental health clinician and work together to achieve the best outcomes for you.

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For more information

**Country Mental Health Services
Country Health SA Local Health Network
PO Box 17
Fullarton SA 5063**

Email: chsa@health.sa.gov.au
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/digitaltelehealthnetwork

Emergency Triage and Liaison Service (ETLS)
Telephone: 13 14 65

Non-English speaking: for information in languages other than English, call the interpreting and Translating Centre and ask them to call The Department for Health and Ageing. This service is available at no cost to you, contact (08) 8226 1990.

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Australian Government

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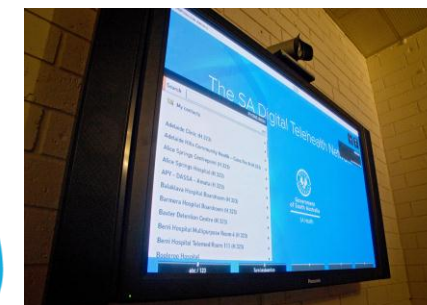
Digital Regions Initiative



**Government
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SA Health

Digital Telehealth Network for country mental health services



Information for
Consumers and
Carers