

NBN Enabled Telehealth Pilot Programs

Frequently asked Questions

What is the NBN Telehealth Pilots Program?	2
Why is there funding for the NBN Telehealth Pilots Program?	2
Why were aged, cancer and palliative care patients chosen?	2
Who will benefit?	2
Does this Program integrate with Personally Controlled Electronic Health Records (PCEHR) at all?	2
What is defined as a home?	2
How is “aged care” categorised?	3
Does this link to the telehealth trials being undertaken in Armidale, Kiama and Townsville?	3
Guidelines	3
Where can I get a copy of the final guidelines?	3
Follow the links on the Program webpage http://www.health.gov.au/ehealth-nbntelehealth	3
Invitation to Apply (ITA)	3
Who is eligible?	3
What is the application process?	3
When do applications close?	3
How do organisations apply?	3
What is the nine box trial implementation plan framework?	3
Who is involved in the assessment process?	3
How is the assessment judged?	4
How long will the assessment process take?	4
Will my application be considered more favourably if I contribute funding?	4
When will successful applicants be notified?	4
Funding	4
How much funding is available?	4
What does the funding cover?	4
What can’t the funding be used for?	4
Who makes the decision on what projects are funded?	5
If I am a successful applicant, how will I receive funds?	5
Key dates and time frames	5
More Information	6
Are you aware of any similar projects?	6
What areas currently have access to the NBN?	6
Where should I look for information on GP After Hours, Personal Controlled Electronic Health Records (PCEHR), Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS).	6

What is the NBN Telehealth Pilots Program?

The \$20.6 million National Broadband Network (NBN) Enabled Telehealth Pilots Program is a new government initiative in response to the Government's Digital Economy Goal for improved health and aged care. The Program will provide funding to successful proposals for pilot projects to develop and deliver telehealth services to NBN-enabled homes with a focus on aged, palliative or cancer care services, including advance planning services. Funded projects will be expected to be sustainable and scalable to a national level as the NBN rollout progresses.

Why is there funding for the NBN Telehealth Pilots Program?

The NBN provides an opportunity to deploy advanced eHealth services and applications across the health care sector and support and increase participation in eHealth nation-wide.

The NBN supports the National E-Health Strategy recommendation that, to establish the national foundations for eHealth activity, broadband connectivity and infrastructure to all Australian health care providers is required. In addition, the Strategy states that improving access to healthcare services and advice from rural, remote and disadvantaged communities via electronic means, such as telehealth, will improve accessibility and support the Government's health reform priorities.

Why were aged, cancer and palliative care patients chosen?

People requiring aged care, cancer care or palliative care, usually require complex and co-ordinated care. These same people are often limited in their ability to access timely and appropriate care, whether due to mobility, health issues, location or isolation.

As telehealth minimises the effects of these barriers this Program puts us in the best position to provide positive outcomes to individuals who most require access to high quality healthcare services.

Who will benefit?

This project will benefit individuals receiving aged care, cancer or palliative care services in NBN early release sites, by reducing the need for travel, increasing access to healthcare services and specialists.

Does this Program integrate with Personally Controlled Electronic Health Records (PCEHR) at all?

This Program is not dependant on the PCEHR, however to maximise the benefit of both Programs, successful applicants will be encouraged to upload information to the PCEHR where possible. For further information on the PCEHR please refer to the National E-Health Transitory Authority (NEHTA) webpage:

<http://www.nehta.gov.au/ehealth-implementation/what-is-a-pcehr>

What is defined as a home?

For the purposes of the Program, an NBN-enabled home refers to an individual's primary place of residence that is connected to the NBN via fibre (either through the fibre rollout or in new developments), fixed wireless or the interim satellite solution. While primarily expected to refer to residential premises, this may also include alternative premises that are a primary place of residence, such as an aged care facility or palliative care home. Services or resources delivered over the NBN require connections through a Retail Service Provider; these providers are listed on www.nbnco.com.au.

How is “aged care” categorised?

For the purposes of this Program, ‘aged care’ should be defined as people who have been assessed and approved for Australian Government subsidised aged care services. This will limit the scope to people with complex care needs, but will include those who are awaiting services.

What are the long term, recurrent or ongoing funding of routine service delivery costs?

The program funds are only available from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2014. There is no scope under this project to amend the current MBS items.

Is telehealth not being used already?

Yes. Telehealth is being used for service delivery across the country. This Program aims to use the increased reliability and capability of the NBN to enhance what services can be provided via telehealth.

Does this link to the telehealth trials being undertaken in Armidale, Kiama and Townsville?

The telehealth trials in Armidale, Kiama and Townsville are being co-ordinated by the Department of Broadband, Communication and the Digital Economy and more information can be found at <http://www.dbcde.gov.au>. These trials are independent of the NBN Enabled Telehealth Pilots Program.

