

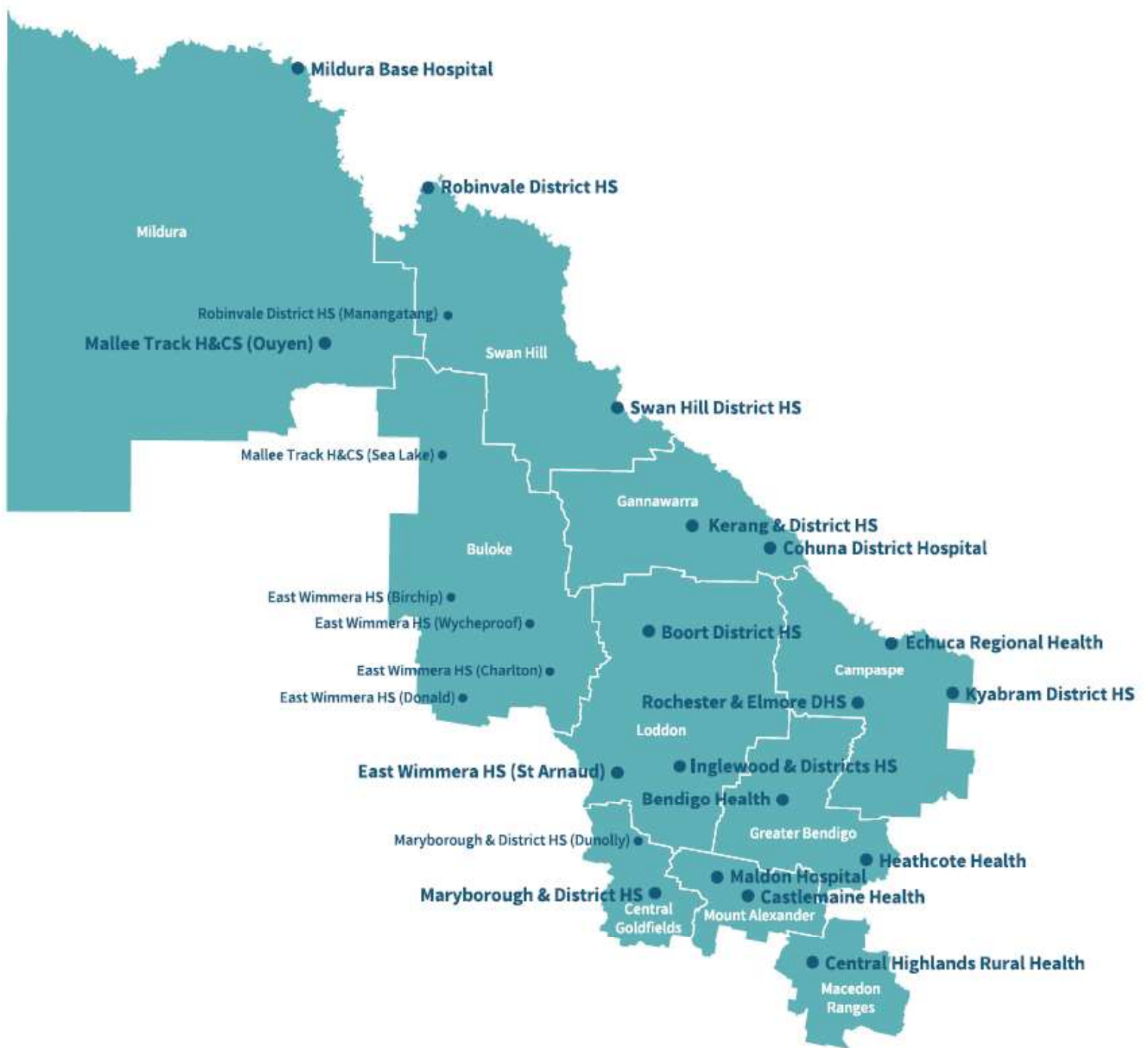


Loddon Mallee
Health Network

Loddon Mallee Region Telehealth Strategy

2022-2025





Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The Loddon Mallee Health Network would like to acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the traditional owners of the lands represented in the Loddon Mallee Region. We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Indigenous Peoples. We express our gratitude in sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

