

Australia pitches \$24 M for telehealth to tackle growing cases of omicron

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Telehealth has been a vital support during the pandemic providing greater flexibility in healthcare delivery



As Omicron case numbers grow, the Australian Government will make temporary changes to Telehealth to give general practitioners (GPs) and specialists additional flexibility to support their patients safely, including the continued supply of PPE and online support.

An additional \$24 million has been committed to fund these changes and builds on the \$34 billion provided since the pandemic began.

The Government will introduce temporary specialist inpatient telehealth Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items (video and phone) and initial and complex specialist telephone consultation items, and longer telephone consultations for GP's (level C) until 30 June 2022.

These services will be made available nationally rather than targeted to Commonwealth-declared hotspots as they were previously, recognising the high infection rate and need to provide healthcare support across the community.

Over the next three months, over 20 million units of PPE will be provided for primary care, including nine million p2/n95 masks for GPs and three million for pharmacists across Australia.