

PSYCHOLOGY TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Neringa Luscombe Smith

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic: Telehealth for psychology services are being offered to provide support to our current and new clients. As this is a difficult time for many families and individuals, this service will be offered at a reduced fee during this time. This service will be updated on a regular basis.

Telehealth includes consultations via both **telephone** and/or **online videoconferencing** (i.e. Zoom, COVIU).

If you feel nervous or unsure about how videoconferencing works, Neringa can schedule a telephone appointment for your first session. She can then go through what is involved and whether you would like to try videoconferencing.

Appointments:

If you would like an appointment, please call Bayside Family Medical on Ph. 9583 1630

Eligibility for Telehealth:

There are three ways to access psychological telehealth services:

1. Referral from GP

If you have a valid referral and Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP), Eating Disorder Plan (EDP) or Pregnancy Support Counselling Plan from your GP you may be eligible for a rebate from Medicare.

Fees for Telehealth Psychological services:

Category	Fee
a) Children & adolescents up to 18 years <i>30-minute session</i>	Bulk Billed (no out of pocket payment)
b) A person who is 'at risk of COVID-19': <i>30-minute session</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents of a baby at home under 12 months• People aged over 70 years• Are pregnant• Are being treated for a chronic health condition• Are immune compromised• Meet the current national triage protocol criteria for suspected COVID-19 infection• Identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent- and are at least 50 years old	Bulk Billed (no out of pocket payment)
c) People who do not fall in the above categories <i>50-minute session</i>	\$150 (Medicare rebate of \$86.15)

2. Private Health Fund Member – no GP referral

No referral or Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP), Eating Disorder Plan (EDP), or Pregnancy Support Counselling Plan.

Private Health Fund members need to check with their fund prior to the first session to check eligibility.

You will not be eligible for a rebate from Medicare.

Private Health Fund Member

\$150 (no Medicare rebate)

3. Private appointment – no GP referral or private health fund membership (no rebate available)

No referral or Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP), Eating Disorder Plan (EDP), or Pregnancy Support Counselling Plan.

You will pay privately and not be eligible for a rebate from Medicare.

Private fee

\$150 (no Medicare rebate)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What is telehealth?

Telehealth means that health services (e.g., psychology; medical) are provided over the telephone or by videoconferencing on a computer, mobile phone or tablet.

Is telehealth effective?

Telehealth allows people to have therapy when they are unable to access support face to face. This allows people to have better access and continue treatment with their preferred therapist when they may not otherwise receive any support, providing an effective alternative to face to face therapy.

Telehealth may not be suitable for all clients. If there is concern regarding suitability, this will be discussed with the client and alternative services will be recommended.

How does telehealth work?

Telephone

The psychologist will call you on your preferred number at the start of your appointment time.

Videoconferencing

To use videoconferencing, you will need a device (computer, mobile phone or tablet) that has a microphone and camera. The psychologist will email you a link before your appointment. When it is your appointment time, click on the link and it will connect you with your psychologist.

If videoconferencing doesn't work due to poor connection, or other technical difficulties, the appointment can still go ahead over the telephone.

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.

Please ensure that you check your volume is turned on and you're not on mute. You can also use headphones or earbuds so only you can hear your Psychologist. It is the client's responsibility to arrange suitable equipment and any additional cost involved with this equipment.

Are online telehealth services safe and secure?

The psychologist takes all reasonable steps to ensure confidentiality is maintained by therapist and client during telehealth sessions.

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 the psychologist will take reasonable steps to ensure video-conferencing technology (Coviu) meets privacy obligations.

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

You can consult with your GP for an assessment to see if you are eligible for a Mental Health Care Plan (up to 10 sessions in a 12-month period / per calendar year), Eating Disorder Plan (up to 40 sessions per calendar year), or Pregnancy Support Counselling. If you do not qualify for one of these treatment plans but wish to consult with a Psychologist, you will be charged the private fee but will not be eligible for a Medicare rebate. You will also need to ensure your credit card number is provided to one of our receptionists before your appointment so that payment can be processed efficiently on the day of your appointment.

Does my Private Health Fund cover my psychology telehealth sessions?

If you do not have a valid Mental Health Care Plan, Eating Disorder Plan or Pregnancy Support Counselling 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. To cancel your appointment, call Bayside Family Medical 24 hours prior.

Ms Neringa Smith \$75 cancellation fee