

# Telepsychiatry Service

## - Frequently Asked Questions



This service is supported by the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network (NBMPHN).  
Wentworth Healthcare is the provider of NBMPHN.

### Service:

The Telepsychiatry Service provides free consultations with psychiatrists to people who are living with complex mental illness in the Nepean Blue Mountains region, who due to socio-economic barriers would not otherwise be able to access a private psychiatrist.

### Eligibility:

#### Eligibility Criteria for General Psychiatric Referrals (until December 31, 2024):

- Residents of the Nepean and Blue Mountains region
- Individuals unable to access Medicare subsidised services due to affordability barriers
- Individuals not currently engaged with a Head to Health or state-based psychiatric service

Note: Clients do not need to hold a Centrelink-issued healthcare card, family healthcare card, or pension card.

#### Eligibility Criteria for Neurodevelopmental Behavioural Disorder Referrals (including ADHD/ASD):

- Residents of the Nepean and Blue Mountains region
- Holders of a Healthcare concession card (Healthcare card, Family healthcare card, or Pension concession card)
- Individuals not currently engaged with a Head to Health or state-based psychiatric service

### Service delivery:

The service is delivered via telehealth through secure video conferencing.

This is available to take place at:

- Any GP practice in the Nepean Blue Mountains region
- The office of a psychosocial service provider
- Client's home (if appropriate based on the referral); or
- A teleconference hub. Hubs are designed for those in the community who do not have access to a smart phone/laptop or do not have the internet – or simply those that would prefer to access the service with the assistance of our care-coordinator who is present at the hub

Kindly note, GPs are encouraged to facilitate telehealth appointments at their practice. There are MBS incentive items available for Practice Nurse participation in telehealth appointments.

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### What is out of scope for referral and treatment?

This service is for treatment only, requests for form filling or reports are not included. The service is not designed for Court Reports, NDIS or Disability Support Pension Assessments, RTA Forms or Workers Compensation reports.

The Telepsychiatry Service is not an emergency or crisis service.

### What is the collaborative model of care?

The referring GP will remain the primary provider of patient care. The Psychiatrist will liaise directly with the GP via their treatment plan, telephone and formal case conference sessions, if required. The GP will write the consumer's script under the guidance of the treating psychiatrist.

### Dokotela GP Psychiatry instant messaging:

We have a group to enable asynchronous communication between GPs and our psychiatrists. GPs can ask patient specific questions such as, "should my patient take Seroquel BD or TDS" or more broad queries such as, "is Seroquel safe in pregnancy". This group can be used to ask anything that pertains to the patient, whether that be following up a script or querying a dosage, our psychiatrists are happy to answer any questions that come through this forum. If it cannot be answered via message, the psychiatrist will try and arrange a time for a phone call to discuss further.

If asking a question in relation to a specific patient, please only include their initials and date of service with Dokotela (this ensures confidentiality is maintained).

To join the group, please email [nbmphn@dokotela.com.au](mailto:nbmphn@dokotela.com.au) with the GP's name and mobile number. The GP will need to download WhatsApp before we can send an invitation. This is an active group with many participants so GPs may like to silence notifications and read at their leisure.

### What are the frequency of appointments?

Typically, the patient will have two appointments, comprised of an initial assessment and a follow-up appointment to review how the proposed management plan is working.

Psychiatry sessions are capped at a maximum of three (3) sessions per referral but if the treating psychiatrist assesses that it is clinically important that the patient has more than three sessions will be taken into consideration.

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## Our Practice:

Dokotela has 40 psychiatrists available and counting – all with a vast range of prior experience and different subspecialties. Amongst us, we have a broad reaching scope of practice. Some examples include, psycho-geriatrics, perinatal psychiatrists and addiction specialists.

Many of our psychiatrists can also speak another language – or if they cannot speak the desired language, we can engage with the TIS interpreting service to arrange a free interpreter. The interpreter simply joins the telehealth session by video link.

## How can I refer?:

Any GP within the Nepean Blue Mountains PHN region can refer a patient via the NBMPHN intake on 1800 223 365. You will then be required to submit the patients' referral, along with their individual referral code.

The following referral information is required, and if not submitted, the referral may not be accepted:

- Current medication summary and response to past medications
- Patient psychiatric history including past admission discharge summaries, or note there has been no admissions
- Past medical history
- Correspondence from previous psychiatrists if relevant

Dokotela will then contact the client with information and to offer an appointment.

## Who can I contact for more information about the Telepsychiatry Service?:

Dokotela Specialists  
P: (02) 8003 7668  
F: (02) 8569 1844  
[nbmphn@dokotela.com.au](mailto:nbmphn@dokotela.com.au)

