



13 March 2020

The Hon Darren Chester MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister Chester,

Firstly, I wish to congratulate you for the leadership you and your colleagues have shown during this challenging time in Australia with the spread of COVID-19 in our community. The Dietitians Association of Australia commends the Morrison Government for its fast action to support the health professionals across the country as they prepare for the impacts of this virus.

As the virus spreads from direct contact, the focus on expanding telehealth support to general practice and psychologists is a step in the right direction however we would argue that this additional support should be extended to other key health professionals including the following DVA Schedule of Fees relevant to Accredited Practising Dietitians (APDs):

In-room dietetic consultations item numbers	DT01 , DT10, DT20, DT30
Dietetic Consultations within Aged Care Facilities item numbers	DT06, DT15, DT25, DT35

Allowing patients to access DVA support for telehealth services with APDs will:

- Further enhance measures already identified by the Government to limit potential exposure of clients to COVID-19 in clinic waiting rooms;
- Ensure continuation of APD access to those in our veteran community who are malnourished and/or suffering chronic diseases; and
- Reduce the economic impact of cancelled appointments, allowing clients in isolation or vulnerable clients to continue accessing services and APDs in isolation to continue providing services.

We therefore request extension of telehealth item number claiming rights to APDs.

Your urgent consideration of this request would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Robert Hunt
Chief Executive Officer