



BENDIGO HEALTH TELEHEALTH SERVICES RELATED TO COVID-19 ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Version 1.0

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Bendigo Health Telehealth Project

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Background Information

In response to COVID 19 and the necessity to focus on patient and staff safety, Bendigo Health are minimizing the number of face to face patient appointments occurring, until further notice.

What is telehealth? Telehealth is a consultation between a patient and a specialist, and will include the use of an audio and video connection via your computer, mobile phone or tablet.

Health direct video call provides a single, consistent entry point on the Bendigo Health webpage for all your telehealth identified clinics patients. From there, patients enter an online waiting area for their appointment. All patients enter the same way, reducing the need for administrative staff to generate a separate link, code or dial-in information for each patient.

Unlike traditional video conferencing, patients do not need an account, special software or dial-in details, which reduces the need for extra resources or systems to support video consulting.

Healthcare professionals engage in the same way they do normally, except they join patients in their clinic's online waiting area rather than its physical one. Clinic staff are notified when a patient arrives in the online waiting area and staff can even transfer patients to other specialists online.

Role of Administration

- 1) Understand the 1-4 "Outcomes"
- 2) Phone patients and explain which "outcome" they have been categorised into
- 3) Follow up email if telehealth is going to be used and attach the BH patient information sheet. Appendix 1; Appendix 2; Appendix 3;
- 4) Assist clinicians and book all telehealth patients –currently recommended as consecutive appointments at start of clinic.
- 5) Manage virtual waiting room when consultations are happening.
- 6) Manage interpreter in waiting room.
- 7) Ensure appropriate MBS billing is still added for MBS clinics. Appendix 4.
- 8) Manage Ad-hoc issues that may arise. Appendix 5 - FAQ's

Understand the 1-4 “Outcomes”

Bendigo Health have advised that from 23rd March 2020, outpatient appointments will follow the hierarchy as detailed below in triaging patient appointments. Depending on the clinical judgement of the Medical Team and patient circumstances, the patient will either be cancelled, contacted for a telephone consult, telehealth consult or a face-face appointment. Each of these possibilities is described below as Outcome 1, 2, 3 or 4 and are covered in more detail in separate pages.

Outcome 1 Cancel appointment

Patient appointment should be cancelled if this is an option.

Outcome 2 Telephone appointment

Telephone appointment should be the first option for a patient consultation. Should the patient need to be physically examined, Telehealth is encouraged as the secondary option.

Private MBS clinic can bill for this consult (specialist, consultant physician, psychiatrist, obstetrics and midwives). See MBS billing items later in document.

Outcome 3 Telehealth appointment

Telehealth appointment is the preferred option when telephone is not deemed appropriate (i.e. patient requires a physical examination) Bendigo Health advises that Healthdirect is the only telehealth platform to be used at this time.

- [Healthdirect](#)**

***Healthdirect requires a desktop computer (with webcam), laptop/surface pro or mobile phone. Google chrome must also be installed. It will not work on thin client computers.*

Outcome 4 Face-to-Face appointment

Face-to-face appointments is the preferred option when telephone and telehealth is not deemed appropriate and/or should the patient be required to be seen in person.

Clinicians to use discretion. Limiting contact with patients/carers is encouraged.

On 11 March 2020, the Prime Minister, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP, announced a number of new MBS items that can now be claimed for telephone and telehealth consults to fight COVID-19 to protect all Australians, including vulnerable groups such as the elderly, those with chronic conditions and Indigenous communities, from the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Initial Telephone contact – for a Telehealth appointment

- Advise patient we are trying to reduce the potential exposure to COVID-19 by undertaking consultations via telehealth
- Explain telehealth is a normal consultation between a patient and their consultant using video conferencing service.
- Inform the patient that their consultant has advised they are an appropriate candidate for a telehealth consultation.
- Ask the patient if they have internet access at home.
- If no, then telehealth (video) is not an option. Advise patient that the Doctor will undertake a normal phone call, confirm the best phone number to call on and ask them to be near their phone at their scheduled appointment time.
- If yes, ask if they have a computer, laptop or smart phone.
- If they have a computer or laptop this must have webcam access.
- Once you have confirmed they have internet access and an appropriate device inform the patient they will need to undertake a test on their device (this is a very important step to ensure there are no technical issues when actual consultation occurs).
- Advise the patient you will be sending them an email with all details and ‘how’ to instructions regarding testing their device and their telehealth appointment. (see example email below)
- Ensure you follow business as usual processes in iPM (if applicable) as per your department.

Example email

Hi (patient name)

As part of ensuring patients health is not compromised by the current COVID-19 situation, we would like to conduct your upcoming appointment via Telehealth (video call).

Date: Wednesday, 25th March 2020

Time: 2:00pm

Please find attached the instructions that explain how to access this service. If you could please undertake the ‘test’ process to make sure your device is set up correctly well before your appointment.

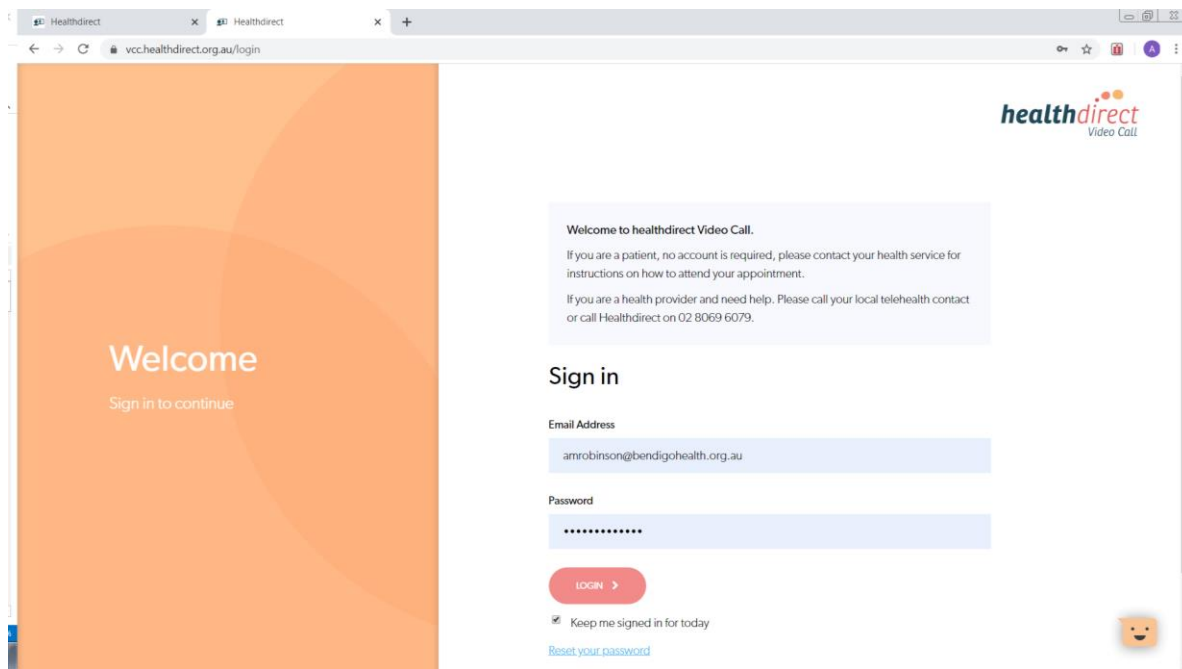
Alternatively here is a link to a video that shows you how to use the telehealth service <https://youtu.be/2b-2lp1AJog>

If you experience any technology issues or would prefer a telephone call, please contact us on 5454 XXXX as soon as possible.

