

MEDIA RELEASE

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Telehealth must be made permanent

The **Australian Association of Psychologists (AAPi)** says telehealth must be made a permanent part of Australia's healthcare system

AAPi Executive Director Tegan Carrison welcomed the six month extension as part of this year's Budget, but said certainty and permanency was needed now.

"Telehealth does not cost the government any extra money. It is simply a different delivery method of healthcare," she said.

"The way a service is delivered - whether face to face or via telehealth - should be a decision made by the client and their own health professional, based on individual circumstances."

Ms Carrison said telehealth had increased access to psychologists for hundreds of thousands of Australians and become a life saving option for many who would struggle to physically see a registered psychologist.

"We need a responsive healthcare system that can adapt to the changes occurring in our society and telehealth is a perfect example of this.

"The fact that 54 million telehealth services were delivered to 13.5 million patients in the space of 12 months makes it a no-brainer. Stop extending telehealth and make it permanent."

A survey of AAPi members in October 2020 found that 91 percent of psychologists supported telehealth being made permanent.

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About Australian Association of Psychologists Inc (AAPi):

The AAPi is a not-for-profit peak body for psychologists that aims to preserve the rich diversity of psychological practice in Australia. Formed in 2010 by a group of passionate grassroots psychologists, the AAPi's primary goal is to address inequality in the profession and represent all psychologists and their clients equally to government and funding bodies. Its primary mission is to lobby for equitable access for the Australian public to professional psychological services funded under the current Medicare Better Access Scheme.

About Tegan Carrison, Executive Director, AAPi:

Tegan has spent over 15 years in public health promotion and is passionate about advocating for the rights of health care professionals and improving access for the community. After studying Nutrition and Health Promotion at Deakin University, Tegan went on to become an experienced clinical educator, supervisor, and mentor, including starting a

student-led interprofessional clinic with the University of Queensland's not-for-profit UQ Health Care. Tegan also brings a wealth of experience in business management, administration and human resource management. She is passionate and dedicated to improving access to mental health services and creating the leading members association for psychologists in Australia.