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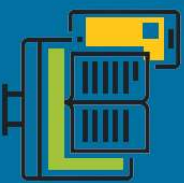
Loddon Mallee Region Telehealth Strategy in Summary

Statement of Intent: To embed telehealth across the Loddon Mallee Region

Definitions: Embed = Telehealth is a routine, viable and accessible option

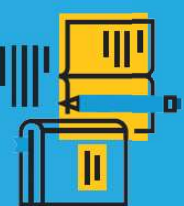
Telehealth = The use of video, telephone, remote monitoring, store and forward and mHealth

Goals & Objectives:



Increase the use of Telehealth Technologies enabling the delivery of healthcare to consumers in their locality

- Support delivery of care via telehealth to enable patients to receive care closer to home
- Support all regional health services to provide care via telehealth



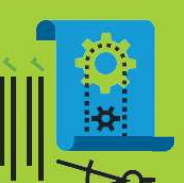
Use Telehealth to build local clinical capacity and capability

- Consumers are able to confidently access healthcare via digital media
- Consumers are confident that care delivered by telehealth meets their needs
- Safety and quality of care is maintained
- Best practice telehealth resources are available to ensure standardisation in service provision



Increase consumer confidence in the use of Telehealth

- Empower and support the workforce to embrace telehealth
- Transform practice through the use of digital technologies
- Resources are available to support telehealth across the region
- Health services have access to a telehealth role to support and build local clinical capacity and capability



Ensure sustainability of Telehealth

- A Governance structure is developed to support the delivery of health care via digital media
- Technology enablement strategies are shared across the region
- Health services have processes, policies and guidelines in place for telehealth

Context

The Loddon Mallee Region (LMR) Telehealth Strategy has been developed following consultation with regional health service CEOs to develop the statement of intent and goals, and then key stakeholders from across the region to produce the objectives that form the basis of the action plan. The LMR Telehealth Strategy reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to maximise the delivery of additional specialist appointments in regional areas, focusing on increasing access to specialist care in a timely manner and closer to their locality. The drive to embed telehealth as an enabler to access health care is emphasised in National, State and Regional Strategies. This Strategy aligns in the following ways:

National

- National Digital Health Strategy - aligns with all 7 strategic priority outcomes, particularly P1,2,3,5 &6
- A National Digital Inclusion Roadmap - aligns with Vision to reduce the digital divide and enable greater social and economic participation for everyone in Australia

State

- Health 2040: Advancing health, access and care - specifically aligns with Better Access, providing easier access via telehealth and linking people to the full array of health professionals regardless of where they live
- Digitising Health Strategy - new Digital Health Roadmap for Victoria is in its final stages of development and is expected to be publicly available during July 2021. "Will assist Victoria's public health sector when investing in digital health investment, removing the risk of disruption of health service delivery, connecting health care and providing consumers with greater involvement in their health care and where it is delivered."
- Victoria's 30 year Infrastructure Strategy Draft 2021 - Objective 2: Foster healthy, safe and inclusive communities & Objective 3: Reduce Disadvantage (Page 13 & 17); Section 1. Confront long-term challenges: 1.3 Embrace technological opportunities; 2.1. Use innovation to deliver better models of healthcare

Loddon Mallee

- Loddon Mallee Health Network (LMHN) Regional Plan 2020+ - closely aligned with the Vision of "Shaping the future of health service delivery to give our communities a great experience throughout the Loddon Mallee Region", particularly in aligning with strategic priority 2 and moving forward the goal of using technology in new ways.
- Loddon Mallee Shared Services (LMSS) Virtual Health Strategy - contributes to the Vision to connect the region and provide care anywhere at anytime with a focus on consumer directed care.

Purpose

The purpose of the LMR Telehealth Strategy is to describe the shared strategic goals and objectives around telehealth service provision that have been prioritised by our regional health services.

An Action Plan has been developed and will be updated annually to track the progress against the actions outlined in this plan.

Definition

Telehealth consultations provide a patient consultation through video or telephone instead of face-to-face. It involves the use of "information and communications technologies (ICTs) to deliver health services and transmit health information over both long and short distances" . It uses the transmission of images, voice, and data between two or more sites using telecommunications to provide health services, such as clinical advice, consultation, education, and training services. The three main modalities of telehealth are:

- 1.Remote patient monitoring – monitoring patient health and clinical information at a distance.
- 2.Store-and-forward – transmission of images or information from one healthcare provider to another.
- 3.Telehealth consultations – connection between a patient and healthcare provider/s through an audio or video enabled device .

