



## TELEHEALTH INFORMATION SHEET



*This patient's home is 35km from the children's hospital. Videoconferences have saved multiple outpatient appointments and avoided a number of trips to the Emergency Department and admissions to hospital.*

### What is telehealth?

Telehealth is a safe form of communication that helps families stay in touch with their specialised health support services. Telehealth uses the internet to create a teleconference or videoconference link between the palliative care team, parents/carers or local health services. This allows family members to see and talk with their palliative care team from home.

Paediatric palliative care services have started using telehealth and are finding it a good way to meet the needs of children and their families. It is available for families living in Sydney or other NSW locations (including rural/remote areas).

### Who can participate in telehealth?

Parents/carers and other family members are all able to use telehealth to talk with the palliative care service. Local health teams can also be involved. These may include:

- Paediatricians
- General Practitioners
- Palliative care nurses
- Community health providers (e.g. nurses)
- Allied health (physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers)
- Other local hospital clinicians
- Schools

### What can be discussed during a telehealth session?

- Symptom management and medication review
- Psychological well-being of the child and family
- Goals of care
- Emergency plans
- End of life planning
- Assistance with practical issues such as equipment
- Education and advice when needed for local health teams
- Bereavement support

### What are the advantages of telehealth?

- Improved access to specialist palliative care at home or in a location closer to home
- Reduced isolation that may occur for families and local health providers
- Prompt symptom management
- Continuity of care
- Support and advice for families/carers
- Improved care for your child that is coordinated with your local health providers
- Less travel and time spent waiting for hospital appointments



NSW Paediatric Palliative  
Care Programme

the  
children's  
hospital at Westmead

The Sydney children's  
Hospitals Network

SYDNEY  
CHILDREN'S  
HOSPITAL  
RANDWICK

Part of the Sydney Children's  
Hospitals Network

Kaleidoscope  
HUNTER CHILDREN'S HEALTH NETWORK

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### What are the disadvantages of telehealth?

- Telehealth sessions may not always be clinically best for your child. The palliative care team may need to examine and assess your child in person, especially when they are unwell.
- A poor internet connection may cause the video or audio link to fail.
- Telehealth is only available during business hours and must be organised with the palliative care service prior.

### What equipment do I need for a telehealth consultation?

- Access to a good broadband internet connection
- An email address
- An iPad/iPhone, Android smart phone/tablet device or computer (Windows/Mac) that has a camera, microphone and speakers
- A private, well lit area where you will not be disturbed or interrupted during the consultation

It is possible for a telehealth session to be held with your local GP or community health service. It is best to talk to your palliative care team if you would like more information about organising this.

### What telehealth programs do we use?

- At The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) and Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick (SCH), the telehealth program "Healthdirect Video Call" is used.
- At John Hunter Children's Hospital Newcastle (JHCH), an app called "Scopia" is used.

### How to prepare for participation in telehealth

#### CHW and SCH

Families will be given an Information Sheet with simple instructions on how to set up a videocall with their palliative care team. It is important that the web browser Google Chrome is installed on your computer or lap top prior to the videoconference.

#### John Hunter Children's Hospital

The palliative care team will talk with you about what type of computer or mobile device you will be using to videoconference. Once they have this information, you will be given specific written instructions to help you prepare for the call.

### What if I prefer face-to-face consultations?

Families do not have to use telehealth if they prefer to meet with their palliative care team in person. Telehealth will always be available if you change your mind.

### How do I find out more about telehealth?

- Talk to your paediatric palliative care service if you are interested in telehealth.
- Consider talking to your GP, paediatrician or other local health teams if you would like them to be involved.

### Contact us

#### The Children's Hospital at Westmead

Ph: (02) 9845 0000 Fax: (02) 9845 2111

Business hours: 8.30am-5pm

Email: schn-chwppc@health.nsw.gov.au

#### Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick

Ph: (02) 9382 5429 Fax: (02) 9382 5680

Business hours: 8.30am-5pm

Email: SCHN-CNCPalliativeCare@health.nsw.gov.au

#### John Hunter Children's Hospital, Newcastle

Ph: (02) 4921 3387 Fax: (02) 4921 3599

Business hours: 8.30am-5pm

Email: HNELHD-PaedPallCare@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au