



Consent for TELEHEALTH appointments

What is the purpose of this form?

The purpose of this form is to provide information to you about telehealth, and to ask for your informed consent to participate in telehealth consultations as part of providing Occupational Therapy services to you.

What is telehealth?

Telehealth is the use of telecommunication techniques for the purpose of providing Occupational Therapy services over a distance, rather than the therapist and client meeting at the same location. The occupational therapist will most often use video-conferencing to administer the session, but may also utilise other formats of communication such as telephone, or email.

What does a telehealth consultation involve?

Your therapist will explore your needs and occupational therapy related goals with you and, where appropriate, will offer information and recommendations. Your therapist will provide you with details of how telehealth will be used in your individual circumstances.

- You will be responsible for any costs associated with setting up the technology needed to that you can access telehealth services. You will need an appropriate device, i.e. smartphone, laptop, iPad, computer, with a camera, microphone and speakers; and a reliable internet connection.
- Melbourne Occupational Therapy Services will be responsible for the cost of calls to you and the cost associated with the platform used to conduct telehealth services
- Your occupational therapist will ask that you access a quiet, private, space to participate in the telehealth consultations.
- You may include a support person with you, as you might in a face-to-face consultation.
- You are not permitted to video or audio record the consultation, unless your occupational therapist gives you permission to do so.

What are the potential benefits of telehealth

- Telehealth may improve access to occupational therapy services
- Telehealth may reduce your need for travel
- Telehealth may decrease exposure to infectious disease

What are the potential risks of telehealth?

- Telehealth consultations may be impacted by technical problems which may affect the quality of the occupational therapy session
- There may be some components of the occupational therapy service for which telehealth is not appropriate or effective and a follow up face-to-face consultation may be required
- Telehealth may not feel the same as an onsite session



- Telehealth may be very new to you and may take time to become familiar with. If you have any concerns, please discuss these with your therapist as soon as possible.
- Telehealth may include practices and procedures that are not as well understood in a telehealth setting as they are onsite.
- Telehealth may increase exposure to privacy and digital security risks (see next section)

Will my privacy be protected?

Melbourne Occupational Therapy Services is subject to the Privacy Act 1988 and must comply with obligations related to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information, including through telehealth.

Your occupational therapist needs to collect and record personal information from you that is relevant to your situation, as a necessary part of the occupational therapy assessment and intervention that is conducted. The occupational therapist must maintain confidentiality and privacy standards during sessions, and in creating, keeping and transmitting records.

At times, audio and video recordings of sessions may be taken to support the occupational therapists work. The occupational therapist will inform you before a recording takes place and will provide you with the reason for doing so. You can refuse to be recorded for any reason.

A detailed description of how your personal information is managed, how you can access your personal information, and how to lodge any concerns or complaints about this service or how your personal information is managed must be provided to you by your occupational therapist on request.

While the occupational therapist is obligated to meet standards to protect your privacy and security, telecommunication, including video-conference, may increase exposure to hacking and other online risks; as with all online activities, there is no guarantee of complete privacy and security protection. You may decrease the risk by using a secure internet connection, meeting with the occupational therapist from a private location, and only communicating using secure channels.

What does informed consent mean?

There are a few important principles related to informed consent:

- **You must be given relevant information.** Ask the occupational therapist if you have questions about telehealth and the services offered.
- **You have the right to understand the information.** Ask the occupational therapist for more information if you do not understand.
- **You have the right to choose.** If you do not agree to telehealth, you may refuse to participate. You may agree to or refuse specific activities within the session.
- **You have the right to stop using telehealth anytime.** You can change your mind about telehealth or a specific activity or procedure, even in the middle of a session.
- **You can agree or refuse in writing or verbally.** You may give your consent using the form below. You may also give consent or change your mind by telling the occupational therapist. Consent and refusal that you give verbally will be documented by the occupational therapist.
- **You can ask about alternatives to telehealth.** If you refuse or change your mind about telehealth services, your occupational therapist will discuss any other options with you. The occupational therapist may or may not be able to offer alternative services.