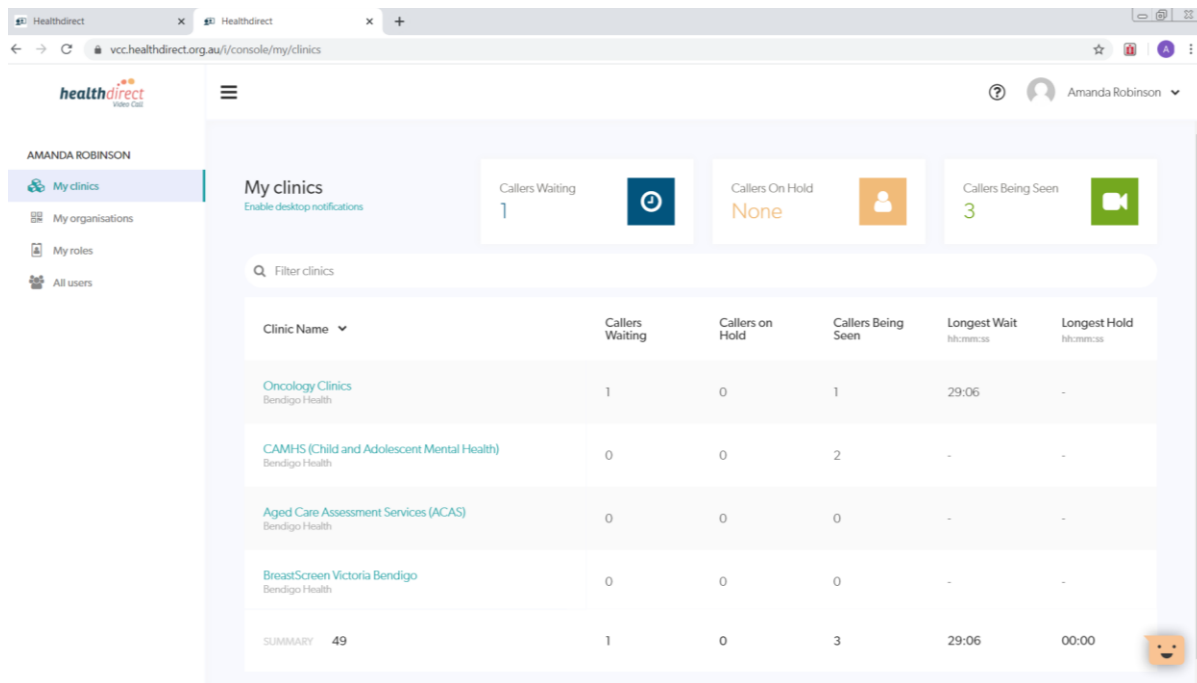
Thank you

Managing the Virtual Waiting Room

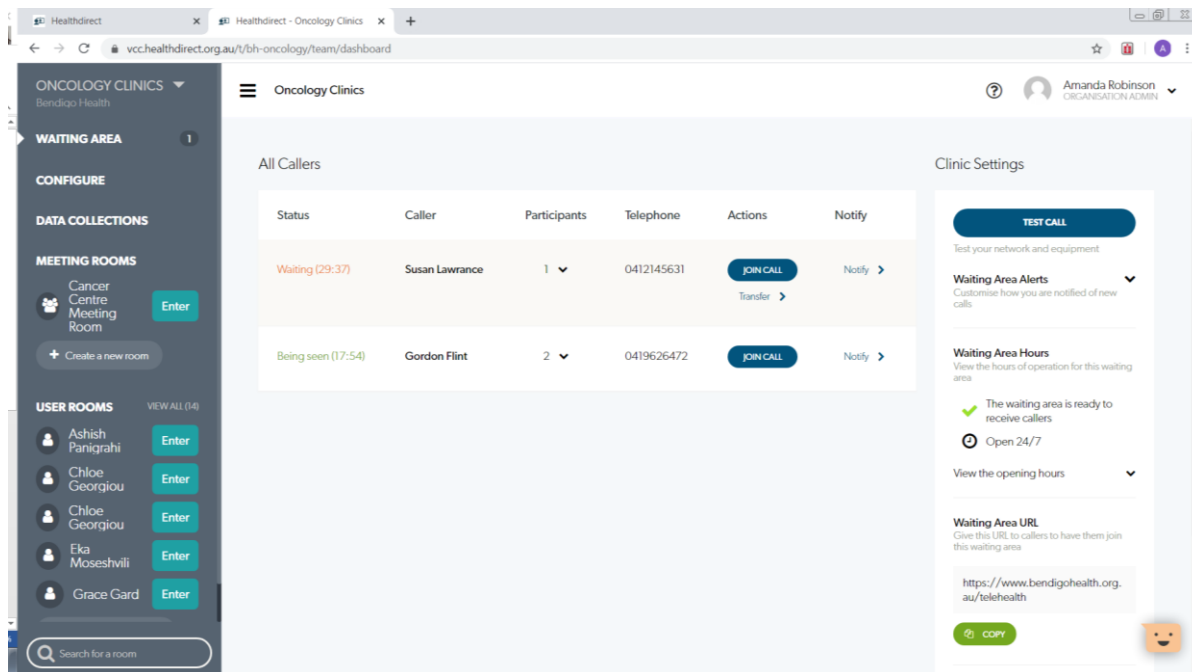
Logging on as 'Administration'



You will be taken to 'My Clinics' - it will show you the total callers waiting, on hold and callers being seen.

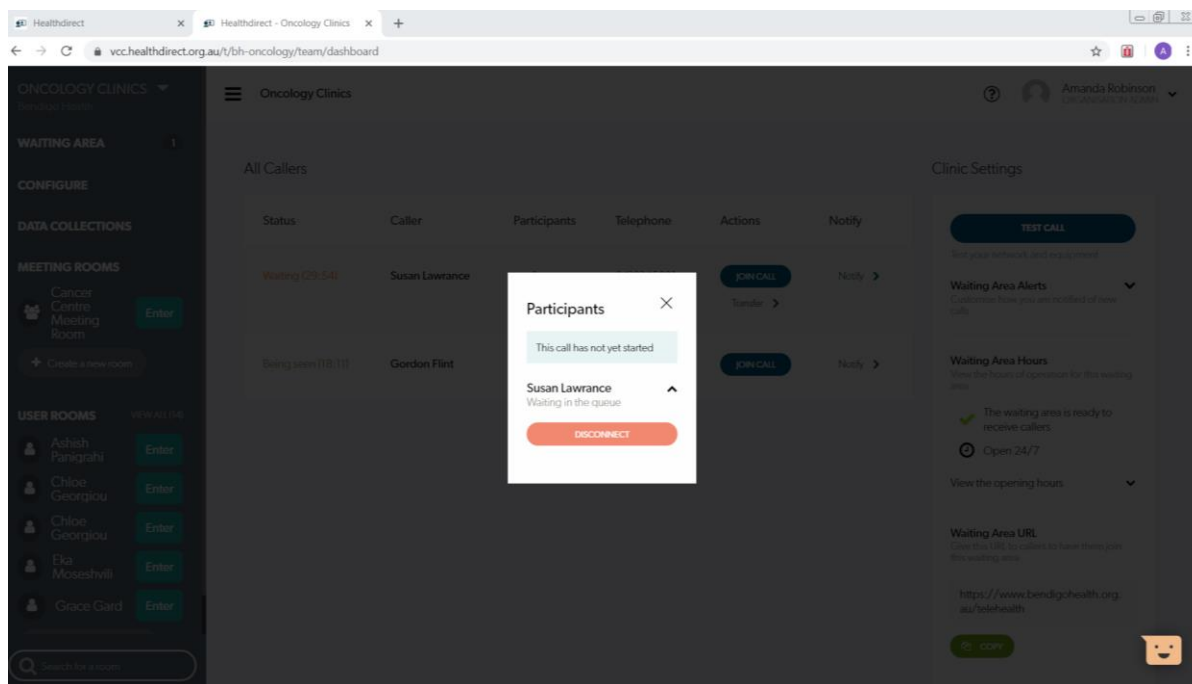


Upon selecting your clinic, the waiting room will look like this. Here you can check all patients in the clinic waiting room, call activity, status of call, transfer to room tab and notify patient by message option. Ensure you always keep an eye on this screen to ensure all calls are managed correctly.

