

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

Before you think about setting up your room for telehealth, it is worth considering which patients could benefit:

- Someone who has to travel a long distance to get to your clinic (which often has financial, work and personal costs)
- Someone who because of age, injury, disability or personal responsibilities might prefer to talk to you from their own home
- Patients who do not need a physical examination and/or can be monitored using photographs and measurements easily taken at home
- Patients who are far away but need urgent review
- Patients with chronic or long-term conditions that require regular monitoring

You might already have videoconferencing facilities at your workplace. If not, there are many software and hardware options. Which is right for you depends on your budget as well as what your patients and partnering facilities can access.

Commonly used software includes Skype, Facetime, Vsee, GoToMeeting and WebEx. You can use the in-built camera in your computer or mobile device, but good webcams are relatively cheap and will greatly improve image quality. The microphone in your computer or mobile is usually sufficient.

For more information see ACCRM's [Technology Directory](#) and [Telehealth Standards Framework](#).

SETTING UP YOUR ROOM:

Follow these simple steps to set up your room for telehealth consultation. A good setup will help ease communication, create a professional look and ensure that you have a trouble-free session.

1. Check the internet access options at your workplace. Your IT or practice manager should be able to help identify the faster options, such as using ADSL instead of 3G.

Tip: If you or your patient has a poor internet connection, try using standard phone call for voice and videoconferencing (on mute) for images.

2. Put your camera at eye level to help you make easy eye contact with your patient
3. Turn on your camera and open your videoconferencing/webcam program so that you can see yourself on the screen
4. Sit a comfortable distance from the camera, so that your facial expressions are clear but you aren't getting a close-up
5. Check that you are in the centre with space either side of your shoulders and a little space above your head, ideally like this:



6. Take a look at what you are wearing. Busy patterns or bright colours should be avoided. They can be distracting to the patient and mean more information needs to be sent (which takes up bandwidth)
7. Now look at the room around you. A plain background with neutral colours is best, so if possible move any distracting furniture
8. If there is a window behind you, close the blinds and turn on an overhead light so that your face isn't in shadow. If your face still isn't easy to see, try placing a lamp in front of you
9. Check that the room is quiet so you can be heard by the patient. Avoid interruptions by placing a sign on the door or letting other staff know you will be in a videoconference

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TROUBLE SHOOTING TIPS

For more information about telehealth, including important issues of security, consent and continuity of care:

[ACCRM Technology Directory](#)

[ACCRM Telehealth Modules](#) or [Module handbook](#)

[ACCRM Telehealth Standards Framework](#)

[AHPRA Guidelines for technology based patient consultations](#)

[NACCHO Getting Telehealth Technology Right](#)

[MBS Online: Technology and Technical Issues for Telehealth](#)

[RANZCO Telehealth and Teleophthalmology Resource](#)

[RACGP Standards for general practices offering video consultations](#)

[RACP Telehealth website](#)