The World Health Organisation (WHO) identified that the unprecedented spread of mobile technologies as well as advancements in their innovative application to address health priorities has evolved into a new field of eHealth, known as mHealth. WHO defines mHealth as "the use of mobile and wireless technologies to support the achievement of health objectives"

¹ Australian Digital Health Agency 2020 Telehealth Consultations for Specialist Practices Fact Sheet. <https://specialist-toolkit.digitalhealth.gov.au/static/Telehealth-Consultations-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

² World Health Organisation (WHO) 2011 mHealth: New horizons for health through mobile technologies: second global survey on eHealth. ISBN 978 92 4 156425 0 https://www.who.int/goe/publications/goe_mhealth_web.pdf

Consultation

During the development of the strategy, a survey was sent out to key stakeholders at each organisation and workshops were held across the region, the feedback from these was used to formulate the objectives and subsequent action plan. Through this process barriers and enablers were identified as well as both the opportunities telehealth presents across the region and the benefits that can be gained through the use of telehealth .

A quick snapshot from the surveys showed the following:

- 67% of health service have a policy/protocol or guidelines
- 50% have troubleshooting guides or on-site contacts to assist in the event of a technology failure
- 50% have identified the data required for reporting purposes
- < 30% have undertaken a consumer experience survey
- Consumer support is varied across the region
- A training needs analysis across the region is not yet done
- 33% have training resources available for staff

*"In one or two words,
what opportunities do
you think Telehealth
will provide?"*



Benefits of Telehealth

Patients and their families/Carers



- Reduction in travel costs
- Reduced number of work time lost to attend appointments
- Improved access to services
- Reduced social isolation
- Greater ability for family consults regardless of where they are
- Increased ability to receive treatment closer to home

Health Care Workers



- Greater access to continuing education and professional development
- Increased opportunities for supported learning
- Increased opportunities for networking and collaboration
- Reduced travel time



Health System

- Reduced expenses related to patient transport
- Reduced need to send cases to larger health services
- Reduced costs involved in sending staff on home visits or other health services



Telehealth Review

Barriers

- Funding models and lack of financial incentives
- Telehealth not being embedded into clinician's practice and workflow and this impacts their capacity and capability to embrace digital technology
- Aging Population in the LMR
- Access to appropriate technology, internet and adequate bandwidth
- Concerns around consent, security, confidentiality and medicolegal implications in a rapidly evolving ICT security environment
- Interoperability of systems
- Lack of Governance, strategic direction and guidance
- Paucity of literature around clinical outcomes through the use of telehealth
- Lack of appreciation of the rural and remote ICT environment and challenges.
- Escalating costs to support digital technologies and increasing demands upon remote infrastructure may inhibit our ability to leverage new technology for improved clinical service delivery.

Enablers

- Lack of specialist availability across the region
- COVID 19 and the increased need to utilise digital technologies
- Strong health network and senior support across the region
- Appetite to engage in telehealth and support patients particularly in the smaller health services
- Evolving technology
- Health workforce more familiar with the use of technology
- Federal and state governmental support and policy changes around the use of digital technologies
- Effective planning
- Greater access to technology
- Governance and co-ordination of telehealth and associated digital technologies
- Greater awareness of the need for interoperability
- More research into outcomes of telehealth enabled models and their impact on population health
- Increased opportunities for collaboration and peer support
- Opportunities for equitable service delivery

Virtual Health

Linking
stakeholders in
the ecosystem

From well-being
to acute and
post-acute care

Accessible at home,
on the move, as well
as in-hospital

Virtual health is a healthcare delivery approach that is driving continuous, connected, coordinated care across the continuum via digital and telecommunication technologies

Encompassing
asynchronous, synchronous
and hybrid modalities

Digital enabled products, platforms and experiences
relating to communication, medicines management
and other health services

- Deloitte, 2019 (Virtual Care)



Statement of Intent

"To embed telehealth across the
Loddon Mallee Region"

Embed = Telehealth is a routine, viable and accessible option.

Telehealth = The use of video, telephone, remote monitoring, store and forward and mHealth.

