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# Queensland Health Telehealth Program

Initiative Type

Service Improvement

Status

Sustained

Added

04 September 2017

Last updated

13 March 2022

URL

<https://test.clinicalexcclence.qld.gov.au/improvement-exchange/queensland-health-telehealth-program>

## Summary

Telehealth is the delivery of health services and information using telecommunication technology. Telehealth can be leveraged to support new and innovative service delivery models in the health sector and facilitate access to safe, sustainable and appropriate health care that is simple, equitable and timely for all Queenslanders. The Department of Health defines telehealth as:

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- Live, audio and/or video inter-active link for clinical consultations and educational purposes.
  - Store and forward telehealth - this model can involve digital images, video, audio and clinical data being captured ("stored") on the client computer; then at a convenient time transmitted securely forwarded to a clinic at another location where they are studied by relevant specialists.
  - Telehealth services and equipment to monitor people's health in their home.

## Key dates

Sep 2012

## Implementation sites

Statewide in over 200 hospitals and community facilities

## Partnerships

Telehealth works collaboratively with a range of stakeholders including the Department of Health, Hospital and Health Services, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Primary Health Networks and General Practice.

## Key Contacts

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## **Aim**

To provide equitable access to the best health care to all Queenslanders no matter their location.

## **Benefits**

- Improve patient access to health care.
- Reduce travel and inconvenience for patients, families, carers and health professionals.
- Provide health professionals with access to peer support and education.

## **Background**

The Queensland population is the most decentralised of any mainland state in Australia. More than half or (approximately 56 per cent) of Queensland's population live outside the Brisbane metropolitan region and about 34 per cent live outside the South East corner, predominantly in towns along the eastern seaboard. Almost 18 per cent of the Queensland population live in areas classified as outer regional, remote or very remote. Within this environment Queensland faces a range of health service delivery challenges which include:

- A growing, ageing, and culturally diverse population.
- Increasing prevalence of chronic conditions.
- Access to services for people in rural and remote communities and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Attracting and retaining skilled professionals, especially for specialist services in rural and remote areas.
- Managing growing demand for health services within the economic and financial environment.
- Healthcare infrastructure and workforce focussed in areas of high population density.

In addressing these challenges the Department of Health and Hospital and Health Services are increasingly being forced to seek ways to extend service delivery capacity and reach within the constraints of the supply environment. International insight coupled with the experience of the Department and Hospital and Health Services is showing that telehealth is one mechanism which may enable some Queenslanders to have the best possible access to high quality health services and outcomes.

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## Solutions Implemented

Queensland currently has one of the largest managed telehealth networks in Australia with over 6,000 hardware and software video conference systems deployed in over 200 hospitals and community facilities, supporting more than 60 clinical specialties and sub-specialties to provide telehealth services across the state. These include:

- Remote Chemotherapy Supervision
- Hospital in the Home
- Geriatrics
- Pharmacy
- Trauma
- Orthopaedics
- Dermatology
- Cardiac Stress Testing
- Preadmission
- Palliative Care
- Vascular

Specific initiatives and solutions that are currently ongoing include:

- The Specialist Outpatient Strategy - Improving the patient journey by 2020, Journey Improvement 6: More appointments closer to home, commits to delivering more telehealth specialist services for the people of Queensland.
- The recent implementation of the Telehealth Portal which provides an easy, safe and secure way to videoconference with patients in their homes, GPs and other external health organisations.
- The introduction of an incentive payment from July 2017 for store and forward telehealth events to promote the uptake of this emerging technology.

## Further Reading

**Resources** [Find out more about Queensland Telehealth](#) **Articles** [Telehealth presents on global stage](#) [CED staff receive Australia Day Achievement Awards](#)