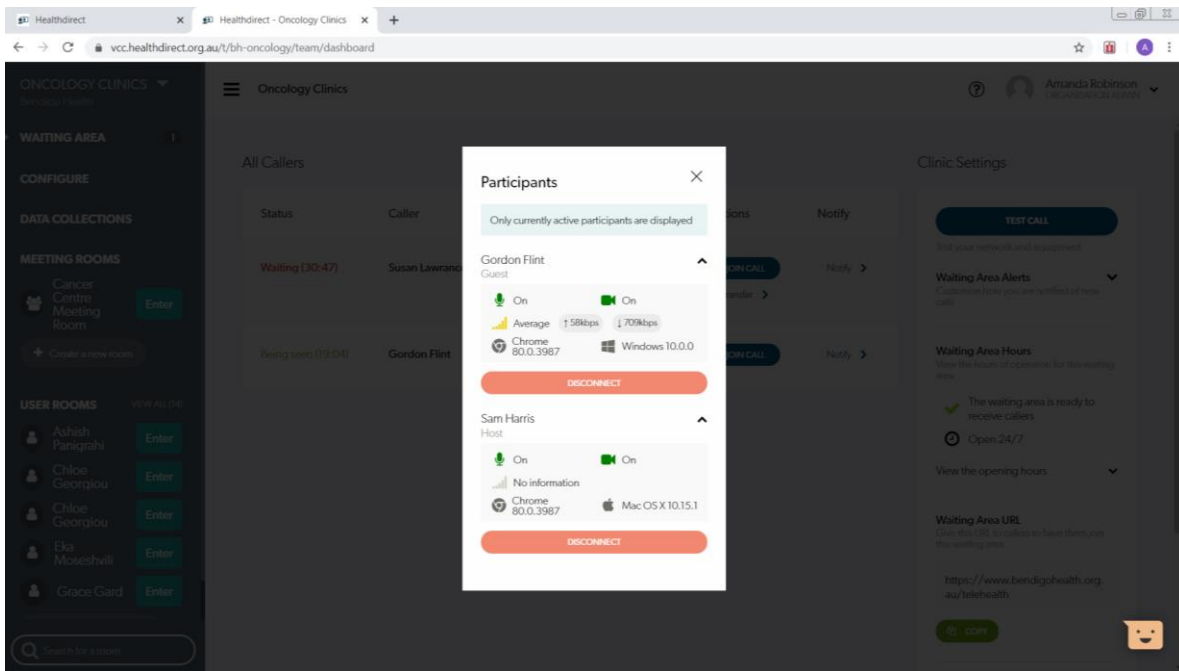


It is up to you to join the call and check patient identifiers as per business as usual. Then place patient back on hold.

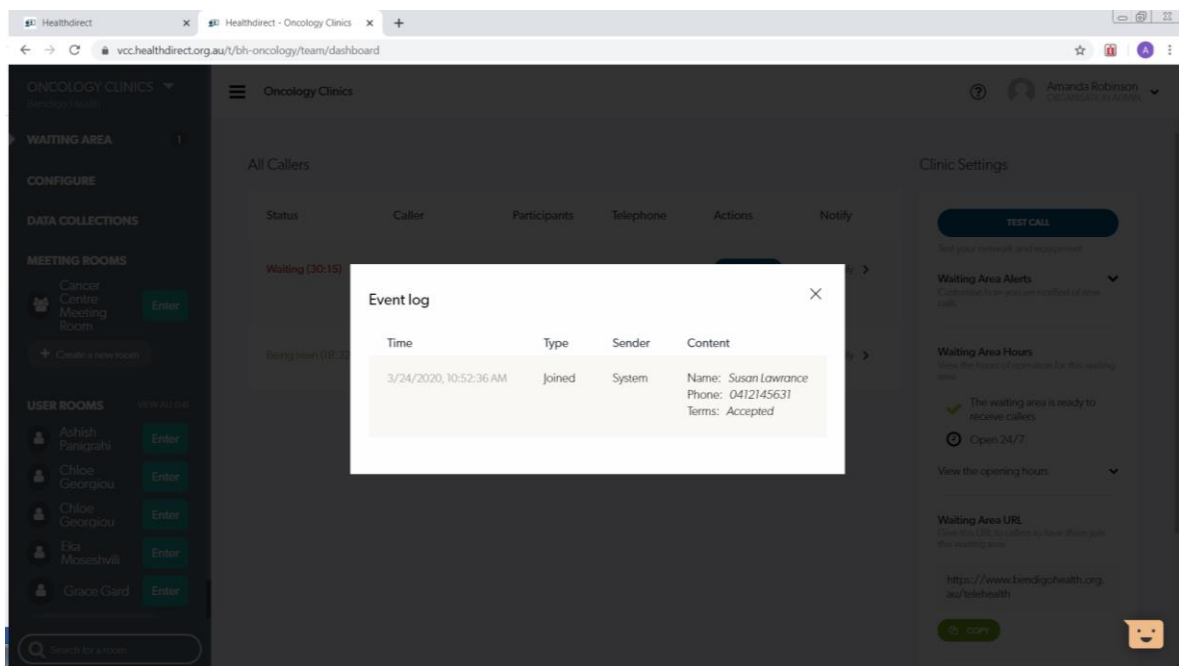
To check participant activity, under the participant heading – select the number (total participants) drop down box and select participants, it will look like this:



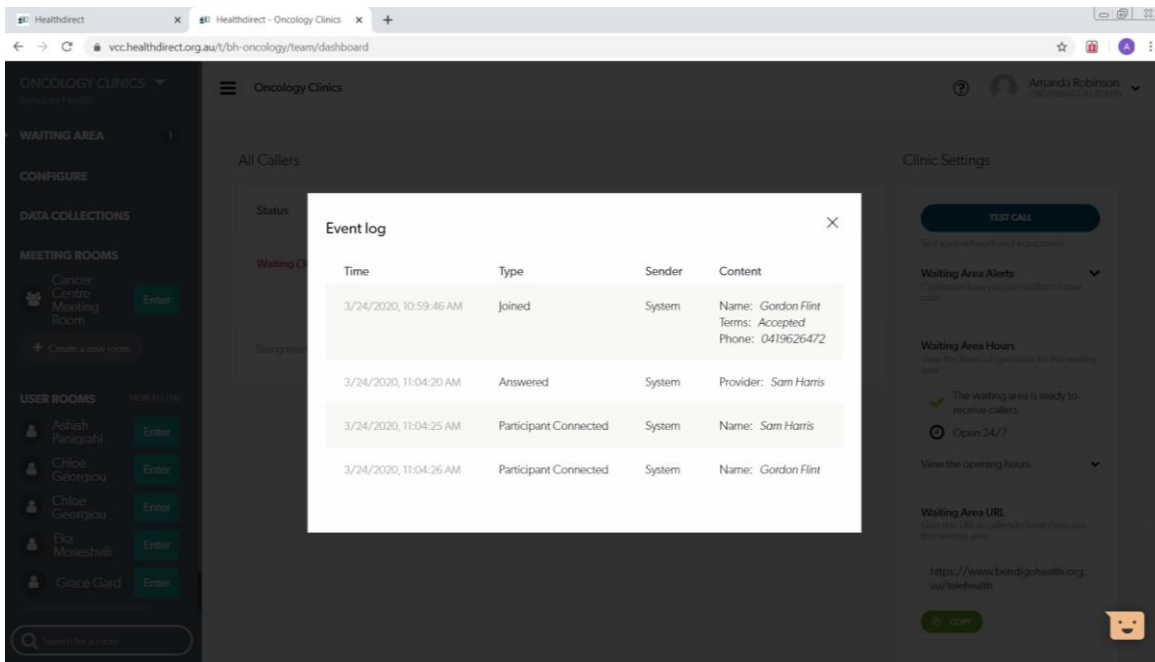
This shows you when a call is connected and the connected participants (this is where you can also disconnect the patient from the call if they are still connected after the clinician has finished the call but not ended it correctly).



This is what the participant activity looks like when selecting call activity from the number drop down box.

