



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

2 June 2020

Australians increasingly online for health and wellbeing services

The Morrison Government welcomes new research released today showing that the health and wellbeing of Australians is increasingly supported by digital services.

Conducted by Venture Insights on behalf of NBN Co, the research shows that while lifestyle habits have shifted dramatically as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the access Australians have to broadband has played a significant role connecting people to each other and to essential services.

Almost half (48 per cent) of survey respondents who had a medical consultation in the past two months have had a telehealth consultation, while the number of respondents 65 and over saying that their household has accessed telehealth services doubled from one in eight (13 per cent) to one in four (27 per cent). Around two thirds (63 per cent) of all respondents said they are now open to more frequently using telehealth services after COVID-19.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said the research demonstrates the critical role of the National Broadband Network (NBN) in boosting the nation's productivity, connectivity and social cohesion.

“The research supports the decision by NBN Co to offer higher bandwidth NBN connections to Australian GP clinics at no extra cost during the pandemic, allowing them to provide more services by telehealth,” Minister Fletcher said.

“Telehealth services remain critical during COVID-19 and are vitally important for access to quality healthcare at home, especially for more vulnerable people such as older Australians.”

NBN Co's Behavioural Change Survey looks at how Australians' internet habits have changed during social distancing, and how they may change as restrictions ease. The survey shows people are finding new ways to stay fit and healthy, with one in two respondents (50 per cent) working from home engaging with online exercise classes, up from one in three (38 per cent) before COVID-19.

The survey also found that people working from home are relying on the internet to maintain social connections with four in five (84 per cent) connecting with family through video calls, and three quarters (73 per cent) making social video calls with their colleagues during COVID-19.

“During the pandemic, Australians have proven themselves incredibly resourceful at finding new and creative ways stay active, engaged, productive and connected with their family and friends,” Minister Fletcher said.

“With the NBN available to more than 11.4 million homes and businesses across the country,

Australians have been much better off than had the rollout continued under Labor's original plan, which would have left 3.5 million fewer homes able to connect.”

For more information on the NBN Behavioural Change Survey and to learn more on what NBN Co is doing to support Australia through COVID-19, visit [NBN Co's website](#).

Media contact:

Brad Hatch | 0448 162 679 | Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au

Rebecca Papillo | 0439 892 771 | Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au

Background

- This research was undertaken by Venture Insights on behalf of NBN Co in April 2020.
- The survey was conducted nationally across Australia and required a representative survey sample across available geographic regions. 1,006 respondents aged 18+ completed the survey.
- 77 per cent of the respondents belonged to a metro area, and 23 per cent to a regional area.