Goals

1. Increase the use of Telehealth technologies enabling the delivery of healthcare to consumers in their locality
2. Use Telehealth to complement and build local clinical capacity and capability
3. Increase consumer confidence in the use of Telehealth
4. Ensure sustainability of Telehealth



Goal One

Increase the use of Telehealth technologies enabling the delivery of healthcare to consumers in their locality

Objectives

- Improve and uplift telehealth regionally to support all regional, sub regional and smaller health services to provide services via telehealth
- Support delivery of services and models of care via telehealth/virtual care so patients can receive care closer to home or in the home i.e. other non-admitted and admitted and sub-acute services





Goal Two

Use Telehealth to complement and build local clinical capacity and capability

Objectives

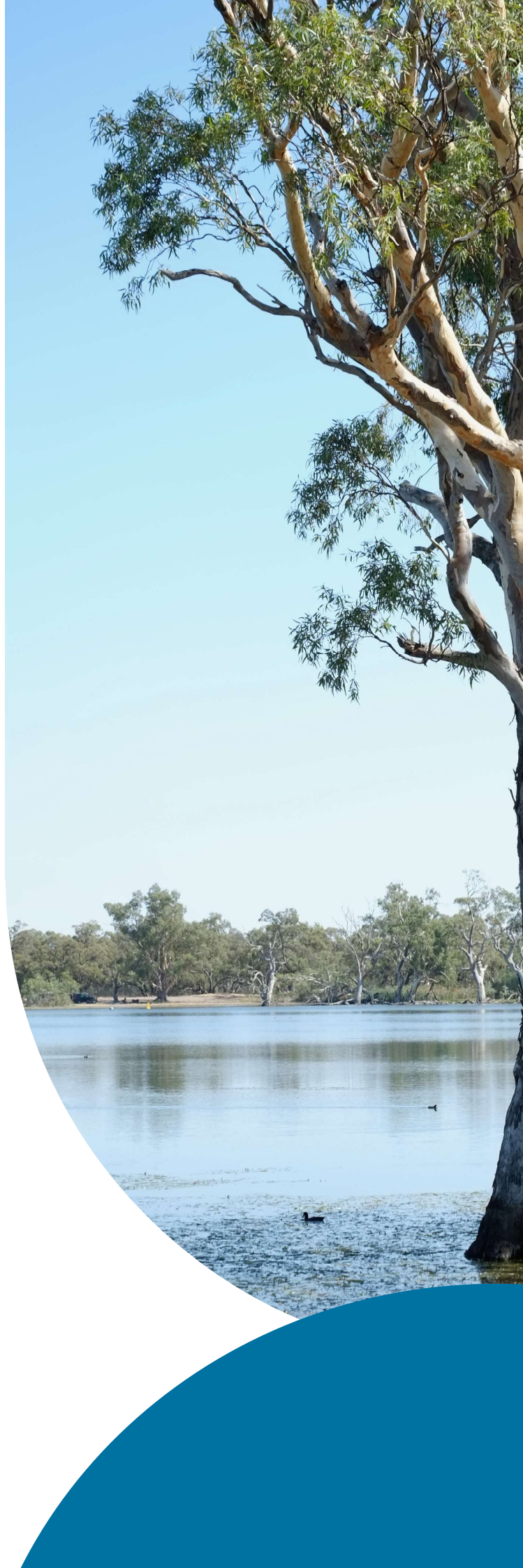
- The LMR health workforce is empowered and supported to embrace telehealth as a 'business as usual' model of care
- Health care practices are transforming through the use of digital technologies
- Each health service has a key telehealth role to support and build local clinical capacity and capability
- Best practice telehealth resources are developed at a regional level and adapted by all health services to ensure a standardised approach to telehealth service provision

Goal Three

Increase consumer confidence in the use of Telehealth

Objectives

- Consumers are able to access their healthcare via digital media with confidence and are actively seeking this form of contact where appropriate
- Consumers are confident that care delivered by telehealth meets their healthcare needs
- Safety and quality of care is maintained via telehealth





Goal Four.