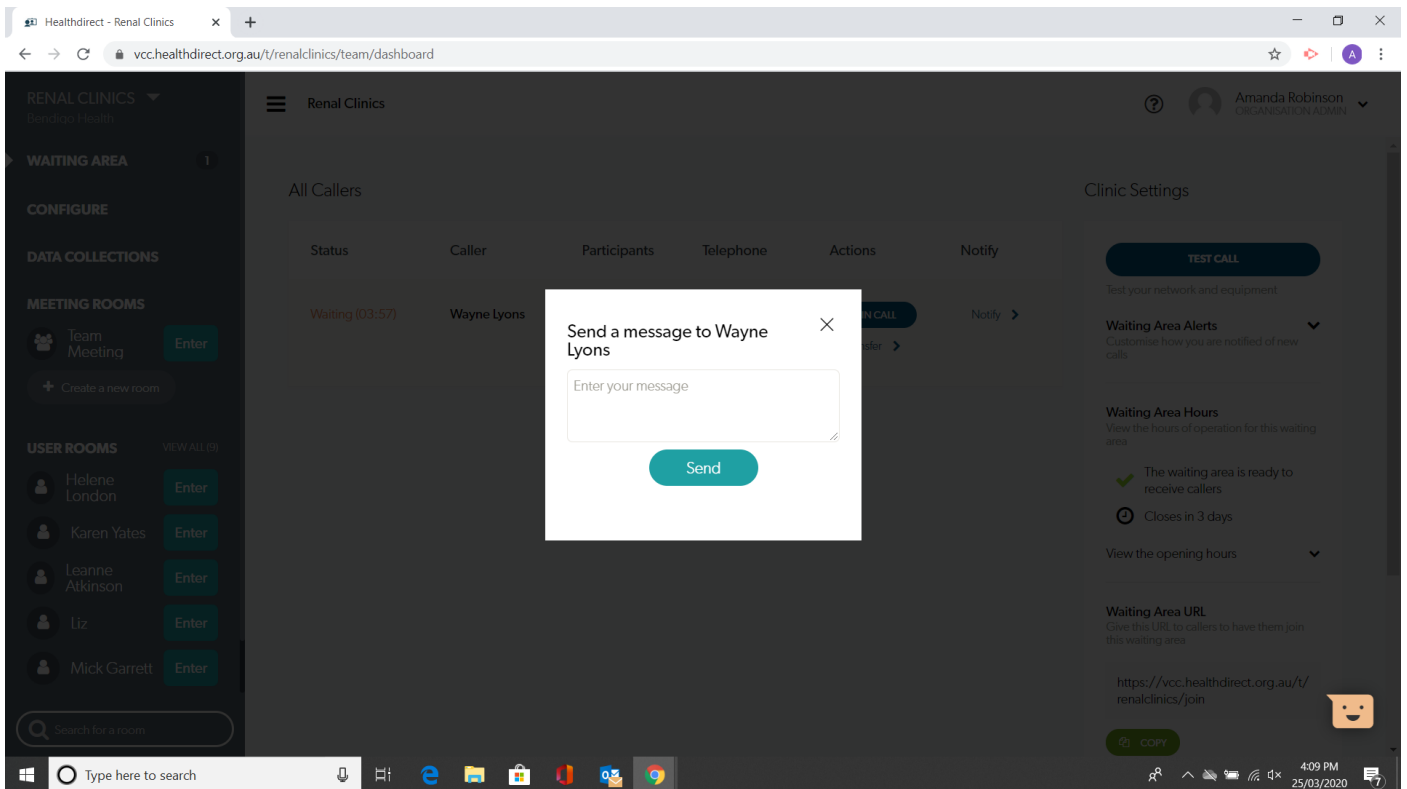


Here it will state when the patient joined the waiting room, if they have been connected to a clinician and when, if they have been placed on hold and which clinician or admin has been in contact with the patient.



This is a good screen to check to see how the patient has been managed and by who, in case more than one administrator is checking the virtual waiting room. You can also see if any messages have been sent to the patient on hold.

You are able to send a message to a patient by selecting the NOTIFY tab, typing your message eg. *Thank you for your patience, the doctor will be with you soon* and press send.



Managing the Interpreter

Admin are to still provide the following information to Oncall when making a booking:

1. Patients full name
2. Patients UR number
3. Clinic/Speciality name. This information will enable the interpreter to locate the correct waiting room.
4. Ensure “Telehealth” is supplied in mode of consultation

It is the clinician who will need to pick up both the patient and interpreter from the virtual waiting room. However, you can assist them with this process. The interpreters are aware of their process to enable a smooth telehealth consultation.

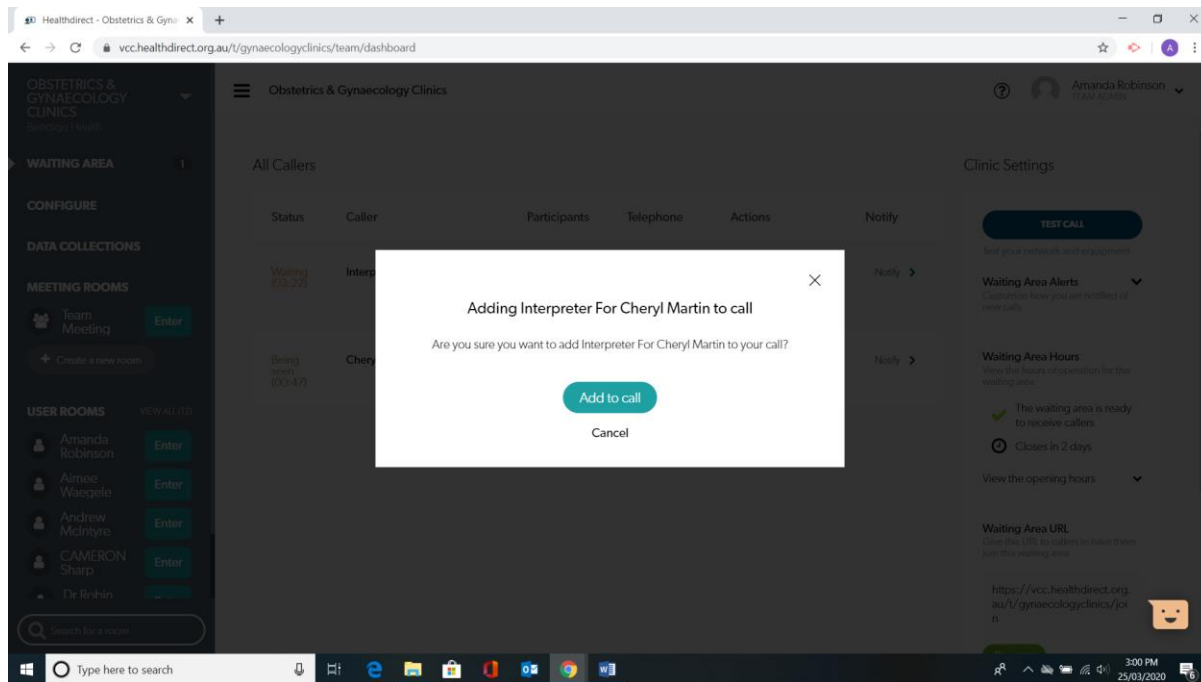
In the virtual waiting room – you will see the patient and the interpreter for the patient as below:

Status	Caller	Participants	Telephone	Actions	Notify
Waiting (03:46)	Cheryl Martin	1	0417378365	JOIN CALL Transfer >	Notify >
Waiting (00:30)	Interpreter For Cheryl Martin	1	0354548379	JOIN CALL Transfer >	Notify >

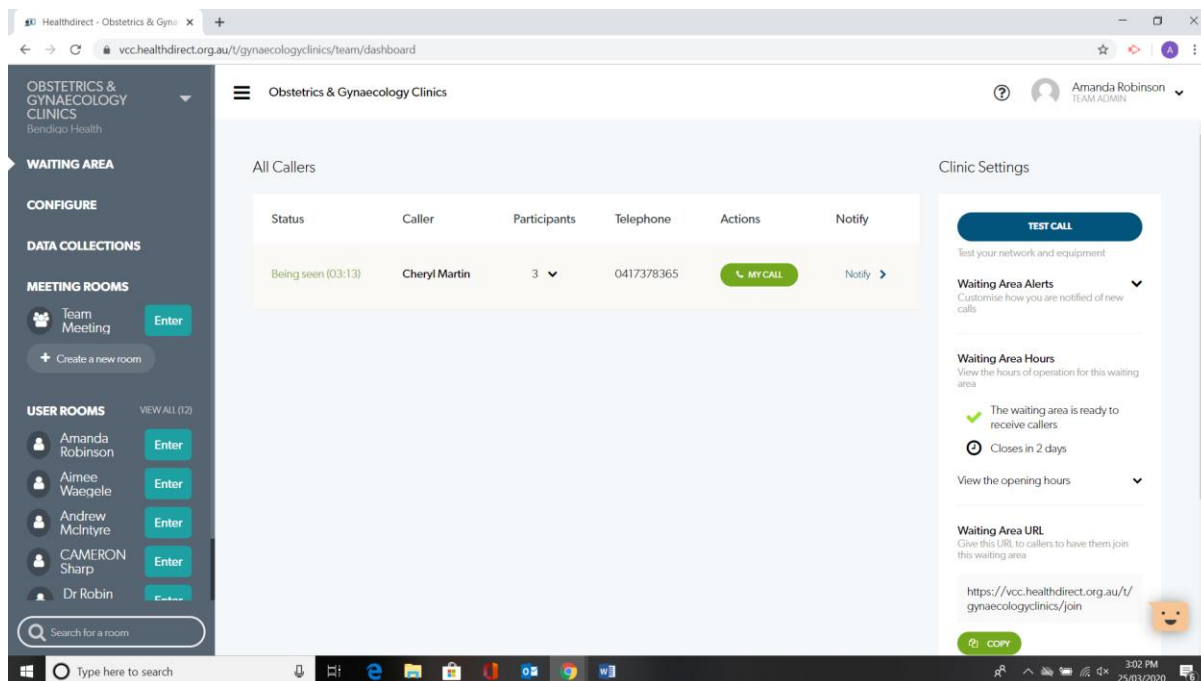
To connect the patient and interpreter – select JOIN CALL under the patient Actions

