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COOPERATIVE
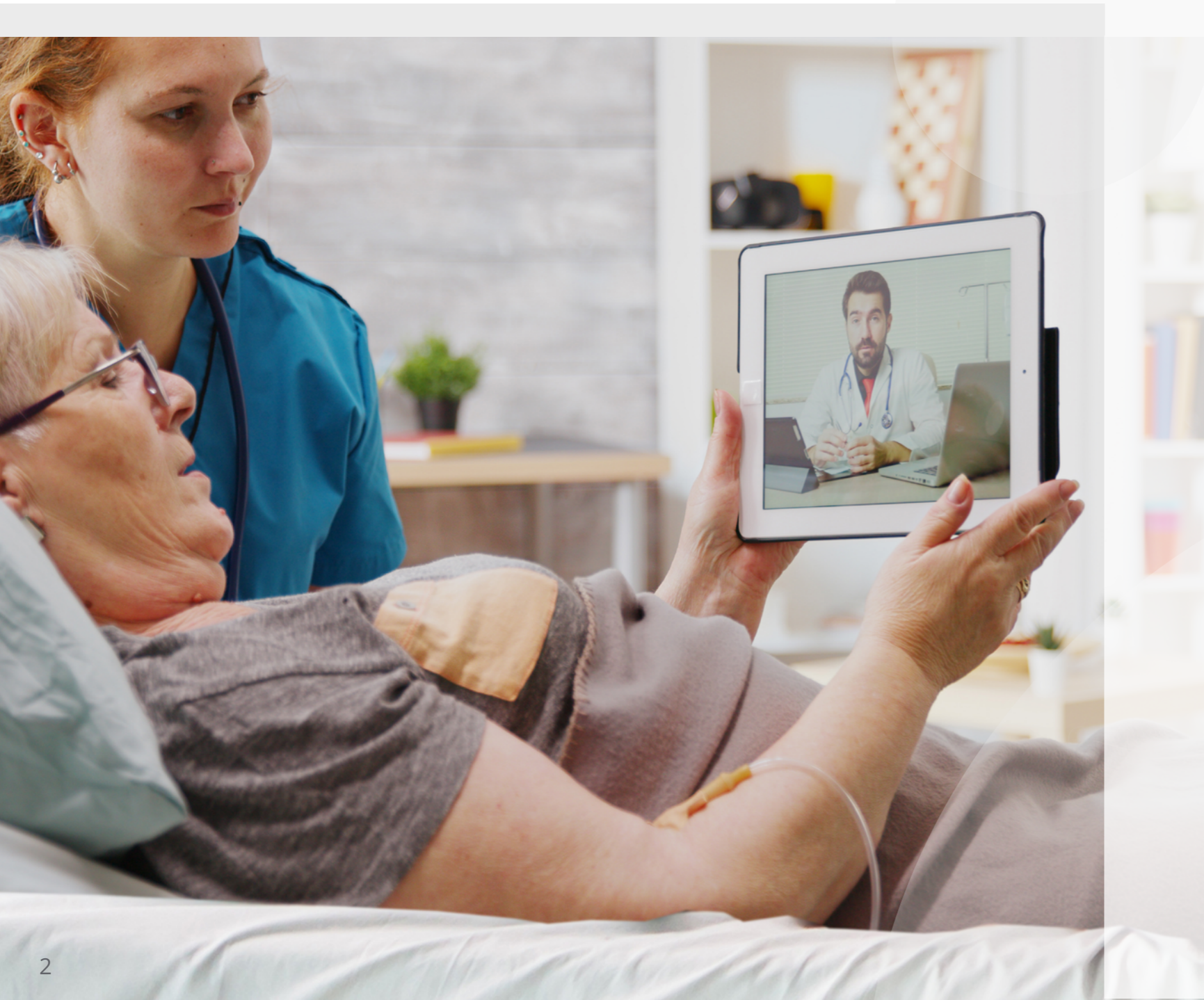An Australian Government Initiative

Residential Aged Care

Telehealth Training Program

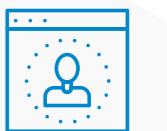# Program overview

Aims

This program has three aims:

1 During COVID, the use of telehealth in aged care grew fast. But how telehealth was conducted varied greatly. This program aims to create consistency in how the aged care sector uses telehealth.

2 Evidence-based practice for telehealth in aged care, is inconsistent. This program aims to establish best available practice guidelines for all aspects of telehealth, tailored to the needs of the residential aged care sector.