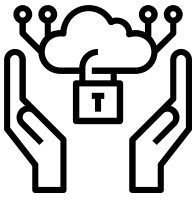
Ensure sustainability of
Telehealth

Objectives

- Governance structure is developed to support the delivery of health care via a digital media across the region
- Shared tools and resources and a unified approach across the region
- Local health services have processes, policies and guidelines in place for telehealth which are endorsed by the Executive and integrated into service delivery
- Resources are allocated to support ongoing telehealth support roles across the region
- Share technology enablement strategies across the regional health sector (e.g. MPHN)

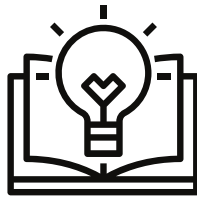
Telehealth

Technology



- Devices
- Interoperability
- WiFi Access

Education

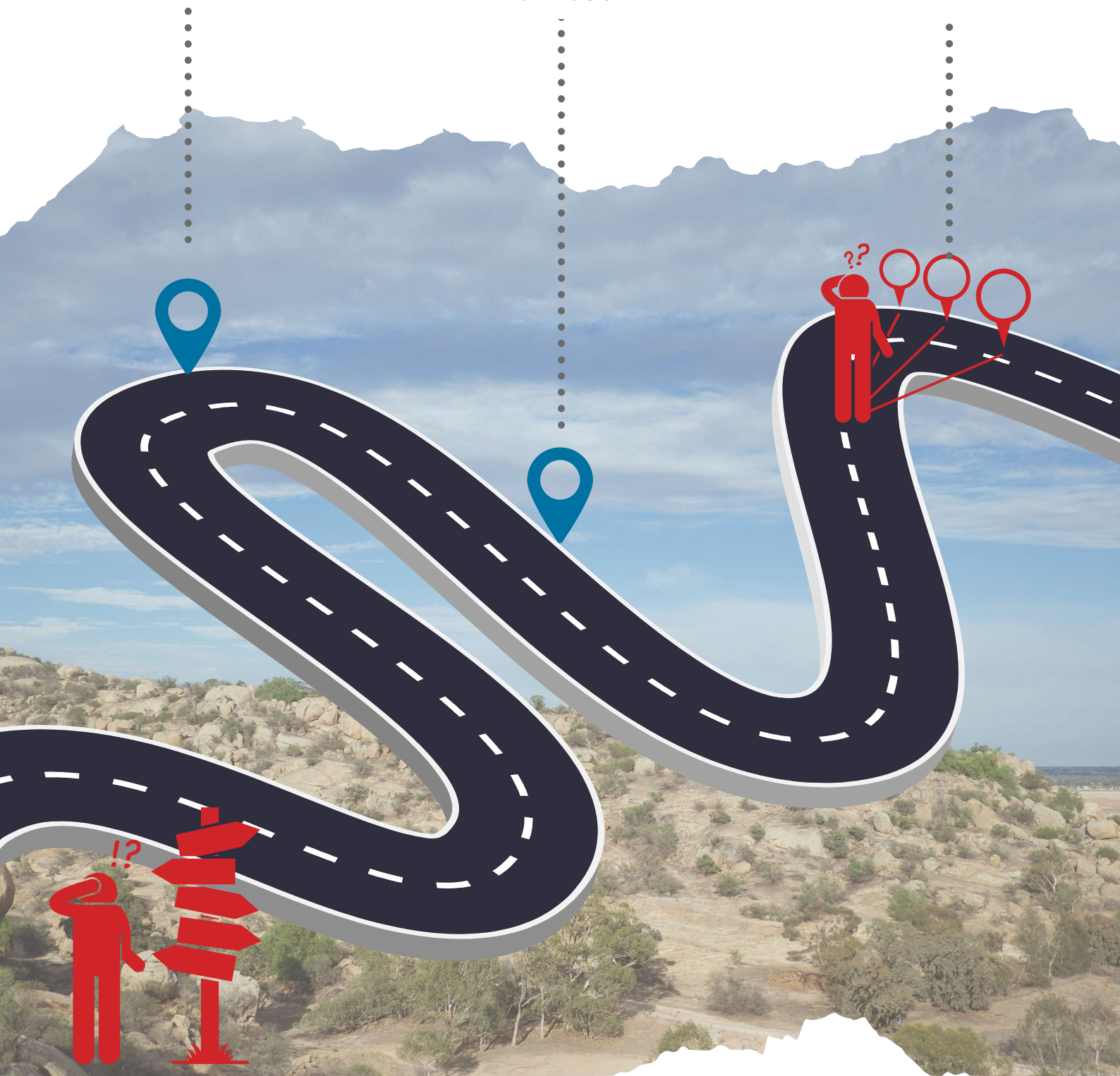


- Access
- How to guides
- Patient information

Support



- Pathways
- Models of Care
- Technical support
- Troubleshooting



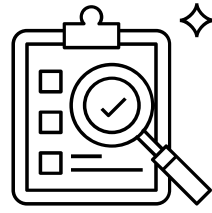
Roadmap

Governance



- Policies
- oversight
- Reporting

Evaluation



- Satisfaction questionnaires
- Outcome measurement



Action Plan Year One

Goal One

- Determine the baseline number of telehealth services being provided across all LMR health services
- Identify health services that are not currently using telehealth and explore barriers and enablers
- Local needs analysis
- Identify telehealth equipment needs
- Regional black spot connectivity identification and advocacy for resolution
- Identify best practice telehealth service delivery and models of care and explore their application to LMR health services
- Implement new or enhance existing telehealth in an increased number of clinical contexts
- Provide information on cost-benefits of Telehealth from stakeholder perspectives

Goal Two

- Relevant staff are trained in telehealth consultations to support them in service provision
- Identify gaps between current processes/practices and those required to operationalise the strategic plan
- Models for remote education, training, clinical support and supervision are developed and implemented
- Develop regional and rural staff telehealth portal
- Identify resources to support key telehealth support roles

Goal Three

- Explore the development of community telehealth hubs to support consumers who cannot access telehealth in their homes
- Promote and market the benefits of telehealth to the community
- Develop a suite of patient information, resources and supports
- Review workflows and tools to assess patient suitability for telehealth and develop/adopt uniform triage criteria for telehealth suitability

Goal Four

- Determine appropriate governance structure to oversee and drive the Strategy and the associated action plan
- Develop systems to facilitate the monitoring and reporting of clinic data at an individual health service level and across the region
