Videoconference guide

These guidelines are designed to help you participate better in videoconference and be more confident when you use the equipment. Many of the issues relate to etiquette and preparation.

1. Know how to use the equipment

Generally, your conference will begin automatically in your venue at the booked time. Always leave the videoconference system ON in standby mode so that remote sites can connect to it for the next booking.

Please make sure you know how to use the remote control to:

- Mute sound
- Adjust volume
- Adjust camera
- Adjust the screen layout
- Show different types of content (for example, files on your computer)
- End the call

You can do all of these things using the remote control. The instructions are in a separate guide.

Remember: please leave the videoconference unit ON in standby mode at all times. This will allow the booking system to connect up all sites automatically, usually 10 minutes before the scheduled start time.

2. Be ready and prepared

- Start and end on time; there may be another conference scheduled to begin immediately after yours
- Have a contingency plan if things go wrong
• Most bookings will connect 10 minutes before the scheduled start time. Arrive early to set yourself up and become familiar with the equipment.

• Mute your microphone while you are waiting for everyone to arrive, and remember to un-mute when you are ready to begin and want to speak

• Choose PIP (picture in picture) on your screen – this will allow you to see what other sites are seeing of you.

4. Get off to a good start and engage everyone

• Invite all participants to introduce themselves at the start of the meeting, and do a sound and visual check at the same time. For example, “I am going to ask each site to un-mute and one person to introduce the people at their site. When you have finished please remember to put mute on again”.

• Briefly outline the etiquette for the session - request that sites remain on mute unless speaking, procedures for asking questions, people identifying themselves before they speak, etc. For example, “This is Sue in Adelaide. Could you please repeat that comment”.

• Build in opportunities to engage participants at all sites, through questions, activities etc.

• Eye contact is important. Look towards the camera (usually near the monitor)

5. Be heard

• Speak up & speak clearly, but there is no need to shout

• Minimise other room noises. Avoid tapping the table or shuffling papers. The microphone is very sensitive and the noise will be loud at other sites, making it difficult for participants to hear

• Mute your microphone when you are not speaking

• Don’t cover the microphone with papers

6. Be considerate

• Allow for a short audio delay and avoid talking over other people - pause and don’t rush responses

• Announce yourself each time before you speak, to give other participants time to focus on you

• Avoid putting yourselves on mute to conduct your own private conversation. It is disconcerting for other sites who can see you speaking

7. Controlling the camera

• Adjust the camera zoom to achieve the best image of your group for other sites.

• Avoid zooming in on speakers while they are speaking – it is difficult for participants to concentrate while the camera is being adjusted.

• Do not adjust the camera at a far site unless they are unable to do it themselves.
8. Be more than a talking head

- Take advantage of the ability to communicate visual information via computer, document camera, or Smart board - presentations, documents, web sites, diagrams etc.
- Include details of these extra requirements in your booking, so technical staff can have the equipment ready and can show you how to use it.
- Ensure documents for presentation on the document camera are clear and use a large size font.

9. Contingency plans

Occasionally things will go wrong during a videoconference. Stay calm and try to identify the problem. Call the technical support staff – see list below for the School of Medicine. Sometimes staff at another site can help you too.

It helps to have a back-up plan –
- Have the phone number of the far sites with you so you can call them and explain the situation,
- For major problems such as power failures or disruptions to network connections, it may be best to re-schedule the conference.
- If only one or two sites are affected, they may be able to phone into the conference, and the meeting can continue.

Be kind to the technical staff:

Please be considerate of the technical staff at your site and treat them with respect.

Sometimes problems occur at sites remote to you and technical staff at that site will be required to diagnose and resolve the problem.

All of our technical staff across all sites work as a team and will try their best to assist you.

HELP – contacts for technical support

| School of Medicine, Bedford Park campus | Jason Ritchie or Paul Mayers  
Phone: 08 8204 5002  
Mobile: 0414 190 055 (JR), or 0414 190 018 (PM)  
Pager: #38882 |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Northern Territory Clinical School, Darwin campus | Des Gellert  
Phone: 08 89 22 6918  
Mob 0409 823 871  
Pager: 706 |
| FU Rural Clinical School (FURCS), Renmark campus | David Badger or Paul Bottrell  
Phone: 08 85 86 1021 (DB), or 85 86 1032 (PB) |
| Centre for Remote Health, Alice Springs | Feng Huang  
Phone: 08 89 51 4721 |