

COVID-19 response

Information for midwives: Updated 10 May 2023

How to conduct telehealth consultations

Phone or video consultations are occasionally required to minimise physical contact time during a necessary midwifery assessment when a client has Covid-19 infection

Ensuring security and confidentiality during remote consultations is essential to protect the woman or person's privacy.

When undertaking a midwifery telehealth consultation, consider:

- Asking open-ended questions.
- Use active listening skills.
- Use follow-up questions to gain as much information as possible.
- Enable women and people enough time to consider and answer your questions.
- Enable enough time for whānau to ask you any questions. Be clear with your answers.
- Video consultations will enable you to assess your client's demeanour, note any changes since your last contact, assess their emotional state, and also interactions with the baby.
- In times of additional stress and uncertainty be more aware of the added pressures for women and people. For example, consider additional family violence screening wherever possible.
- Be aware of health literacy, and ensure information is shared in a way that the client indicates they understand.
- If a woman or person who is Covid-19 positive has limited English (or a language spoken by the midwife), it is important to use formal interpreting services for midwifery conversations and assessment. See the section below on [working with telephone or video interpreting services](#) during telehealth appointments.
- Document all your discussions, actions and care plans in the maternity record as soon as possible after the consultation has finished.

Support

- If you have any concerns about your phone/video assessment, consider consulting with a practice colleague/back up, a mentor, hospital colleague/midwifery manager, or the local College/Te Whatu Ora liaison midwife, for advice and to talk through options.
- The midwifery advisors at the College are also available by phone or email.

Working with telephone or video interpreting services during a telehealth midwifery appointment

Telephone interpreting services are funded for all LMC midwifery care through Connecting Now. For information on how to access this service, contact the College National Office.

If the woman's language is one of the 'top 10' languages you do not need to pre-book. For rarer languages, you will need to pre-book using the link on the Connecting Now flyer which the College can supply to you.

Instructions on setting up a three-way telephone conversation from an Android or iPhone:

For telephone assessments, a three-way telephone conversation can be conducted between the midwife, the woman and an interpreter by merging calls.

1. Phone the interpreting service as per the Connecting Now instructions (contact the College for these).
2. Ask for an interpreter in the language you require, or use your pre-booking instructions.
3. Once the interpreter answers the call, explain that you will put them on hold while you call the woman.
4. On your smartphone screen, tap 'add call'. This will put the interpreter on hold once you select or dial the woman's number.
5. When the woman answers, tap 'merge calls'.
6. You can end the call for either participant to return to a normal two-way call, or end the call completely with both at the same time.

If you need to access an interpreter for a videoconference appointment, contact Connecting Now to discuss.

Guidelines for health professionals working with remote interpreters can be found at [eCALD](#).

Getting started with video consultations

Choose a video platform to use for your consultations



If you already use a video option, continue to use this.
Suggested options for new users are below.

1. Zoom

2. Skype

3. WhatsApp

4. Messenger

5. Doxy

1. Zoom – Free and easy to use. As a host you can organise a time for a consultation with your client, send a link (url) to enable them to join you, and at the designated time, log into your account and open the session – on your phone or computer <https://zoom.us/>

2. Skype – Free and easy to use. Video chat and voice calls between computers, tablets and mobile devices. Full screen video <https://www.skype.com/en/>

3. WhatsApp – Free and easy to use. Uses internet connections. Android and iPhone computer options but no iPad options. Text messages and video calls <https://www.whatsapp.com/>

4. Messenger – Free and easy to use. Can be used for instant messages and videos. It is a separate app to Facebook but a user profile can be set using a Facebook account or telephone number. Phone or computer. App download <https://www.messenger.com/>

5. Doxy – Free for calls and video calls and easy to use – there are upgrade options. Doxy.me will automatically keep track of the date, time, and duration of every session <https://doxy.me/>

If technical support is required for video consultations
phone MMPO (03) 377 2485 - option 2 for IT help