# **The Complete Guide to Your Telehealth Appointment in Australia: Everything You Need to Know**

Telehealth appointments have revolutionised how Australians access healthcare. Once a convenient alternative, they’ve now become a central pillar of how we manage our health, offering flexible, safe, and effective ways to see a doctor — without leaving home.

Whether you’re living in a regional town, juggling work and family life, or simply looking to skip the waiting room, telehealth puts expert medical advice within easy reach. In this comprehensive guide, we’ll walk you through **exactly how telehealth appointments work in Australia**, how to prepare, what to expect, and how to make the most of your virtual consultation.

## **Why Telehealth Matters in Australia**

Australia is vast — and access to healthcare can vary dramatically depending on where you live. Telehealth has helped bridge that gap, ensuring that high-quality medical care isn’t limited by geography.

Telehealth has soared in popularity because it offers:

* **Convenience** — consult a doctor from your lounge room, your office, or even your car.
* **Accessibility** — reach healthcare providers no matter where you live.
* **Safety** — minimise exposure to infectious diseases, especially important for immunocompromised individuals.
* **Continuity of care** — stay connected with your regular GP or specialist without long delays.
* **Mental health support** — connect discreetly and comfortably with psychologists, psychiatrists, or counsellors.
* **Cost efficiency** — potentially reduce travel costs, time off work, and other out-of-pocket expenses.

Government support has solidified telehealth’s role in Australia’s healthcare system. Medicare rebates now cover a wide range of telehealth services, making it a sustainable option for millions of Australians.

## **How to Book Your Telehealth Appointment**

Booking a telehealth appointment in Australia is simple — and there’s more than one path to get started.

### **Through Your Regular GP or Specialist**

Your first stop should be your **existing healthcare provider**. Many general practices and specialist clinics now offer telehealth services to existing patients. Because your doctor already knows your medical history, this is often the easiest and safest route for **continuity of care**.

* Check their website or call to ask if telehealth appointments are available.
* Ask about how appointments are conducted (phone or video).
* Confirm fees, especially if you rely on bulk billing.

### **Via Dedicated Telehealth Platforms**

If you need care urgently or don’t have a regular doctor, you can use **dedicated online telehealth services**. Trusted platforms operating in Australia include:

* **Instant Consult**
* **TeleDoc Australia**
* **Phenix Health**
* **24-7 MedCare**

These services typically offer:

* Short wait times
* Video or phone consultations
* Online doctor consultations for common conditions
* Medical certificates
* Electronic prescriptions
* Specialist referrals

Most allow bookings via their websites or mobile apps.

### **Using Healthdirect**

The Australian Government’s **Healthdirect** website is another valuable resource. Their “Find a health service” tool helps you locate nearby doctors and filter providers offering telehealth. It’s especially useful if you’re looking for specific services like after-hours care or mental health support.

### **Booking Process**

Regardless of where you book, you’ll usually provide:

* Your name, date of birth, and contact details
* Medicare details (if applicable)
* A brief reason for your appointment
* Preferred times for your consultation

**Tip:** Ask upfront about fees, Medicare rebates, and any potential gap costs so there are no surprises.

## **How to Prepare for Your Telehealth Appointment**

A little preparation goes a long way to ensure your virtual appointment runs smoothly. Here’s how to get ready.

### **Check Your Technology**

Telehealth requires minimal equipment, but it needs to work reliably.

* Use a **computer, tablet, or smartphone** with a camera and microphone.
* Ensure a stable internet connection. Video calls need sufficient speed to avoid lag or dropouts.
* Test your camera, microphone, and speakers beforehand.
* Close other apps that might slow your device.
* If other household members are streaming video or gaming, ask them to pause during your appointment.

Many clinics will provide a test link or instructions for their telehealth platform.

### **Prepare Your Environment**

Choose a quiet, private spot for your appointment. Good lighting helps your doctor see you clearly. Avoid sitting with a window behind you, which can cast shadows and obscure your face.

If someone will join you for support (a family member, friend, or carer), let the clinic know beforehand and ensure they’re visible on camera.

### **Have Your Details Ready**

Gather everything you might need, such as:

* Medicare card
* Private health insurance details (if relevant)
* A list of current medications and dosages
* Allergies
* Notes about your symptoms, including:  
  + When they started
  + How severe they are
  + Whether anything makes them better or worse
* Questions you want to ask

If you use health monitoring devices (like a thermometer, blood pressure cuff, or blood glucose meter), have them nearby. Your doctor might ask you to take readings during the call.

## **What to Expect During Your Telehealth Appointment**

A telehealth consultation is very similar to a face-to-face visit — just conducted over video or phone. Here’s how it typically unfolds.

### **Starting the Call**

At your scheduled time, your doctor or the telehealth platform will initiate the call. You might receive:

* A video link via SMS or email
* A phone call directly from the doctor or clinic

### **Identity Verification**

Your doctor will confirm:

* Their identity and qualifications
* Your full name and date of birth
* Your address or Medicare number

This step protects your privacy and ensures they’re speaking to the right patient.

### **Discussing Your Health**

This is the core of your appointment. Your doctor will:

* Ask about your symptoms
* Review your medical history
* Discuss lifestyle factors relevant to your health

If it’s a video call, your doctor might:

* Visually examine issues like skin rashes, swelling, or injuries
* Ask you to move limbs or press on certain areas to help assess pain or swelling

They’ll then provide **diagnosis, treatment options, and next steps**.

