

## Online Video Consultations

### Preamble

The issue of whether remedial massage therapists or myotherapists can provide online video conferencing consultation for their clients is considered by: defining the terms, legal and medical requirement, therapist training and protection of the consumer.

Online Video Consultations are considered out of scope for members who hold the Certificate IV Massage in Therapy Practice.

*Remedial Massage* is the subjective and objective assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of the signs, symptoms and causes of biomechanical dysfunction or injury, using specific mobilisation techniques, in order to restore normal health and function<sup>i</sup>.

*Myotherapy* is a specialised manual therapy with a scope of practice aimed at assessment, treatment and prevention of specific musculoskeletal conditions and somatic dysfunction. Soft tissues include muscular and connective tissues and their within and between system interactions<sup>ii</sup>.

There are two recognised definitions of Online Video Conferencing Consultation, typically associated with the practice of medicine, but can extend to Allied Health Professionals. The International Organisation for Standardisation makes the following definition and distinction. Online Video Consultation is 'use of telecommunication techniques for the purpose of providing telemedicine, medical education, and health education over a distance', while drawing a distinction between this and telemedicine, which is defined as the 'use of advanced telecommunication technologies to exchange health information and provide health care services across geographic, time, social and cultural barriers'.<sup>iii</sup>

Video Conferencing takes place between two or more participants over a secure password protected network to improve access to healthcare services.<sup>iv</sup>

### Aim

This position statement is to serve as a guideline for remedial massage therapists and myotherapists who conduct online video consultation.

Every therapist has the right to make the decision as to the appropriateness of treatment in consultation with the client. However, decision making, and treatment protocols should be consistent in context with the pathology, within the scope of practice of the practitioner and in consultation with the client.

Without hands on treatment therapists are restricted to providing limited assessment taking appropriate Informed Consent and Record Keeping and Corrective Exercises and Exercise prescription. Depending on results, referrals should be made to a professional who can provide hands on treatment if necessary.

Providing an online video consultation for therapists with a Diploma of Remedial Massage is considered outside the scope of practice unless they have completed specialised training. This includes studies in Corrective Exercises and Exercise Prescription during their training with a recognised RTO or as part of ongoing training post Diploma by an institute qualified to teach these modalities OR as a separate physical education qualification, they may provide these treatments via Video Consultation. Recommendations and guidelines as provided in the Exercise Prescription and Corrective Exercise Position Statement must be adhered to.

Therapists should not complete an online video consultation unless they feel comfortable, and it is in their scope of practice.

### Process

Remedial massage therapists and myotherapists conducting online video consultations, should ensure they are maintaining appropriate Clinical Record Keeping as per the Massage & Myotherapy Australia Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Online Video Consultations may include:

- Informed Consent
- Assessment
- Corrective Exercise and/or;
- Exercise Prescription – which may include strength, stability and flexibility prescription.
- Referral/s
- Clinical Record Keeping must be maintained

Online video consultations are not eligible for rebate under the Private Health Funds Approved Provider Terms and Conditions for Remedial Massage Therapists or Myotherapists.

The Association recommends therapists contact their insurance provider, **prior to conducting any online video consultations** to establish whether your insurance will cover you while servicing clients remotely.

### Other Documents

- Code of Ethics, Standards and National Code of Conduct
- Informed Consent – Position Statement
- Exercise Prescription and Corrective Exercise Position Statement

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<sup>i</sup> PHIR submission

<sup>ii</sup> 22316VIC Advanced Diploma of Myotherapy 2016. 3.1 Industry / enterprise / community needs, p3

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishin\\_g.nsf/Content/e-health-telehealth](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishin_g.nsf/Content/e-health-telehealth)

<sup>iv</sup> ibid