3 Telehealth has both strengths and risks. And there are no consistent or rigorous methodologies for amplifying those strengths and controlling those risks. This program aims to help aged care homes embrace the opportunities telehealth provides and manage its risks.

Structure

Diagnostic

An optional up-front diagnostic helps personalise the training pathway to each individual's needs.

Streams

Two learning streams to recognise the unique needs of residential aged care versus clinicians.

Each stream covers all aspects of telehealth including set up, governance, management and usage.

Themes

Inside each stream are a series of eLearning modules, grouped into themes.

1. General
2. Infrastructure
3. Logistics and support
4. Best practice
5. Models of care
6. Troubleshooting

Microlearning modules

Short
Each module is about 6 minutes long. This enables them to be completed in bursts, working around busy schedules.

Practical
Each module explores the benefits, gives an example, uses video to explain best practice and includes an implementation checklist and resources.

Accessible
Plain language, closed captions and videos make the materials more accessible.

Supplementary resources

A variety of resources help clinicians and aged care providers implement telehealth.

Supplementary resources

This telehealth training program also has supplementary resources to help Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs) promote the training.

Social media tiles

These images can be used on internal and public social media platforms, to promote the benefits and importance of telehealth best practice and the training program.

Digital posters

These posters can be shared digitally or printed and pinned up, to promote the training program.

Accreditation

There are 9 sets of short modules in this training and each set provides 30 minutes endorsed CPD for GPs and nurses (practitioners, registered and enrolled).

GPs and nurses may also claim additional CPD hours where they have explored additional research, reflected on their practice, or engaged in implementation of the learning.

This training is endorsed by the following organisations:

ACRRM

RACGP
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Australian College of Nursing

Who's it for?

This telehealth training program has two broad audiences:

Onsite staff and clinicians

working inside aged care settings.

This includes not just personal care workers, but also nurses, specialists, managers and other staff working in aged care settings. The program is tailored to the needs of this audience by focusing not only on the practical aspects of telehealth, but also how interactions with clinicians can be supported and enabled by aged care staff, residents, their families and carers.

Remote-end clinicians and other health professionals

providing medical, health and wellbeing services to the aged care sector, practicing offsite.

This includes not just GPs, but also medical specialists and allied health professionals like counsellors, dietitians and physiotherapists. The program is tailored to the needs of this audience by focusing not only on the practical aspects of telehealth, but also on the models of care most typically associated with aged care patients like wound care and geriatrics.

Why should you do it?

Comprehensive and targeted

This free telehealth training program is groundbreaking. No other program is as comprehensive or as targeted to the aged care industry.

Personalised

Using an optional up-front diagnostic, learners can skip the topics they already have expertise in, allowing them to craft a personalised learning pathway.

Holistic

This telehealth training program also has accompanying resources to help aged care providers and clinicians plan and implement telehealth and manage associated organisational change.

" *Telehealth has given our staff the support to connect with a clinician. We are able to escalate clinical concerns which provides early intervention and avoids unnecessary hospital transfers. We have used telehealth for wound reviews, infection management and end-of-life care. I believe this has provided our residents with choice, dignity and respect.*"

- Trudy Hetherington, Care Manager

How does it work?

Customise

Where needed, customise the training and the supplementary resources to your organisation's needs.

Rollout

Link to the hosted content or upload the eLearning modules to your Learning Management System and enrol relevant staff.

Maintain

Maintain telehealth best practices by updating systems and materials in line with regulatory and best practice changes.

Refresh

Reuse the materials as required to refresh training for staff involved in telehealth, and to deliver training to new staff.

Marketing

Use the supplementary resources to promote the training program within your organisation and to residents and families.

Support

Support uptake of telehealth as business-as-usual by ensuring all relevant policies, procedures and processes are in place.

Accredit

GPs and nurses can claim CPD hours for this training upon completion.

Monitor

Support staff as they work through the learning and monitor progress towards telehealth best practice business-as-usual.

Implementing telehealth

Use the following tips and strategies to get started and build on implementing telehealth.

Consult

- Involve stakeholders including staff, residents, families and external medical service providers.
- Identify needs, benefits and concerns.
- Identify policy, technology and skill gaps.

Prepare

- Have a clear focus on when, why and how telehealth is being rolled out.
- Consider resident accessibility needs.
- Ensure you have reliable internet access.
- Ensure your hardware and software is easy to use.
- Adopt and promote best practice standards.
- Integrate telehealth with financial and strategic planning.
- Integrate telehealth into existing governance structures.