Guidelines**Where can I get a copy of the final guidelines?**

Follow the links on the Program webpage <http://www.health.gov.au/ehealth-nbntelehealth>

Invitation to Apply (ITA)**Who is eligible?**

Applications will be encouraged from a wide range of organisations and consortia including those that specialise in the delivery of telehealth cancer care, palliative care and aged care services in regional, rural, and remote areas.

What is the application process?

The application process and criteria are described in the draft guidelines.

When do applications close?

Applications will close 2pm, Eastern Standard Time 17 May 2012.

How do organisations apply?

Organisations can apply by completing the application form which will be enclosed in the invitation to apply. A hard copy of the application will need to be submitted to the department by the closing date.

What is the nine box trial implementation plan framework?

The nine-box trial implementation plan framework is a project development tool designed to assist in the planning, implementation and evaluation of pilots. Completion of an implementation plan based on this framework will be required as a first project deliverable for successful applicants.

Assessment**Who is involved in the assessment process?**

Relevant people within the department, as well as appropriate representatives from other government agencies, will participate in the assessment process. The assessment panel will include people involved in aged care, cancer care or palliative care or telehealth services.

Additionally, the department will seek the opinions of probity, financial, technical or legal advisors if required.

How is the assessment judged?

Applications will be assessed against the selection criteria outlined in the guidelines. Further details will be provided in the invitation to apply.

How long will the assessment process take?

An indicative timetable for the assessment process will be detailed in the invitation to apply, however, this will depend on the number of applications received.

Will my application be considered more favourably if I contribute funding?

Yes. Private and community organisations are encouraged, but not required, to include co-contributions as part of their application. Project proponents should specify the level and type of co-contributions that they are offering. The level of co-contribution that is offered will be taken into account in competitive assessment of project proposals. State and territory government co-contributions will also be considered favourably.

State and territory government organisations must provide evidence of matched funds or in-kind support if applying for funding.

When will successful applicants be notified?

Successful applicants will be notified in writing about the results of the application process as soon as possible after the assessment process. Successful applicants may then be invited to enter into contract negotiations with the intent of commencing projects from 1 July 2012.

Unsuccessful applicants will not be notified of the results of the process until contracts with successful organisations have been executed.

Funding

How much funding is available?

Up to \$20.6 million (GST exclusive) of the Program funding will be available to fund projects over the life of the Program.

The amount of funding provided for individual Telehealth Pilots will generally be around \$1 million to \$3 million (GST exclusive). Higher levels of funding may be available for Pilot projects that are able to demonstrate exceptional prospective benefits.

What does the funding cover?

Funding can be used for capital and infrastructure purposes. Some examples of the appropriate funds usage are:

- equipment, for example tablet devices or computers;
- service delivery (unless this is funded through alternative sources);
- staffing and on-costs;
- administrative costs (including legal, accounting and insurance); and
- costs to support the local steering / reference group.

What can't the funding be used for?

Activities/capital that will not be funded include:

- activities or equipment that duplicate existing resources or initiatives;
- long-term, recurrent or ongoing funding of routine service delivery costs; and
- activities that assist only a sole individual or organisation with no impact on the wider community.

Who makes the decision on what projects are funded?

The Minister for Health will make the decision, in conjunction with Minister for Broadband, Communication and the Digital Economy.

If I am a successful applicant, how will I receive funds?

You will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the department.

You will then be required to submit an invoice to the department, along with sufficient proof that progress has been made on the project.

Key dates and time frames

Key dates include:

- call for Applications in early April 2012, with applications closing 2pm, Eastern standard time 17 May 2012;
- pilots will be announced when funding agreements are executed;
- Funding Agreements will commence from July 2012;
- final overall project reports will be required by June 2014; and
- an evaluation of the Program will be conducted in 2014.

If I have a complaint about the process, what should I do?

If you have a complaint please forward a written letter to the Program manager and the complaint will be managed by the appropriate person in the department.

Where to find further out information?

Information is available on the Department of Health and Ageing webpage,

<http://www.health.gov.au>, in the ehealth /telehealth section. For further information please contact the department at the email address: NBNtelepilots@health.gov.au.

More Information

Are you aware of any similar projects?

You may be interested in the Department of Veterans' Affairs In-Home Telemonitoring for Veterans trial (see www.dva.gov.au for more information). For information on other NBN-related initiatives, please refer to www.nbn.gov.au

What areas currently have access to the NBN?

Please refer to the NBNC Co website at <http://www.NBNC.com.au> or the NBN website at <http://www.NBN.gov.au>

If I want more information on the NBN, where should I look?

Information is available at the following webpages:

<http://www.NBN.gov.au>

<http://www.dbcde.gov.au>

<http://www.NBNC.com.au>

Where should I look for information on GP After Hours, Personal Controlled Electronic Health Records (PCEHR), Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS).

Further information is available on these Programs at:

<http://www.nehta.gov.au/ehealth-implementation/what-is-a-pcher>

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/gpahp-lp>

<http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/connectinghealthservices-eligible-geo>