

BAYSIDE FAMILY MEDICAL

UPDATED: 27th APRIL 2020

Clinical Psychology services during COVID-19 pandemic: Telehealth continues

Until further notice, Dr Alicia Papas (Clinical Psychologist), will be providing psychological services for all mental health issues via **telehealth only**.

Telehealth includes consultations via both **online videoconferencing** and **telephone**. Dr Alicia Papas prefers online video sessions (using Zoom, downloadable for free).

Dr Alicia Papas will be providing the usual **50+ minute** consultations via telehealth, as well as a **30 minute** option.

Fees and Rebates:

For all clients with a valid Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP) or Eating Disorder Plan (EDP) from your GP, you will be eligible to continue receiving Medicare rebates. From 27th April 2020, normal in-clinic fees will be charged for telehealth sessions, however the Saturday rate will not be applicable (the weekday rate will apply to all appointments).

Please note – if any client is experiencing genuine financial hardship due to the impact of the pandemic, please discuss this with Dr Alicia Papas at your consultation and fees may be reduced and/or sessions bulk-billed.

Clinical Psychology: **Standard in-clinic Fees**

Psychologist	Type	Consult duration	Fee	Medicare rebate*	Out-of-pocket gap
Dr Alicia Papas	Clinical	50-60 min	\$195 (weekdays) \$205 (Saturdays) \$165 (concession)	\$126.50	\$68.50 (weekdays) \$78.50 (Saturdays) \$38.50 (concession)

**Medicare rebates apply if you have a valid MHCP/EDP from your GP*

Clinical Psychology: **COVID-19 Telehealth Fees (from 27th April, subject to change)**

Psychologist	Type	Consult duration	Fee	Medicare rebate*	Out-of-pocket gap
Dr Alicia Papas	Clinical	50-60 min	\$195 (all appts)	\$126.50	\$68.50
Dr Alicia Papas	Clinical	30 min	\$115 (all appts)	\$86.15	\$28.85

**Medicare rebates apply if you have a valid MHCP/EDP from your GP*

If you **do not** have a MHCP or EDP, Dr Alicia Papas is currently charging a reduced rate for telehealth consults compared to the standard in-clinic fees. A 50+ minute telehealth session is \$165 (i.e., usual concession/healthcare card holder rate) and a 30-minute telehealth session is \$100.

Dr Alicia Papas' availability during COVID-19 response:

Mondays 10:00am – 7:00pm
Thursdays 10:00am – 7:00pm
Saturdays 9:00am – 12:00pm (afternoons available on request until 3:00pm)

Please note: Bayside Family Medical is currently operating on reduced hours (until 5:00pm on weekdays and closed on Saturdays), however our Psychologists will still be available via telehealth during their usual working hours until 7:00pm on weekdays and on Saturdays.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What is telehealth?

Telehealth means that health services (e.g., psychology; medical) are provided online or via telephone. When telehealth is online, this is achieved through video conferencing – basically the psychologist and client can see each other via computer/laptop/smartphone etc. This still provides a face-to-face session and allows for the best possible assessment and intervention options.

Is telehealth effective?

There is no difference to the quality of psychology services if received in person or online – research shows they are both equally as effective. In fact, people that live rurally or remotely often rely on telehealth services to receive healthcare.

How does telehealth work?

As long as you have an electronic device with a camera and microphone, telehealth is easy to access. You will receive an e-mail with a link to the video session– all you need to do is click on the link at the time of your appointment and you will see your Psychologist appear on the screen! If your Psychologist is not there, just wait a few minutes as they may be finishing up with another client. If you have a telephone appointment, your Psychologist will ring you on your preferred phone number.

What should I do to prepare for the telehealth session?

We recommend using a private room at home where you will not be disturbed during your session. For online video sessions, you can use any of the following electronic devices as long as they have a camera and microphone: computer (PC); laptop; tablet; smart phone; iPhone. For sessions with Dr Alicia Papas, you will need to download Zoom on your device before your initial telehealth session so that you can connect.

Please ensure that you have connected via audio, your volume is turned on and you're not on mute.

You can also use headphones or earphones so only you can hear your Psychologist.

Are online telehealth services safe and secure?

Telehealth sessions will also be confidential between therapist and client.

It is noted that the privacy of any form of communication via the Internet or a mobile device is limited by the security of the technology, however all psychologists will take reasonable steps to ensure video-conferencing technology (we use Zoom or COVIU) meets privacy obligations.

What if I don't have a Mental Health Care Plan or Eating Disorder Plan?

You can consult with your GP first for an assessment to see if you are eligible for a Mental Health Care Plan (up to 10 sessions in a 12-month period or per calendar year) or Eating Disorder Plan (up to 40 sessions per calendar year). If you do not qualify for one of these treatment plans and/or you wish to consult with a Psychologist, you will be charged a reduced rate (\$165 for a 50+ minute consult or \$100 for a 30 minute consult) and will not be eligible for a Medicare rebate.

How do I pay for my session?

You can call our reception team either directly before or after your appointment and pay for your session over the phone with a credit card - our receptionists will also issue your rebate to Medicare if applicable. To avoid calling reception to make payment each time you have an appointment, your credit card details can be saved on your patient file at your request and our reception team will process your payment efficiently at the end of your session.

Am I eligible for bulk billing of Psychology consults?

Our Psychologists are continuing to provide the same quality mental health services via telehealth, thus in-clinic consultation fees will be applicable (except for Saturday telehealth appointments; the Saturday surcharge will not apply). We understand that the current pandemic is placing financial stress on some of our patients, therefore our Psychologists will consider reducing fees or bulk-billing those individuals who are experiencing genuine financial hardship. Please discuss your situation directly with your Psychologist.

Does my Private Health Fund cover my psychology telehealth sessions?

If you do not have a valid Mental Health Care Plan or Eating Disorder Plan from your GP, as with standard in-clinic psychology appointments, your Private Health fund may cover some of your session costs if you have Psychology Extras. Please check with your provider prior to your first telehealth session.

Do late cancellation fees apply to telehealth sessions?

Yes. The same conditions apply to telehealth sessions as they do for usual in-clinic sessions. This is because failure to cancel appointments with more than 24 hours notice means that your appointment time cannot be offered to someone else and the Psychologist's time is also left unutilised. If you can no longer attend your scheduled telehealth session, please ensure you cancel at least 24 hours ahead of your appointment time.