Train

- Educate on key concerns like privacy, data security and technology barriers.
- Train and support both staff and residents in using the software and on relevant policies and procedures.
- Train staff on using the hardware and software including troubleshooting.
- Promote training and monitor completion.

Implement

- Begin with specific use cases like routine consultations and gradually expand.
- Engage enthusiastic staff to champion the change. Also mitigate resistance from reluctant staff.
- Provide ongoing procedural and technical support.
- Promote the benefits to staff and address concerns.
- Highlight positive experiences to residents, families, and staff.

Monitor

- Conduct quality and compliance evaluations.
- Measure telehealth outcomes to showcase the benefits.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen service delivery.
- Monitor, update and maintain technology including backups.
- Monitor service delivery costs to assure financial sustainability and to identify opportunities.
- Monitor and adapt to changes in compliance, technology and resident health needs.

"*It has been a game changer for staff and residents, we love it!*"

- Heila Brooks, Care Manager

FAQs

"I'm interested in providing myself or my staff with training in telehealth - What do I need to know?"

What are the origins of the RACH Telehealth Training program?

- 15 Primary Health Networks (PHNs), from around Australia, decided to collaborate and co-commission to create a nationally consistent telehealth training program with a specific focus on telehealth from a Residential Aged Care Home perspective. Obvious Choice were awarded the tender and have developed a series of microlearning modules for both Residential Aged Care Home clinicians and staff, and remote-end clinicians providing telehealth from a location offsite.

Why microlearning modules?

- PHNs recognise that time is very limited for people working in a residential aged care home setting. By providing 6 minute learning modules, learners can take their time, work at a pace that suits and easily revisit sections they'd like to repeat.

What are the opportunities and benefits?

- The aged care workforce can be transient. This training will enable a consistent understanding of how to support telehealth in aged care, supporting RACHs to better utilise telehealth for their residents.
- The benefits for residents are many, but the biggest benefit is enabling people to see a range of clinicians, regardless of the clinician's location. The support to both the resident and the RACH will keep people feeling well and healthy for as long as possible.

Who should access the training?

- Anyone who provides telehealth support in a Commonwealth-funded residential aged care home setting. You might be a nurse in a RACH, or a specialist who provides telehealth to residents in a RACH. You may also be a GP who can provide support at either the resident-end or the remote-end of the consultation.

I'm interested in hosting the training on our organisation's LMS. How is this arranged?

- By agreeing to the terms and conditions, any eligible organisations can apply to have the modules provided to them, for no cost.

What are the eligibility requirements? (Who is it for exactly?)

- RACHs, Allied Health Providers, GPs, Specialists and PHNs, or organisations that support these clinicians. If you're not sure if your organisation is eligible, please get in touch with your local Primary Health Network.

What are the options for accessing the training if I'm not a host organisation?

- If you work in a Commonwealth-funded RACH, you can access the training from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission learning platform, Alis.
- PHNs are seeking other opportunities to provide the training to all types of clinicians who provide, or could provide, services to RACHs.

Are there any costs?

- The PHN Telehealth Training Project is providing this training free of charge to eligible organisations who would like to host. A condition of hosting is that the training must be provided to learners at no cost.

What are the options for structuring the training?

- The training has been designed to follow specific learning pathways, with different options to suit your learning cohort. Advice can be provided on the best way to structure the modules on your LMS, to suit your needs.

How does accreditation work?

- The modules have been accredited for GPs with the RACGP and ACRRM and for nurses with the ACN. Certificates of completion are available for inclusion with the modules in the LMS. We can discuss which certificates are needed for each host.

Are there any terms and conditions for host organisations?

- Yes, any organisation wanting to include the Telehealth Training Modules on their LMS will be required to accept and agree to the Terms and Conditions, available on the website prior to download.

How can interested organisations find out more?

- A website will be developed where you can access information along with the training package.
- In the meantime, you can contact your local Primary Health Network for more information.

VIC

North Western Melbourne PHN

South Eastern Melbourne PHN

Eastern Melbourne PHN

Western Victoria PHN

Gippsland PHN

Murray PHN

NSW

Coordinare – South Eastern NSW PHN

Western New South Wales PHN

Murrumbidgee PHN

Healthy North Coast – North Coast PHN

QLD

Gold Coast PHN

Brisbane North PHN

Northern Queensland PHN

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN

TAS

Primary Health Tasmania – Tasmania PHN