- Determine ongoing resourcing of telehealth human and infrastructure supports, provide recommendations for these and develop a business plan



*"There's a need to have...
tailored documents approved...a
proper way of training staff and
recording telehealth activity
data and consumer
satisfaction"*

Action Plan Year Two

Goal One

- Investigate available technologies for shared care pathways
- Leverage innovative technology advancements to deliver care as close as possible to the home regardless of modality
- Explore an app portal for clinically-approved apps for our community
- Explore analytics to move from a descriptive toward a more predictive/preventative model of care
- Explore partnerships to utilise data for predictive individual healthcare leveraging analytical algorithm technology to enable personalised care and early identification of patients at risk of chronic disease

Goal Two

- Streamline electronic processes for clinical outcomes, required diagnostic services and communication with relevant health care providers to encourage utilisation during a telehealth consultation
- Establish a regional telehealth/virtual care community of practice
- Expand & maintain regional and rural staff telehealth portal

Goal Three

- Survey patient experience of telehealth
- Research to measure user acceptance including:
 - Surveys – consumer and clinician
 - Clinical outcomes
 - Health and wellbeing outcomes

Goal Four

- Endorse and implement replacement patient administration and enterprise interoperability systems

*"Travel to
review appointments
is high cost financially...when
telehealth consults with a
clinician sitting in at our end can
achieve the same outcome without
the burden."*

Action Plan Year Three

Goal One

- Embed standardised technology for in-home monitoring, remote point of care devices, virtual health care and related video consultations
- Continue to leverage digital solutions that support alternative care models to reduce staff travel and increase efficiencies e.g., wearables, smart devices, precision medicine, genomics, drones, AI/machine learning, robotics, big data, virtual reality for therapeutic support

Goal Two

- Embed education and training program
- Embed usage and updating of the regional and rural staff telehealth portal
- Continued support of regional Victorian Telehealth Community of Practice

Goal Three

- Establish automated consumer feedback mechanisms to continuously monitor experience, satisfaction and outcomes
- Evaluation of impacts on health outcomes and regional burden of disease

Goal Four

- Determine ongoing governance and sustainability requirements
- Establish standardised processes for integration of all VC/telehealth programs into health services medical records

"Flexible funding models that support telehealth across the region at all levels....accompanying funding for capital and initial establishment costs."

