

The discussion paper does not provide any evidence supporting the Medical Board of Australia's proposal to not support prescribing for patients with whom doctors have never consulted (i.e. restrict Australians' access to prescriptions through online forms or questionnaires). There is no rationale or explanation for this proposal beyond "this is not good practice", which is disturbing. It is makes for bad policy making practice.

I have found it easy, convenient, and affordable to use telehealth services for basic services such as routine blood tests to monitor my general health. If the results were to show something abnormal, the service I use would recommend that I see a GP for further consultation. This demonstrates the business cares about their patients' wellbeing and safety.

There are numerous benefits to telehealth services. They are immediately available and can reduce costs for Australians living in rural or remote areas especially with cost of living being a big issue. However, I appreciate remote consultations and online prescribing can pose potential safety risks such as an individual trying to gain multiple medications that can cause grave harm to themselves. Before making changes that could lead to unintentional detrimental outcomes, the Board or Department of Health needs to investigate whether telehealth businesses are providing health care responsibly.

Rather than do away with online clinicians, the Board needs to find a way to integrate them more into public healthcare for the benefit of all Australians.

Regards,

Sue Anne Wong

