Expansion of Telehealth in remote NA

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History of Telehealth

- Aeromedical Service
- eHealth
- Video conferencing & digital diagnostic tools

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NT Context:

- 32% population Indigenous
- 79% live in remote communities (ABS, 2011)
- > 100 remote clinics
- Many of these have poor access to internet
- >30 communities with >100 people – not internet! (NTG)
- NTG & Telstra – collaborative program eg Timber Creek => ADSL
- NTG invested in National Telehealth Connection Service (NTCS)

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Northern Territory Government:

- 1,100 consults => $1.2 mill
- Keen to increase telehealth uptake
- Significant funding allocated

NBN satellites are unsuitable for Telehealth: Digital Policy Unit Department of Corporate and Information Services submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Broadband Network.

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26 Specialties:

Paediatrics	General Medical
Infectious diseases	Endocrinology
Gastroenterology	Occupational Therapy
Renal	Burns
General Surgical	Pre-admissions
Gynaecology	Orthopaedics
Oncology	Psychiatric
Dermatology	Cardiology
Cardiac rehabilitation	Rheumatology
Thoracic medicine	Sleep disorders
Memory clinics	Hepatobiliary
Pain management	Spinal
Haematology	Addiction Medicine

(Michelle McGuirk, pers comm)

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Last 18 months - Cross-sector Collaboration

- Aboriginal Medical Services NT Aboriginal Corporation AMSANT
- Broadband for the Bush Alliance Ltd (B4BA)
- Telstra Health
- Northern Institute, Charles Darwin University
- NT Department of Health (DoH)
- eMerge IT Solutions

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AMSANT/B4BA/NI Telehealth Program

- Telstra Health - Secured $1.5 mill to upgrade connectivity for 15 remote clinics (Telstra RAP), including access to NTCS
- DoH – committed significant funds
- CDU Internal grant to support Telehealth Expansion $50k (seed funding)
- Regional Economic & Infrastructure, NTG $400k – Laynhapuy Homelands

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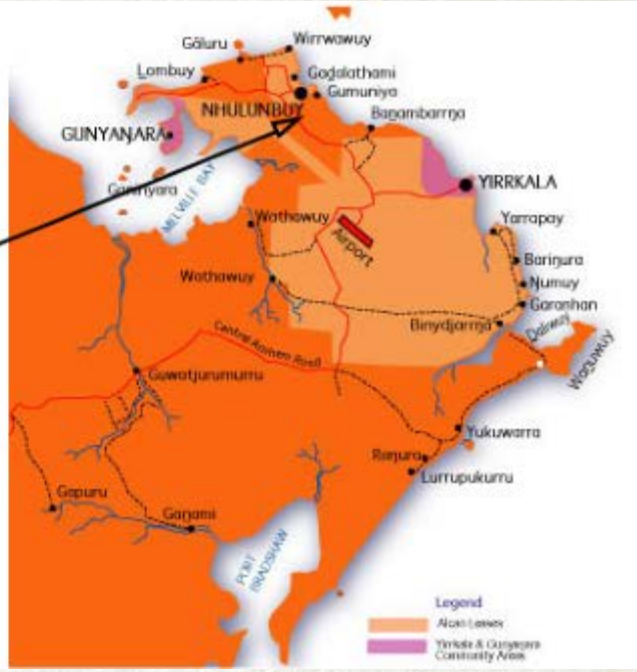

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Remote Community Controlled Sector:

- Increase access to GP Services

Recommendation: Recent MBS Review =>
Increase GP Medicare items for Telehealth

Acute Care:

- Cardiology emergency management
- Emergency cameras
- Internet connected diagnostics
  - iStat blood analysis
  - Blood pressure
  - Blood sugar monitoring
  - Weight scales
  - Ultrasound

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Tertiary Services:

- Outpatient appointments and patient travel
- Cardiology recovery
- Wound management
- Palliative care
- Outreach services
- Mental health
- Social and emotional wellbeing

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Support Services:

- Staff connectivity
- Education and training
- Access to government services

Expected Outcomes:

- ⇧ Productivity
- ⇧ Telehealth consults
- ⇧ Health and social benefits
- ⇩ Patient Travel $$
- ⇩ Did Not Attend rates
- ⇧ Access to training
- ⇧ VC used in day-to-day practice
- ⇧ Medicare income
- ⇧ Availability internet based clinical systems
- ⇧ Business efficiency, better recruitment
- ⇧ Availability of services
- ⇧ Access to specialist services
- ⇩ Waiting times
- ⇧ Support for remote staff
- Identification of barriers and enablers ⇧ Telehealth

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Opportunities.

- "Close the Gap"
- Assist other Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations
- Remote areas of China
- Indonesia?
- International collaborations
- PATS savings and Medicare income => employ more local people

1. % PATS savings need to be returned to the community sector
2. MBS include item number for GP Telehealth services

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Questions?

- Suggestions?

- Thank you!

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