

Online sexual health consultations: Examining young people's privacy and security concerns

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Increasing Access Through Online Consultations



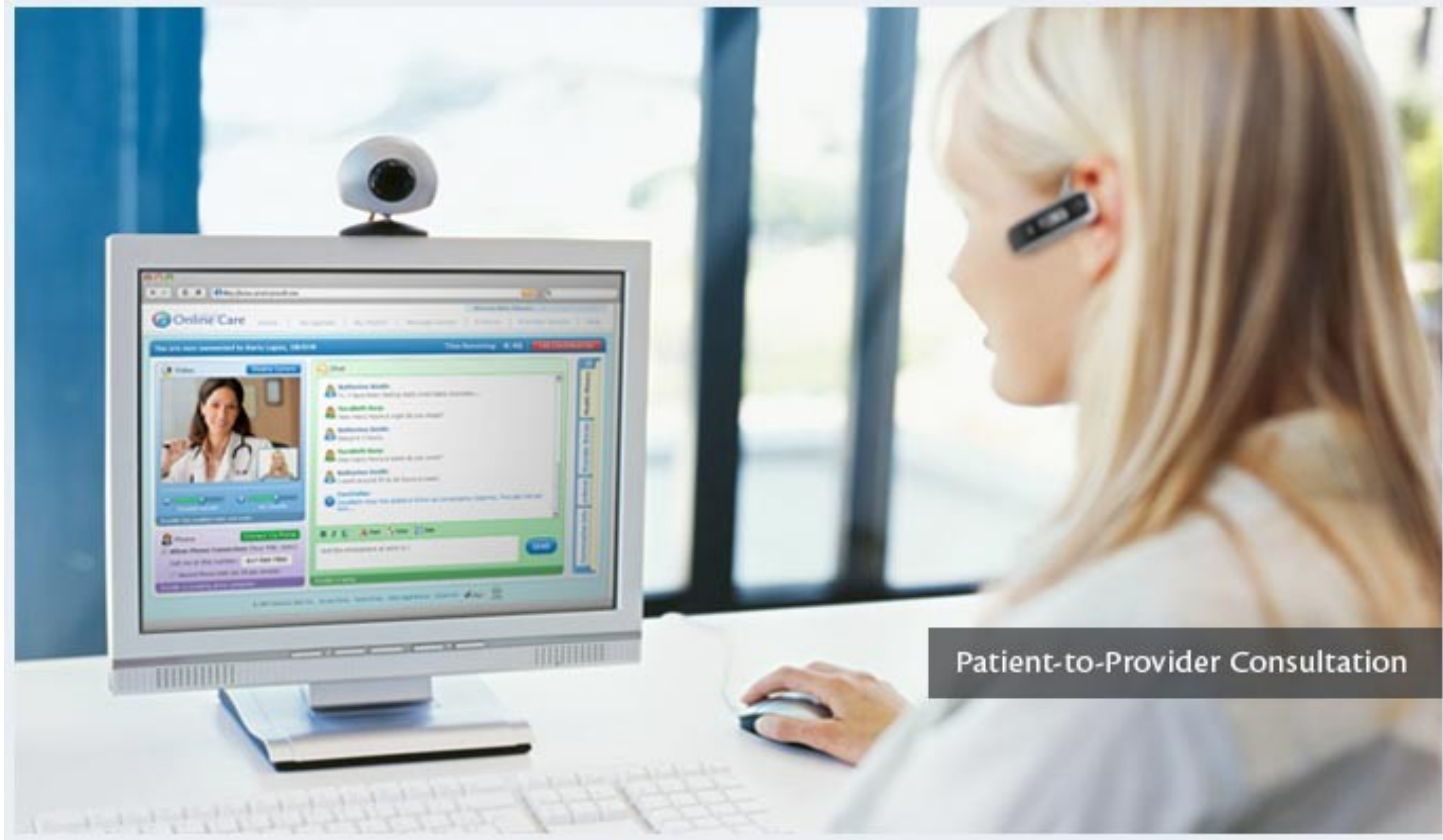
**Connecting health services
with the future**

Julia Gillard and Labor
Let's move Australia forward



CONNECTING HEALTH SERVICES WITH THE FUTURE: MODERNISING MEDICARE BY PROVIDING REBATES FOR ONLINE CONSULTATIONS

A re-elected Gillard Labor Government will modernise the health system and deliver better health services by providing Medicare rebates for online consultations across a range of specialties for the first time.



Patient-to-Provider Consultation



Online Consultations

- Advantages:
 - Increased access specialists
 - Lessened travel and waiting time
 - Lowered costs
- Concerns:
 - Threats to privacy and security
 - Quality of doctor-patient communication



Online Sexual Health Consultations

- What are young people's views on online sexual health consultations?



Home STI Testing Kit



Online Sexual Health Consultation

- There was limited interest from young people
 - 29% willing to have an online consultation
- Men were more willing than women to have an online consultation (36% vs 26%, $p=0.01$)

(Garrett CC, Hocking J, Chen MY, Fairley CK, Kirkman M. (2011). Young people's views on the potential use of telemedicine consultations for sexual health: results of a national survey. *BMC Infectious Diseases*, 11: 285.)

Why was the Acceptability of Online Consultations Low?

- Privacy and security concerns
- Telephone was seen as sufficient



What is Different about an Online Consultation?

- Joshua Meyrowitz's (1985) theory on electronic media and social behaviour
- Danah Boyd (2008) her theory on networked publics (i.e. social network sites)

Joshua Meyrowitz (1985)

- Audience is altered in an electronic environment
- Information and performances that were once limited to one social situation can now be broadcast to multiple environments
- People can't deny the event occurred

Danah Boyd (2008)

Attributes of digital information:

- Persistence: content automatically recorded and archived
- Replicability: content can be duplicated
- Scalability: potential visibility of content is great
- Searchability: content can be accessed through search

- Why Were Women Less Willing?
 - Gendered experiences of online spaces and technology



Gendered Experiences of Online Spaces and Technology

- Women more likely than men to experience sexual harassment online
- Young Australian women assess webcams as high-risk activity (Australian Communication and Media Authority, 2009)
- Damage to a reputation following sexting

Online Privacy

- Women more concerned about online privacy in general than men
- Women more to engage in privacy protection behaviours



How to Increase the Acceptability of Online Sexual Health Consultations?

- 1) Clinics should have comprehensive privacy and security policies.
- 2) Ensure patients are aware of these policies
- 3) Follow-up consultations



In Conclusion

- 1) Attributes of digital information need to be considered when planning to implement an online service
- 2) Patients' privacy and security concerns about online consultations need to be addressed
- 3) Despite young peoples' frequent use of online communication they may still prefer to consult a healthcare provider in person

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Thank You



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