

## Abstract Form

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**Title of abstract:** Delivering cancer genetic counselling via Telehealth – insights from the CONTACT pilot study

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### Background:

Access to cancer genetic counselling is an issue for patients from rural, remote and urban backgrounds and for cancer patients managing the competing demands of work, family life and treatment. Telehealth, or health care delivered by videoconferencing, has the potential to improve access by giving patients a convenient and cost-saving alternative to face-to-face appointments. Previous research has demonstrated that telemedicine delivered by a Clinical Geneticist is effective and equivalent to face-to-face consultations (Zilliagus et al., 2011). However, telehealth has not been evaluated in Australia for cancer genetic counselling. Additionally, the new direct-to-patient Telehealth platform PEXIP is yet to be evaluated in cancer genetics.

### Aims:

To explore patient and genetic counsellor experiences and the psychological impact of telehealth in cancer genetic counselling.

### Method:

We aim to recruit 60 participants for the pilot study. Participants will be randomised to receive telehealth, telephone or in-person genetic counselling appointments. Participants will complete pre- and post-appointment questionnaires to measure psychological distress, engagement with their genetic counsellor and satisfaction with telehealth. Patients having telephone and telehealth appointments will also answer brief interview questions exploring technological issues. Genetic counsellors will complete post-appointment questionnaires to assess satisfaction with telehealth and their perceived interactions with the patient. Descriptive statistics will be used for data analysis.

**Results:**

We will present results from the pilot study. We anticipate these results will demonstrate the non-inferiority of telehealth in the delivery of cancer genetic counselling compared to standard care.