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Understanding Telehealth appointments

2 min read

Telehealth has become a familiar and convenient option for clients. Whether it's a quick phone call with their GP or a video consultation from their living room, it can be a great option when getting to a clinic isn't easy.

But while telehealth is incredibly useful, it's not always the right fit—especially when accurate medical evidence or a physical assessment is needed.
Knowing when telehealth works well (and when it doesn't) helps ensure assessments are reliable and complete. Let's break it down.

When Telehealth *Is* a Good Option

Telehealth is best used when a physical examination **isn't necessary**. In these situations, a phone or video appointment can be just as effective as being in person.

DVA Paperwork With a Long-Term GP

If a diagnosis has already been confirmed and the patient has a long-standing relationship with their regular GP, telehealth can be a reasonable way to complete certain DVA documents. The key is that the GP already knows the patient's history well.

Individual circumstances

Telehealth appointments are a great option for clients who live in remote areas, as they remove the need for long travel. They're also ideal for people with mobility challenges, allowing them to connect with clinicians from the comfort and safety of their own home.

Telepsychiatry

🩺 When Telehealth Is *Not* Enough

Some health assessments rely heavily on what a doctor can observe and measure in person. In these situations, telehealth usually isn't appropriate.

Musculoskeletal Assessments

These almost always require a hands-on physical examination. Testing mobility, strength, and function simply can't be done accurately through video.

Impairment Assessments

Most impairment ratings depend on objective findings—things like range of motion, reflexes, gait, or visible signs of injury. These assessments help confirm symptoms, determine impairment levels and work out apportionment. Without examining the person in person, these findings just aren't reliable.

Multiple Conditions or Unexpected Symptoms

Even when a rating depends partly on what the client reports, an in-person assessment is still important. This is especially true when:

- several conditions are involved, or
- the reported impairment doesn't line up with what would usually be expected.

Being face-to-face allows the assessor to notice details and patterns that video simply can't capture.

Want to Learn More?

Further information about telehealth appointments is available on the **Compensation Claims Support Site - Telehealth**, including guidance on when each type of consultation is most appropriate.