

Use of visual and audio technology in telehealth medication review consultations

This resource highlights key areas for consideration when conducting a Home Medicines Review (HMR) outside of a person’s home. This should be read in conjunction with the PSA’s *Guidelines for comprehensive medication management reviews* which describe best practice for the delivery of medication management services.

There are multiple options for telehealth interactions with patients. Pharmacists using applications for telehealth medication reviews should be familiar with the user interface of their preferred system, allowing for clear and concise explanations to enable the patient to participate adequately in the process.

Pharmacists should also become familiar with common applications that may already be being used by the patient

(e.g. Skype, FaceTime, WhatsApp etc.) and, if the patient prefers, use these for the consultation.

Preferred systems for pharmacists are those that do not require the patient to download any additional software or register for any services that they may not already be using.

Determining which process and technology will be used in the review, and whether the review can be conducted by telehealth can be summarised in the following five steps.

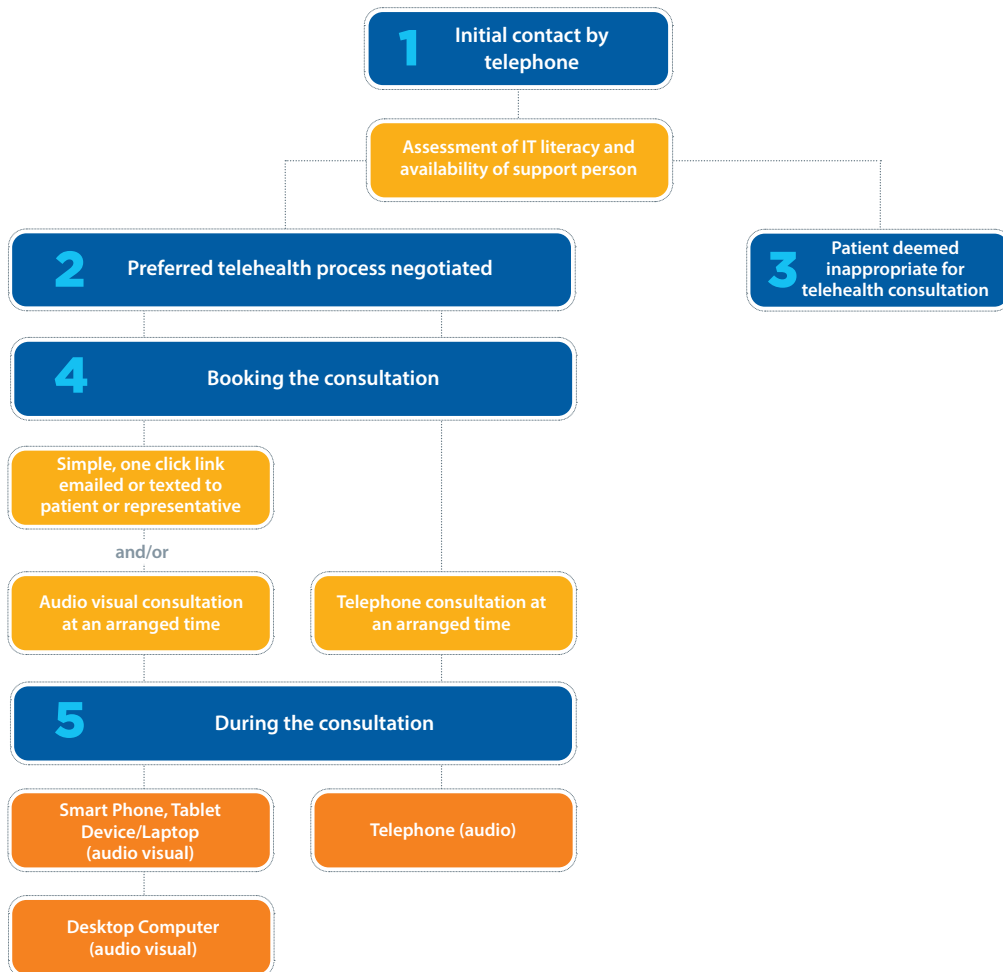


Figure 1: Determining the process for, and appropriateness of, a Telehealth Medication Review Consultation

The patient

Being involved in a telehealth consultation requires that the patient or the patient's support person (e.g. family member, aboriginal health worker etc.) has:

- a) access to the information technology and internet required,
- b) the sensory, motor and cognitive skills and IT literacy required to engage online, and
- c) is willing to have a telehealth medication review.

It is not expected that telehealth medication review consultations are short consultations, so the pharmacist will need to assess that the patient (and support person if required) are able to sustain the interaction for sufficient time (this includes things like fully charged batteries etc.).

1. Initial contact by telephone

The pharmacist contacts the patient by telephone. The pharmacist explains the process of a telehealth medication review. Initially, the pharmacist should ascertain whether the patient can clearly hear and understand the conversation in order to determine if a telehealth consultation would be appropriate.

2. Preferred telehealth process negotiated

The pharmacist should ascertain the patient's preferred digital hardware systems. The hardware may be in the form of a smart phone or other portable device, or a desktop computer with camera and microphone. Patients who are more information technology literate may already have access to an audio visual application (app) and email services.

If the patient does not have access to this form of technology, but they have a support person (e.g. a family member) that does have access to a mobile device, it may be possible for the pharmacist to arrange the consultation with that support person present at the patient's home.

The pharmacist may need to acquire the appropriate technology (app) to match patient and/or support person preferences. For patients who do not have access to any audio visual devices, or the assistance of an appropriate support person that could provide such a device, the option of a telephone consultation may be considered.

3. Patient deemed inappropriate for telehealth consultation

For those patients where telehealth consultation is not appropriate, a delay in the medication review until a time when physical attendance at the home is possible may be required.

4. Booking the telehealth consultation

The pharmacist and patient should arrange an appropriate time for the booking. The pharmacist may choose to email or text a hyperlink for the patient to activate at the agreed time.

At the time of booking, it would be appropriate to email copy of the "How to prepare for, and what to expect from a telehealth medication review consultation" information sheet and the **Home Medicines Review Patient consent form**.

5. During the consultation

While the relevant documents would be emailed to the patient and support person (if needed), the pharmacist should have ready access to the forms at the beginning of the consultation. The pharmacist must ensure that the patient understands the consent process and the pharmacist should document verbal consent was obtained from the patient (signing is not required in this instance).

