

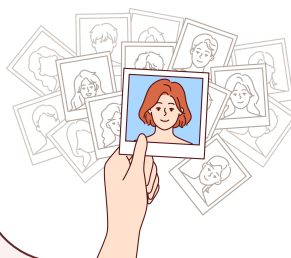
Protocol for the Health Technology Assessment of teledermatology to support the management of primary care referrals

What will this HTA examine?

This HTA will examine the clinical effectiveness, safety and cost impacts of using teledermatology for adult and paediatric patients referred by a GP to a consultant dermatologist.



What is teledermatology?



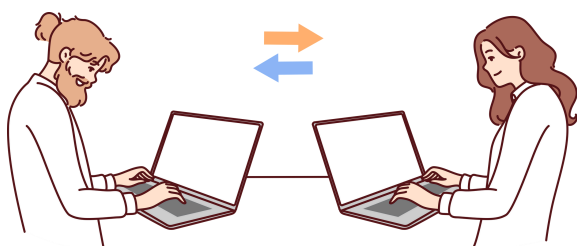
Teledermatology is when a dermatologist uses photos or live video conferencing in addition to other clinical information to triage, diagnose, or monitor skin conditions, without the need for the patient to attend in person.

Why is demand increasing?



The increase is driven by an ageing population, rising incidence of skin cancer, and improvements in the treatments and technologies available for the management of chronic skin conditions.

How would this change the current triage system?



A dermatologist would have access to images or videos in addition to the clinical referral letter to support a management decision to:

- refer them for in-person consultation
- book them for the required procedure
- redirect them to another speciality, or
- offer guidance to their GP to care for them in a primary care setting.

The new system would also support patient prioritisation for those for whom an in-person consultation or procedure is considered necessary.

How could teledermatology help?

The Health Service Executive Model of Care for Dermatology aims to increase capacity among dermatologists to engage in effective triaging of referrals to secondary and or tertiary care, given the long waiting lists for these services. There are many different ways this could be facilitated; one option which could be assessed is teledermatology.