Status	Caller	Participants	Telephone	Actions	Notify
Waiting (03:01)	Interpreter For Cheryl Martin	1	0354548379	ADD TO CALL + Transfer >	Notify >
Being seen (00:26)	Cheryl Martin	1	0417378365	MY CALL	Notify >

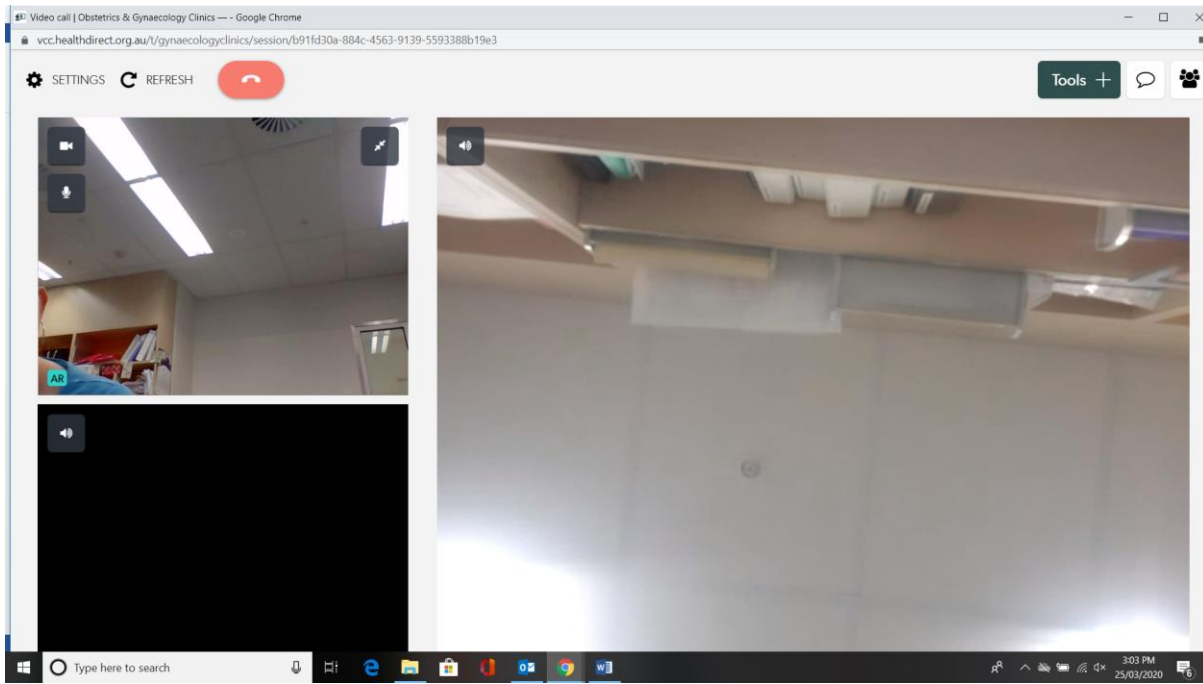
Then select ADD TO CALL under the Interpreter actions. And confirm you are adding and combining the call.



In the virtual waiting room window you can now see that both Interpreter and Patient are in the clinician consultation. Participants = 3

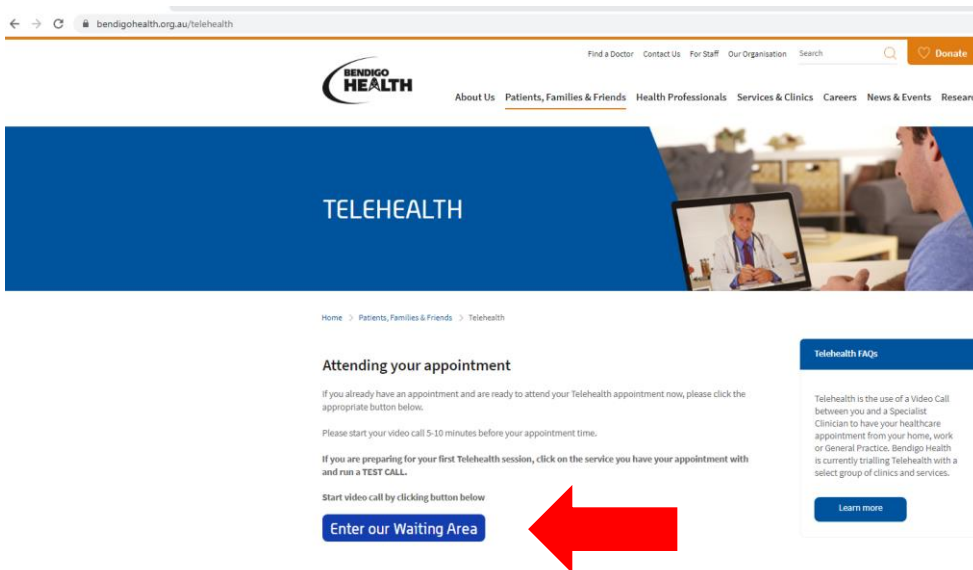


This is what the Telehealth consultation room should now look like, the consultation can now begin -

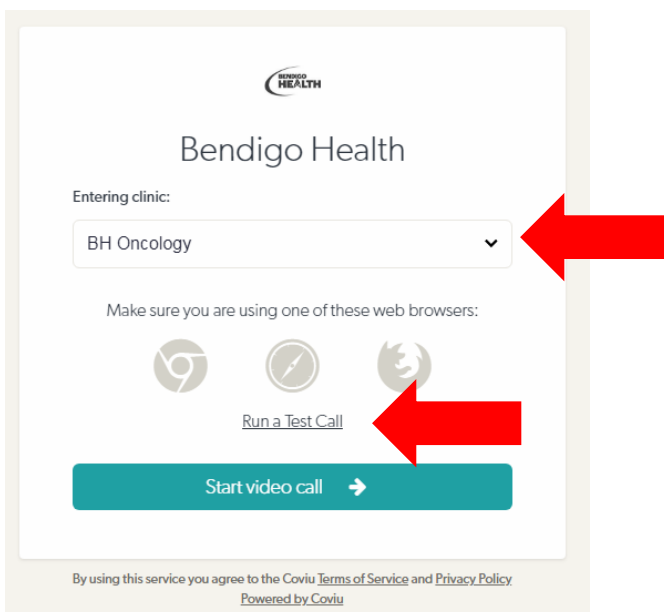


Appendix 1. Test your access via a computer or Android device (patient instructions)

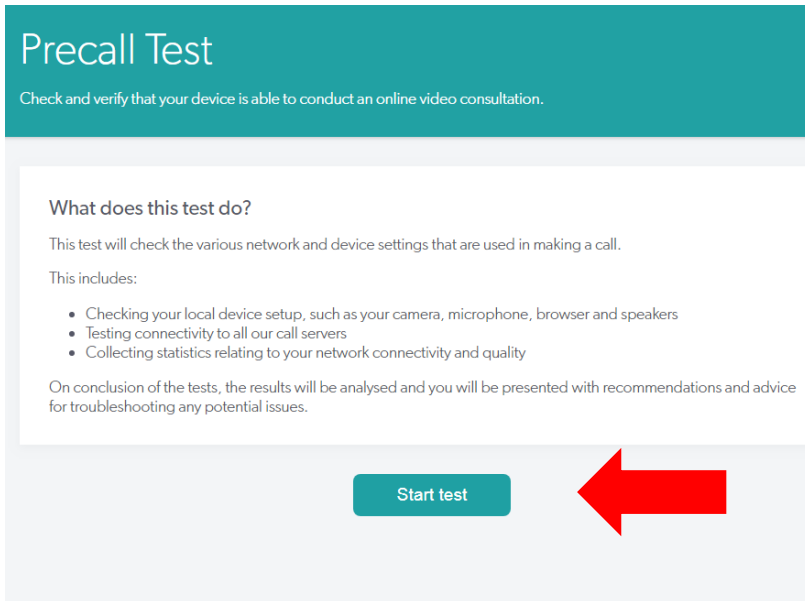
Log on to www.bendigohealth.org.au/telehealth using Google Chrome and click on 'ENTER OUR WAITING AREA'



