**Presentation title:**

**NPS MedicineWise Educational Visits – Virtually Anywhere**

**Abstract** (max. 300 words):

**Background**

NPS MedicineWise educational visits provide Australian general practitioners (GPs) with an opportunity to receive up to date independent information about medicines and medical tests and reflect on current practice. NPS MedicineWise Clinical Services Specialists (CSS) travel to rural and remote regions enabling over 6000 GPs in these regions to participate in visits each year. Unfortunately, some GPs are unable to attend visits at the time the CSS is present. Videoconferencing technology could enable increased access to and frequency of the educational visits for rural and remote GPs.

**Objectives**

To pilot, evaluate and establish a supplementary ‘virtual visiting’ (VV) service.

**Method**

VVs were piloted with rural and remote GPs between July 2016 and June 2017. Qualitative evaluation was conducted with participating GPs and CSS via online and telephone surveys to determine acceptability.

**Results**

Pilot 1: 6 VVs delivered by 4 CSS to 19 GPs between June and December 2016. Technology issues impaired visit quality. Alternative videoconferencing technology was proposed.

Pilot 2: 67 VVs delivered by 16 CSS to 117 GPs between January and June 2017. When the technology worked flawlessly, both GPs and CSS were satisfied with the visit. Occasional technology issues occurred – predominantly delays establishing call connection or sound/video issues due to limited internet bandwidth.

Post-visit GP feedback reported 100% GP satisfaction with all GPs indicating they would participate in a VV again and likely to recommend a VV to a colleague. GPs appreciated a VV when they would otherwise miss a visit in person and valued increased flexibility with scheduling VVs (e.g. out of practice hours). GPs reported the service was “very useful to rural practitioners and should continue”.

**Conclusion**

Videoconferencing technology can be harnessed to successfully deliver VVs with sufficient internet speed and suitable software. Broader implementation of the service and impact evaluation is planned for 2017-18.