## **What Telehealth Doctors Can Do for You**

Telehealth doctors in Australia can handle a wide range of services. Here’s what they’re able to help with during a virtual appointment:

### **Prescriptions**

* Doctors can issue **electronic prescriptions (e-scripts)**, sent via SMS or email.
* You simply show the pharmacy your digital token to collect your medication.
* For controlled drugs (like certain pain medications), an in-person visit might still be required.

### **Referrals**

If you need further tests or specialist care, doctors can issue:

* Electronic referrals for pathology tests (e.g. blood work)
* Radiology referrals (e.g. ultrasounds, MRIs)
* Specialist letters for other medical professionals

These referrals are often emailed to you or directly to the provider.

### **Medical Certificates**

Doctors can issue medical certificates electronically for:

* Work or school leave
* Fitness-to-work clearances

### **Management Plans**

If you have a chronic condition like diabetes, asthma, or heart disease, your doctor can:

* Create or update management plans
* Provide self-care advice
* Schedule regular follow-ups

### **Mental Health Care**

Telehealth has made accessing mental health support significantly easier. Doctors can:

* Discuss mental health concerns
* Create mental health care plans
* Refer you to psychologists or psychiatrists
* Provide counselling sessions

Feel free to raise any mental health topics — they’re just as important as physical health.

## **After Your Telehealth Appointment**

Your appointment might end, but your care doesn’t stop there. Here’s what happens next.

### **Prescriptions**

If you’ve been given an e-script, you’ll receive a **token** (usually a QR code) via SMS or email. Show this token to your pharmacy to collect your medication. If you lose your token, your doctor or pharmacy can reissue it.

### **Referrals**

If tests or specialist visits are needed:

* Book appointments promptly.
* Keep copies of any referral letters for your records.

### **Follow-Up**

Your doctor will outline:

* Whether you’ll need a follow-up telehealth appointment.
* If an in-person visit is necessary for further assessment.
* Any monitoring you should do at home (e.g. symptom tracking, blood pressure readings).

### **Keeping Records**

All details from your telehealth consult go into your medical file. This helps maintain **continuity of care**, so the next doctor you see — virtual or in-person — has a clear picture of your health history.

## **Costs and Medicare Rebates for Telehealth**

A big reason telehealth has become so popular in Australia is government support through the **Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS)**. Here’s how the costs break down.

### **Private Fees**

For private consultations:

* A standard GP telehealth consult usually costs between **$45 and $75**.
* Specialists may charge more, depending on length and complexity.

### **Bulk Billing**

Many GPs offer bulk-billed telehealth for:

* Concession card holders
* Children under 12 months
* Certain mental health services

Bulk billing means Medicare covers the full cost, leaving you with no out-of-pocket expenses.

### **Medicare Rebates**

Telehealth rebates under the MBS are now permanent. However, you often need an **existing clinical relationship** with the doctor. This typically means:

* You’ve seen the doctor or another GP at the same practice in person within the last 12 months.

Exceptions apply for:

* Babies under 12 months
* People experiencing homelessness
* Urgent after-hours care

Always check rebate eligibility when you book to avoid unexpected costs.

## **Keeping Your Telehealth Appointment Private and Secure**

Privacy is a cornerstone of Australia’s healthcare system. The same laws that protect in-person visits apply to telehealth, including:

* The **Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)**
* The **Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)**

Reputable telehealth providers:

* Use secure, encrypted platforms for video calls.
* Confirm patient identities before consultations.
* Keep health records securely stored under Australian standards.
* Seek your consent for recording any consultation.

### **Your Role**

Help protect your own privacy by:

* Avoiding public Wi-Fi for appointments.
* Using only trusted links from known providers.
* Reviewing privacy policies on any telehealth platform you use.

If you ever receive suspicious messages claiming to be from your telehealth provider, contact the clinic directly to verify.

## **The Future of Telehealth in Australia**

Telehealth is no longer “the future” — it’s the **present** of healthcare in Australia. But the innovation isn’t stopping here.

### **Hybrid Care**

Many practices are adopting **hybrid models**, blending telehealth and in-person care for flexible, tailored treatment plans.

### **Remote Patient Monitoring**

Wearable devices are transforming chronic care. Patients can track vital signs like heart rate, blood pressure, and blood glucose from home, transmitting data directly to their doctor.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

AI is starting to:

* Help triage symptoms
* Draft clinical notes
* Support mental health tools

All with strong ethical oversight and privacy safeguards.

### **Integration with My Health Record**

Telehealth increasingly integrates with **My Health Record**, ensuring seamless information sharing between GPs, specialists, and hospitals for more coordinated care.

## **The Bottom Line**

Telehealth appointments have firmly embedded themselves into the way Australians access medical care. They’re safe, convenient, and effective — and for many, they’ve become the first choice for handling everything from everyday ailments to specialist referrals.

By understanding how telehealth works, preparing thoroughly, and choosing reputable services, you’ll be ready to make the most of your virtual healthcare experience.

**Ready to skip the waiting room?** At Medicly, we’re here to make telehealth simple, secure, and personal. Book your next appointment today and take charge of your health — wherever you are.

**Disclaimer:** This guide provides general information only. Always consult a qualified healthcare professional regarding your individual circumstances.