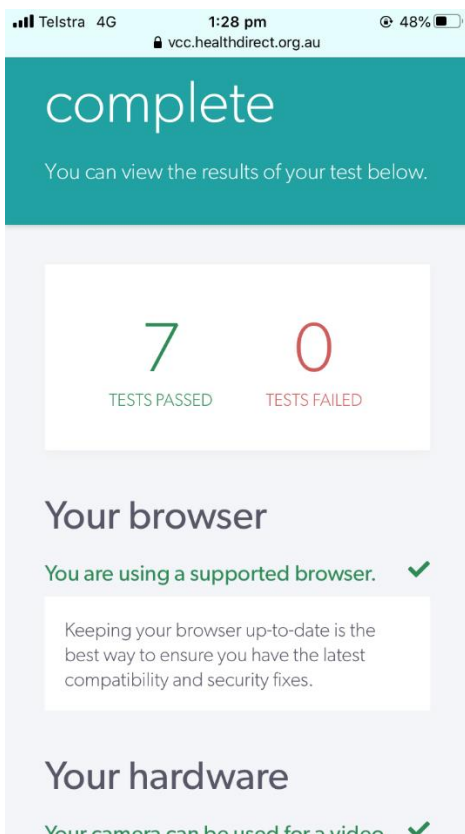
1. Select 'CLINIC NAME' as the clinic name (*amend this to correct clinic your patient is attending – then delete this comment*)
2. Select 'RUN A TEST CALL' This will make sure your computer is set up to complete the telehealth appointment



3. Select 'START TEST'



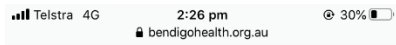
4. If the test call passes you are ready to undertake a telehealth appointment



5. If it fails items you are unable to access telehealth appointments via this device. Please contact Bendigo Health on 5454 XXXX to discuss other options.

Appendix 2. Test your access via an Apple device (patient instructions)

1. Log on to www.bendigohealth.org.au/telehealth using Safari and click on 'ENTER OUR WAITING AREA'



Attending your appointment

If you already have an appointment and are ready to attend your Telehealth appointment now, please click the appropriate button below.

Please start your video call 5-10 minutes before your appointment time.

If you are preparing for your first Telehealth session, click on the service you have your appointment with and run a TEST CALL.

Start video call by clicking button below

Enter our Waiting Area



2. Select 'CLINIC NAME' as the clinic name. *(amend this to correct clinic your patient is attending – then delete this comment)*
3. Select 'RUN A TEST CALL' This will make sure your iPhone or iPad is set up to complete the telehealth appointment.
4. Select 'START TEST'

Precall Test

Check and verify that your device is able to conduct an online video consultation.

What does this test do?

This test will check the various network and device settings that are used in making a call.

This includes:

- Checking your local device setup, such as your camera, microphone, browser and speakers
- Testing connectivity to all our call servers
- Collecting statistics relating to your network connectivity and quality

On conclusion of the tests, the results will be analysed and you will be presented with recommendations and advice for troubleshooting any potential issues.

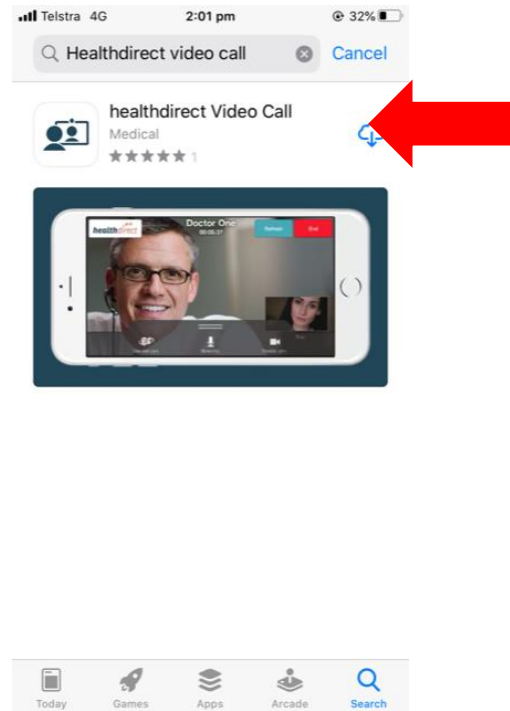
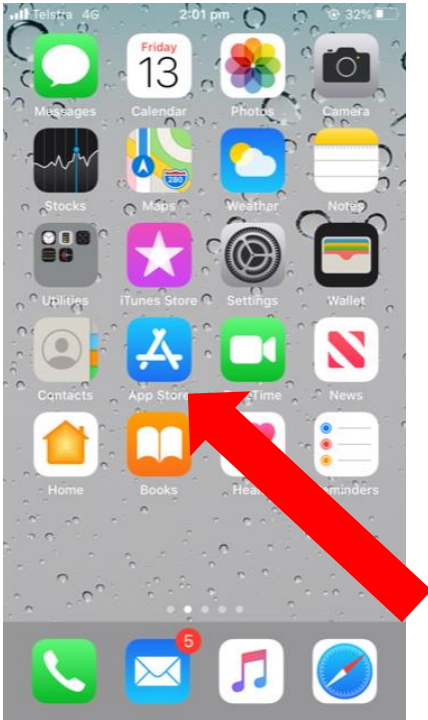
Start test



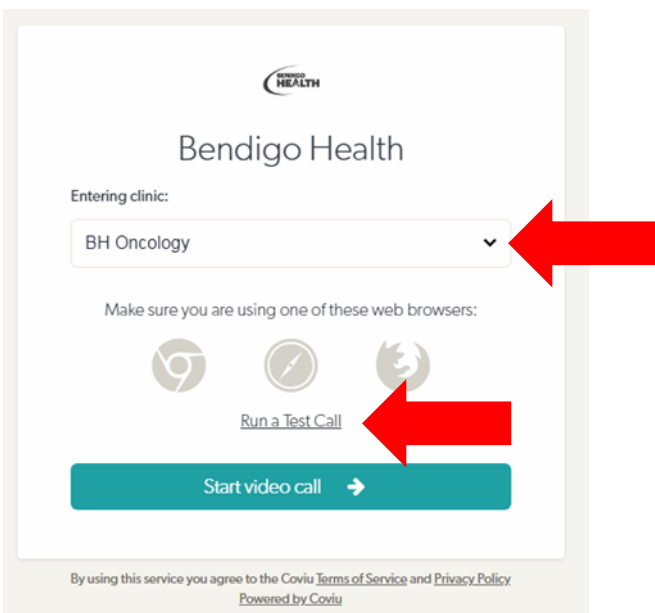
- If the test call passes you are ready to a telehealth appointment.
- If it fails items you are unable to access telehealth appointments via this device. Please contact Bendigo Health on 5454 XXXX to discuss other options.

OR

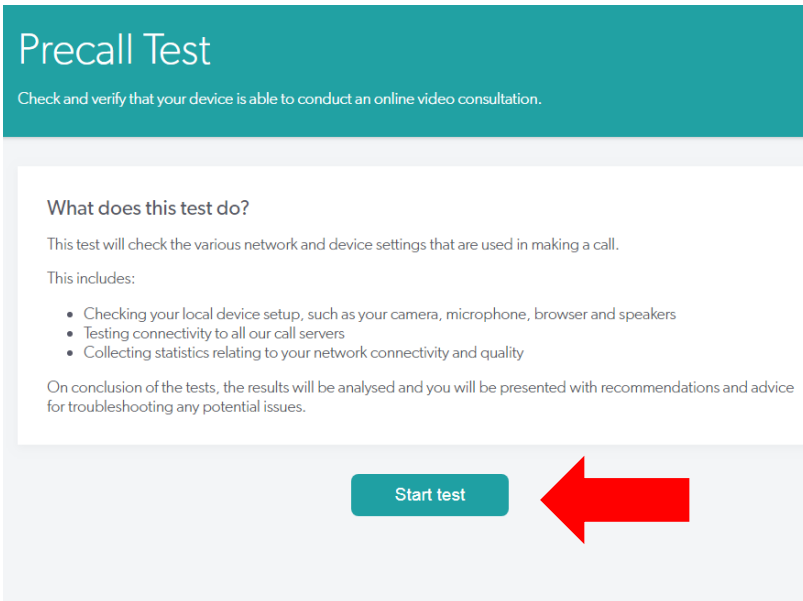
- Go to the App store on your phone and download 'Healthdirect video call'



