**Educational, infrastructure and policy parameters required to support quality use of telehealth in rural and remote Australia. - Where are the gaps?**

* Dr Jeff Ayton Chair ACRRM Telehealth Advisory Committee
* Representative from Australian Digital health Agency
* Representative from the Victorian Health Department Community of Practice
* Representative from Medicare (billing)
* Rural GP / Practice doing telehealth well
* Representative from Metro hospital (VIC) who wants to do more telehealth

**Aim**

ACRRM recognises that quality rural generalist health practice is characterised by the provision of a broad range of services including those provided by telehealth. Telehealth is seen by ACRRM as an essential component of effective rural and remote practice and fit for purpose implementation is a duty of care requirement of Registrars and Fellows. The panel will discuss the range of strategies implemented to facilitate the uptake of telehealth services and examine their reach, efficacy and opportunities for improvement for the benefit of patient equity to accessing health care.

**Results**

The collaboration - [ACRRM Telehealth Advisory Committee](http://www.ehealth.acrrm.org.au/) saw the establishment of a virtual online community in 2012 with a membership of over 2000 users.

A [Framework for Telehealth standards](http://www.ehealth.acrrm.org.au/telehealth-standards) was developed and implemented by a range of medical and other craft groups, educational modules and a curriculum statement mandating use of telehealth was produced to ensure that the future rural doctor workforce is telehealth competent and aware. Directories, clinical services (Tele-Derm) and applications were developed to enable clinicians to connect.

New MBS item numbers (with restrictions) introduced for telehealth consultations but growth has stagnated over the last year.

**Conclusion**

Despite the availability of these (and other) resources, and engagement of early adaptors, the uptake of telehealth in each state has not been sufficient to redress the inequity of access to services for rural and remote people. This panel discussion and workshop will make explicit the lessons learned over the past decade, reinforce the imperative for telehealth and identify essential changes (policy, infrastructure, and training) required to imbed telehealth in routine practice. Recommended attributes for effective telehealth implementation will be explored within the emerging context of Health Care Home arrangements.