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Telehealth visit with Dr Mossman Neurologist

Telehealth is the use of videoconferencing technology to conduct a medical consultation (see <http://www.racptelehealth.com.au/> click Resources). With Covid-19 shutdown in New Zealand, I am offering online video consultations with Skype or Zoom.

In most cases of medicine, the history is a more important assessment of problems than the examination. Nevertheless, an abbreviated examination would be performed online as already occurs by Video-link in after-hours stroke care. However, after Covid-19 has resolved, I would offer a full examination as need be for reassurance if symptoms had not settled, with a normal follow-up fee.

Endorsement of Telehealth. Telehealth has been used pre Covid-19 and has also been endorsed by Southern Cross Medical Insurance, Medical Specialist Colleges and the ACC.

A video consultation for new patients would, apart from some aspects of the physical neurological examination, be the same as a normal consultation visit in terms of:

1. Ascertaining the problem from your doctor's referral letter.
2. Asking you to present your symptoms.
3. Dr Mossman asking additional questions.
4. A neurological examination would be assessed by:

Eye movements with your eyes following your thumb moving slowly to the right and left while looking downwards; then quickly looking up, looking down, looking to the left and right.

Facial weakness by asking you to grimace or blow out your cheeks.

Tongue movements your ability to quickly enunciate "la la la", open your mouth and move your tongue quickly side to side and poke out your tongue.

Hearing by asking you to rub your fingers together comparing your left and right ear hearing.

Motor function by asking you to shrug your shoulders and then separately to put your arms out in front of you with your eyes closed, looking for any drift of one arm.

Hand dexterity by asking you to:

- (i) stretch one arm out in front of you and with the opposite hand touch the index finger of your outstretched hand; then touch the tip of your nose with the same hand.
- (ii) make rapid sequential tapping movements of your fingers of one hand against the palm of the other hand (like a galloping horse).

Balance

- (i) your ability to stand still with your eyes closed
- (ii) walking across the room
- (iii) your ability to walk heel to toe in a straight line

Sensation by asking you to

- (i) compare the touch sensation of a light touch on your feet to that on your thighs
- (ii) cold temperature perception by asking you to compare the coldness of a spoon on your feet compared to on your thighs

The plantar reflex by asking a household member to gently scrape the outer aspect of the sole of your foot moving from the heel to the toes with a blunt metal teaspoon handle, after checking that I can see you on the screen.

Additional tests of motor function would be performed if necessary.

A video consultation does have some limitations with respect to examining your eyes, motor strength and your inner ear balance function.

5. Dr Mossman would then make an analysis/summary and subsequently dictate a letter, with copies to yourself and your General Practitioner/referring doctor.

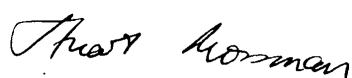
Requirements for a Telehealth consultation

1. **Referral letter.** If you would like an appointment, a referral letter from your GP or Specialist is a prerequisite.
2. **Patient action.** Please request a Telehealth consultation (**Contact Dr Mossman**)
3. **Questionnaire.** We will email you a medical questionnaire after your referral is received.
4. **Zoom appointment time and link.** Dr Mossman will email the appointment time and Zoom link after your questionnaire has been returned.
5. **Room acoustics and size.** **You will need a quiet room with good acoustics.** For example, rather than the hard surfaces of a kitchen, a room with soft furnishings such as a lounge would be suitable. A room of sufficient size would be required to assess your ability to walk.
6. **Lighting.** Any lighting should be in front or above you, but not behind you.
7. **Type of internet connection.** Please check connectivity for technical issues the day before your consultation and see <http://www.speedtest.net/> This ensures a video consultation will work. Upload and download internet speeds need to be greater than 0.7Mb/s.
8. **Disruptions.** Please ensure that the consultation is free from disruptions, e.g. phone ringing.
9. **Support person.** A household member can hold the tablet or laptop as necessary when I ask you to perform certain parts of the examination or help with any technical difficulties.
10. **Zoom consultation.** Please click on the **Zoom link** at your appointment time and be ready to proceed as above.

Starting and performing the Telehealth visit

1. **Identification and consent.** Dr Mossman would ensure that he is identifying the correct patient with your name and date of birth and that verbal consent is given for the Telehealth visit.
2. **Note taking.** As is normal practice, Dr Mossman would ask questions during the consultation, take notes and perform a clinical examination as outlined above.
3. **Letter.** After the consultation Dr Mossman would dictate your letter and forward it to your referring doctor with a copy to yourself.
4. **Technical failure or unsatisfactory consultation.** If the Telehealth visit fails for any reason, then Dr Mossman would suggest a one-to-one in person consultation post the Covid-19 crisis.
5. **After Covid-19 has resolved,** and if your symptoms have not settled, please contact neurology@mossman.net.nz and Dr Mossman would offer a full examination as a follow up patient as needs be.
6. **Consultation time** is one hour for new patients and 30 mins for follow up patients. This includes time dictating the letter offline.
7. **The consultation fee** for new patients is \$510 and \$265 for follow up patients, with any extra time charged proportionately.

Contact Dr Mossman. If you wish to engage in a Telehealth consultation, please email neurology@mossman.net.nz


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