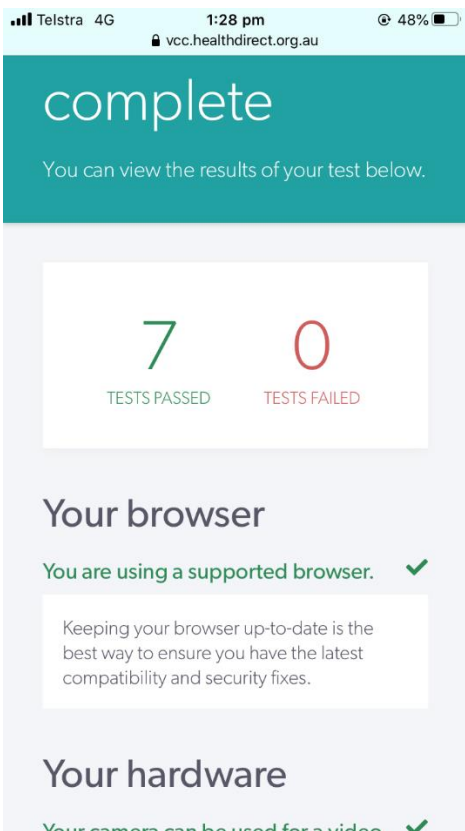
- Select 'CLINIC NAME' as the clinic name. *(amend this to correct clinic your patient is attending – then delete this comment)*
- Select 'RUN A TEST CALL' This will make sure your iPhone or iPad is set up to complete the telehealth appointment.



3. Select 'START TEST'



4. If the test call passes you are ready to a telehealth appointment.



5. If it fails items you are unable to access telehealth appointments via this device. Please contact Bendigo Health on 5454 XXXX to discuss other options.

Appendix 3. Information for logging into Health Direct (patient instructions)

Patient guide for telehealth using 'Health Direct'

The clinic appointment you have scheduled at Bendigo Health will take place using either your mobile device or your computer as discussed in a recent telephone call with you.

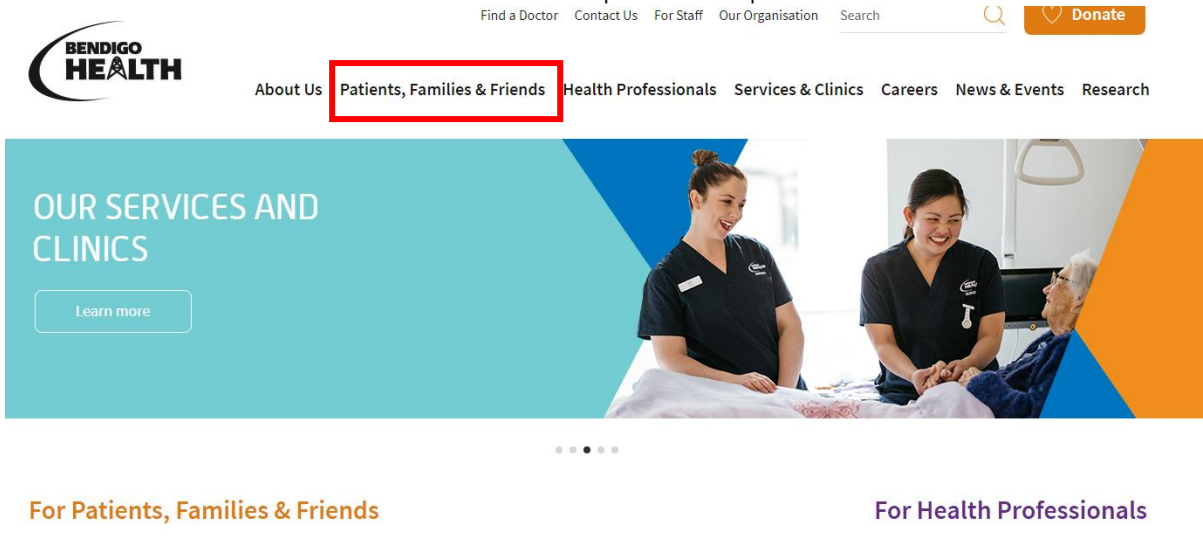
For information about how to link in to this telehealth appointment using 'Health Direct' please click on this link <https://youtu.be/2b-2Ip1AJog> or read the information below:

HEALTH DIRECT

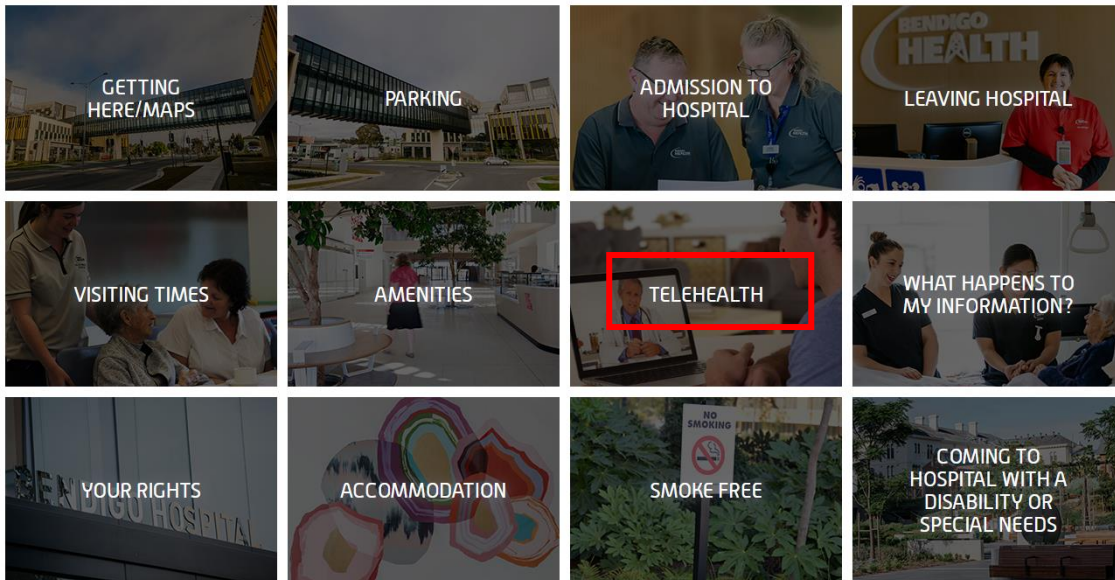
Computer- Google Chrome required

Mobile- Google Chrome not required

1. Open webpage www.bendigohealth.org.au using GOOGLE CHROME only when using a computer. If you're using a mobile, open your standard browser.
2. Select the "Patient & Families" tab from the top selection panel



3. Scroll down & select "Telehealth"



4. Select “Enter our Waiting Area”

TELEHEALTH

Home > Patients, Families & Friends > Telehealth

Attending your appointment

If you already have an appointment and are ready to attend your Telehealth appointment now, please click the appropriate button below.

Please start your video call 5-10 minutes before your appointment time.

If you are preparing for your first Telehealth session, click on the service you have your appointment with and run a TEST CALL.

Start video call by clicking button below

Enter our Waiting Area

Telehealth is a consultation between a patient and a specialist, and will include the use of an audio and video connection via your computer, mobile phone or tablet. Family members or other health professionals, including your local General Practitioner, may also be involved in the Telehealth consultation.

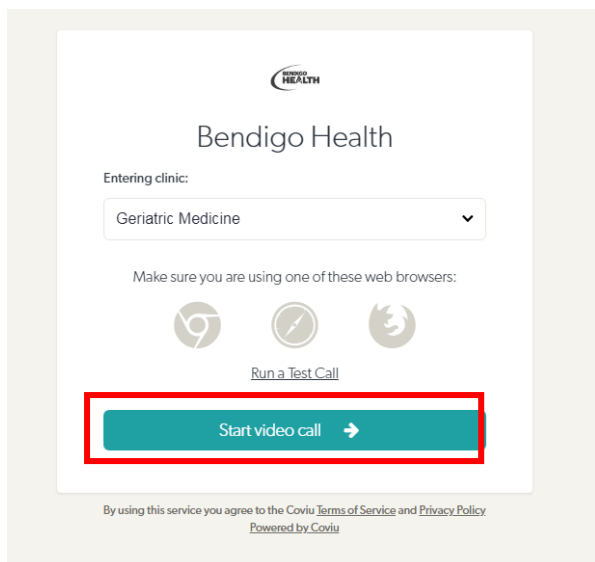
Telehealth FAQs

Telehealth is the use of a Video Call between you and a Specialist Clinician to have your healthcare appointment from your home, work or General Practice. Bendigo Health is currently trialling Telehealth with a select group of clinics and services.

