



Media release

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Immediate access to most pathology reports empowers Australians and their care teams from today

Access to timely and accurate pathology reports is a critical challenge for healthcare teams. Australians living with chronic or complex conditions often rely on care from a range of professionals like specialists, GPs, nurses and allied health practitioners, who all need up-to-date information to coordinate and optimise care, even if they are not the original requestor of the test. Delays in receiving pathology results can slow decision-making, impact communication between providers and affect outcomes for healthcare consumers.

Recognising these issues, the Australian Digital Health Agency (the Agency) has enabled faster access to pathology reports through My Health Record and the **my health** app from today. This ensures Australians and all members of their healthcare team can promptly view and act on important health information.

Agency CEO Amanda Cattermole PSM said this improvement is designed to streamline collaboration, facilitate earlier discussions and enhance the overall quality of care delivered.

“Putting timely health information in the hands of Australians and their care teams through My Health Record and **my health** app supports safer, more connected care. These access changes to most pathology reports empower both consumers and healthcare professionals to act quickly, make informed decisions, and ultimately improve health outcomes,” Ms Cattermole said.

Agency Chief Clinical Adviser (Medicine) Dr Amandeep Hansra said data from the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) shows more than 70% of all medical decisions depend on pathology results.

“Pathology results are often the key to unlocking a diagnosis, helping doctors make timely and accurate decisions. With Australians now able to access their results sooner, it opens the door for more meaningful conversations with their healthcare providers. Together, we can make informed choices and ensure care is tailored to each patient’s needs,” Dr Hansra said.

Importantly, consumers continue to have a choice regarding whether their test results are uploaded to My Health Record. They can ask their healthcare provider not to upload a particular pathology report and their provider must comply with this request. Consumers can also restrict access to their record, restrict access to a document or remove a document once it’s uploaded, if they choose to.

Clinical and healthcare consumer advice is at the heart of this change, which is based on guidance from the Clinical Reference Group (CRG), a collective with representatives from relevant peak bodies, professional associations and consumer groups.

The CRG spent almost 2 years reviewing the clinical safety of sharing sensitive and non-sensitive tests immediately.

The Agency’s Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) also contributed with personal perspectives.

CAC member Larissa Roberts says her complex and chronic health issues have seen her undergo numerous pathology tests.

“After more than 5 years of seeking an effective treatment, a recent test provided the answers we needed. Any option to get those results earlier would have enabled me to work more quickly with my broader healthcare team, coordinate the new treatment and improve my quality of life sooner,” Ms Roberts said.

The Agency has provided extensive guidance throughout the last month to support over 1,400 stakeholder groups, such as peak bodies, colleges, jurisdictions, public and private hospitals, Primary Health Networks, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and pathology laboratories to prepare and ensure comprehensive awareness of the reforms.

Consumers Health Forum CEO Dr Elizabeth Deveny has welcomed the faster access to pathology results, noting it is about more than convenience, it’s about confidence.

“Putting results in people’s hands faster is a win for equity and transparency; it gives healthcare consumers the chance to be more active partners in their care, ask questions sooner and make more informed decisions,” Dr Deveny said.

Parkinson’s Australia CEO Olivia Nassaris supports this, saying, “for people living with Parkinson’s, timely access to information is not just a convenience, it’s a critical component of coordinated, person-centred care. Gone are the days of carrying around a folder or envelope with printed test results. My Health Record means that someone can have up to date and accurate information at their fingertips at all times.”

[This list](#) has information on which pathology tests will be immediately accessible after they are uploaded to My Health Record.

For access to your key health information and more in the palm of your hand, download the **my health** app today. If you need help getting started, call the My Health Record helpline 1800 723 471 available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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About the Australian Digital Health Agency

When it comes to improving the health of all Australians, the role of digital innovation and connection is a vital part of a modern, accessible healthcare system. Against the backdrop of COVID-19, digital health has seen exponential growth in relevance and importance, making it more pertinent than ever for all Australians and healthcare providers.

Better patient healthcare and health outcomes are possible when you have a health infrastructure that can be safely accessed, easily used and responsibly shared.

To achieve this, the [National Digital Health Strategy](#) is establishing the foundations for a sustainable health system that constantly improves. It underpins and coordinates work that is already happening between governments, healthcare providers, consumers, innovators and the technology industry.

For further information: www.digitalhealth.gov.au.

The Australian Digital Health Agency is jointly funded by the Australian Government and all state and territory governments.