Accessing rehabilitation with telehealth

Benefits of using telehealth for rehabilitation

- Access care from anywhere
- Find a time that suits you
- Empower people to become independent
- Reduce hospital stays
- Manage long-term conditions
- Access to physiotherapy services
- No travel if you are ill or have mobility restrictions
- Eliminate cross-infection risks

What is telehealth?
Telehealth or eHealth is the use of electronic communications to share medical information to improve a person’s health.

Why use telehealth?
COVID-19 has affected face to face time between healthcare professionals, including physiotherapists, and patients. Telehealth means you can access physiotherapy services from your own home.

As movement experts, physiotherapists can play an important role in the COVID-19 pandemic and help people who are at risk of functional decline during periods of social distancing and quarantine.
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When to use telehealth

Physiotherapists are using telehealth to support patients and treat a wide range of conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- chronic heart failure
- type 2 diabetes
- rheumatic disease
- mental health conditions
- musculoskeletal conditions
- cancer
- post surgery (e.g., hip, knee replacement)

What to consider before your telehealth appointment

1. Are you going to use a computer, laptop, tablet or other mobile device?
2. Do you have a strong and reliable internet connection?
3. Make sure your microphone, speakers/headphones, webcam are working
4. Don’t have a good internet connection? You can use your landline telephone
5. Would you like a family member or friend to be with you for the consultation?
6. You may be asked to move around or do some exercises so plan what you are going to wear
7. Make a list of the questions you want to ask

Prepare for your appointment as if it were a face to face meeting and make sure you have your physiotherapist’s telephone number in case there are technical difficulties

Telehealth can be as effective as conventional methods of healthcare delivery to improve physical function and pain for a range of musculoskeletal conditions
Information sources for fact sheets and further reading:

Benefits of using telehealth for rehabilitation.
Introduction to telehealth, Physiopedia

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New to physiotherapy and telehealth? Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapy

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Telehealth. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

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Cottrell MA, Galea OA, O'Leary SP, Hill AJ, Russell TG. Real-time telerehabilitation for the treatment of musculoskeletal conditions is effective and comparable to standard practice: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Clinical Rehabilitation 2017 May;31(5):625-638