[Learn more](#)

Telehealth Brochure

5. Scroll down to the relevant department **[Clinic Name]** & select “Start Video Call”



6. Select “Start Video Call” or “Run a test call” if you would like to ensure your sound & picture is working correctly – ***THIS IS RECOMMENDED prior to each consultation***
7. Enter the contact details of the person we can contact should there be a disconnection & tick “accept” & “Continue”
This information is only kept for the duration of your video call
NB: You must include an area code for land line phone numbers

8. Important Information – click “continue” to proceed”
9. You are now in the waiting area and the consultant will connect with you shortly.

If you experience any problems with linking up, please contact the administration contact person listed within your ‘virtual clinic’ on Health Direct.

Appendix 4. Telehealth Consultations COVID-19 MBS codes

Bulk-billed telephone consultation services which can be provided by GPs, specialists, consultant physicians, obstetricians, consultant psychiatrists, nurse practitioners, allied mental health workers and midwives for certain vulnerable people;

Vulnerable/isolated patients are those where at least one of the following apply:

- (a) the person has been diagnosed with COVID-19 virus but who is not a patient of a hospital; or
- (b) the person has been required to isolate themselves in quarantine in accordance with home isolation guidance issued by Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC); or
- (c) the person is considered more susceptible to the COVID-19 virus being a person who is: (i) at least 70 years old; or (ii) at least 50 years old and is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; or (iii) is pregnant; or
- (iv) is a parent of a child under 12 months; or
- (v) is already under treatment for chronic health conditions or is immune compromised; or (d) the person meets the current national triage protocol criteria for suspected COVID-19 infection.

These groups will need to have seen their provider face-to-face at least once in the previous 12 months.

A health professional at risk for COVID-19 means a person that:

- (a) has been diagnosed with COVID-19 but who is not a patient of a hospital; or
- (b) has been required to isolate themselves in quarantine in accordance with home isolation guidance issued by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee.

MBS Code notes relevant for all item numbers

- a) the attendance is where:
 - (i) the person is a patient at risk of COVID-19 virus; or
 - (ii) the specialist is a health professional at risk of COVID-19 virus; and
- (b) the attendance follows referral of the patient to the specialist; and
- (c) the attendance was of more than 5 minutes in duration; and
- (d) the patient is not an admitted patient; and
- (e) the service is bulk-billed.

SPECIALIST, CONSULTANT PHYSICIAN AND PSYCHIATRIST TELEHEALTH ATTENDANCES for COVID-19			
Existing Items <i>face to face</i>		COVID-19 Telehealth items	
104	Initial attendance	91822	Telehealth initial attendance
105	Subsequent attendance	91823	Telehealth subsequent attendance

110	Initial attendance	91824	Telehealth initial attendance
116	Subsequent attendance	91825	Telehealth subsequent attendance
119	Minor attendance	91826	Telehealth minor attendance
300	Consultation, continuing patient, not more than 15 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91827	Telehealth consultation, continuing patient, not more than 15 minutes
302	Consultation, continuing patient, 15 to 30 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91828	Telehealth consultation, continuing patient, 15 to 30 minutes
304	Consultation, continuing patient, 30 to 45 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91829	Telehealth consultation, continuing patient, 30 to 45 minutes
306	Consultation, continuing patient, 45 to 75 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91830	Telehealth consultation, continuing patient, 45 to 75 minutes
308	Consultation, continuing patient, more than 75 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91831	Telehealth consultation, continuing patient, more than 75 minutes

SPECIALIST, CONSULTANT PHYSICIAN AND PSYCHIATRIST TELEPHONE ATTENDANCES for COVID-19			
Existing Items <i>face to face</i>		COVID-19 Telephone items	
104	Initial attendance	91832	Telephone initial attendance
105	Subsequent attendance	91833	Telephone subsequent attendance
110	Initial attendance	91834	Telephone initial attendance

116	Subsequent attendance	91835	Telephone subsequent attendance
119	Minor attendance	91836	Telephone minor attendance
300	Consultation, continuing patient, not more than 15 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91837	Telephone consultation, continuing patient, not more than 15 minutes
302	Consultation, continuing patient, 15 to 30 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91838	Telephone consultation, continuing patient, 15 to 30 minutes
304	Consultation, continuing patient, 30 to 45 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91839	Telephone consultation, continuing patient, 30 to 45 minutes
306	Consultation, continuing patient, 45 to 75 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91840	Telephone consultation, continuing patient, 45 to 75 minutes
308	Consultation, continuing patient, more than 75 minutes, fewer than 50 attendances	91841	Telephone consultation, continuing patient, more than 75 minutes

OBSTETRICIAN TELEHEALTH ATTENDANCES			
Existing Items		COVID-19 items	
16400	Antenatal Service Provided by a Nurse, Midwife or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner on behalf of, and under the supervision of, a medical practitioner	91850	Telehealth Antenatal Service Provided by a Nurse, Midwife or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner on behalf of, and under the supervision of, a medical practitioner
16407	Mental Health Assessments for Obstetric Patients by an obstetrician or GP	91851	Telehealth Mental Health Assessments for Obstetric Patients by an obstetrician or GP

16408	Postnatal attendance by a midwife (on behalf of and under the supervision of the medical practitioner who attended the birth); or (ii) an obstetrician; or (iii) a general practitioner	91852	Telehealth Postnatal attendance by a midwife (on behalf of and under the supervision of the medical practitioner who attended the birth); or (ii) an obstetrician; or (iii) a general practitioner
16500	Antenatal Care by a specialist obstetrician	91853	Telehealth Antenatal Care by a specialist obstetrician

OBSTETRICIAN TELEPHONE ATTENDANCES			
Existing Items		COVID-19 items	
16400	Antenatal Service Provided by a Nurse, Midwife or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner on behalf of, and under the supervision of, a medical practitioner	91855	Telephone Antenatal Service Provided by a Nurse, Midwife or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner on behalf of, and under the supervision of, a medical practitioner
16407	Mental Health Assessments for Obstetric Patients by an obstetrician or GP	91856	Telephone Mental Health Assessments for Obstetric Patients by an obstetrician or GP
16408	Postnatal attendance by a midwife (on behalf of and under the supervision of the medical practitioner who attended the birth); or (ii) an obstetrician; or (iii) a general practitioner	91857	Telephone Postnatal attendance by a midwife (on behalf of and under the supervision of the medical practitioner who attended the birth); or (ii) an obstetrician; or (iii) a general practitioner
16500	Antenatal Care by a specialist obstetrician	91858	Telephone Antenatal Care by a specialist obstetrician

Appendix 5. Frequently asked questions – Common patient or clinician issues

Will I be billed for telehealth? No, Eligible telehealth consultations will be bulk-billed to Medicare. There will be no cost to you.

Is Telehealth just as good as seeing my specialist? A high standard of care will be maintained regardless of whether you have a consultation in person or via telehealth. Your specialist will decide, based on your specific needs, condition, and treatment plan, whether a telehealth appointment will meet this standard and is suitable for you.

Are telehealth consultations safe, private and confidential? All telehealth consultations are private, confidential and adhere to the same clinical standards as face-to-face consultations.

What happens if the telehealth consultation is interrupted or internet connection is lost? If the connection is interrupted or lost, the consultation will be continued by telephone or another appointment time will be booked. If you are experiencing issues on the day and are unable to start the video call, please contact the administration number given to you.

Can an interpreter support me in my telehealth appointment? Yes, please ask for an interpreter when you are discussing a telehealth appointment. We will organise for an interpreter to support you in your telehealth consultation.

What if I need to change my appointment? If your appointment needs to be rescheduled, we will organise a new date and time. Please contact us to make changes.

Can a family member or carer join me in my telehealth appointment? Yes, your family or carer can attend your telehealth appointment.

What if I'm running late? If you are running late, we cannot guarantee that a clinician will be available at a different time. Please ensure that you start a telehealth call at least 10 minutes before your appointment. This will let you troubleshoot any issues that might delay your call.

What if my specialist is running late? Our services can be busy. We will do our best to see you as close to your appointment time as possible and appreciate your patience in this matter. If your appointment is 30 minutes late, please call the number given to you.