New NT Telehealth partnership with Telstra

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The Northern Territory is working with Telstra to expand and strengthen the Telehealth service to connect more Territorians with specialist doctors and clinicians.

“Northern Territory Health is proud to be at the forefront of Telehealth technology,” Minister for Health Robyn Lambley said.

“Telehealth began in the NT in 2011 and NT Health has had some recent success with a new pilot starting in Tennant Creek, Katherine and Alice Springs in June.

“It connects patients in remote areas with specialist doctors. The patient sits at their local health centre with a clinician and perhaps with their family, and speaks to clinicians via video link.

“Telehealth also provides the opportunity for smaller hospitals to instantly tap into specialists in larger hospitals for better emergency treatment, as well as doing away with the need to travel for outpatient or pre-treatment appointments.

“This week NT Health has signed a new agreement with Telstra Health to implement the National Telehealth Connection Service in the Territory.

“This technology upgrade will allow seamless connections from one end point to another regardless of the equipment and software.

“At the moment there are restrictions with the software and hardware in Telehealth and this project is aimed at fixing this.

“NT Health is working with Telstra to establish connectivity between the Northern Territory Government network and two Aboriginal Medical Service partners - Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation and Santa Teresa Health Centre, run by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress.

“The pilot has been underway for six weeks with the two health centres connecting to Alice Springs Hospital for Telehealth clinics, making it possible for patients to attend from their community rather than travelling to Alice Springs.

“This included respiratory and orthopaedics patients requiring specialist treatment.
“Negotiations are underway with SA Health to run clinics with the Alice Springs Hospital, including cancer services, Royal Adelaide Hospital burns clinics, rehabilitation and liver transplant consultations.

“The $300,000 funding for this contract has been made possible thanks to the Commonwealth’s Digital Regions initiative and we’re excited to be heading into this next phase of Telehealth.”

Media Contact: Phoebe Stewart 0438885774