



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## AMA Pathology Position Statement highlights need for adequate funding

Continued underfunding of pathology services is placing additional pressures on a critical part of Australia's healthcare system, the Australian Medical Association said today.

The AMA's updated Pathology Position Statement says pathology services in Australia must remain high-quality, accessible, and affordable.

AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen said pathology services are critical to modern healthcare in Australia and have experienced decades of Medicare freezes.

"Pathology is essential in modern healthcare, providing crucial information for screening, diagnosis, treatment and monitoring — all of which practitioners rely on to ensure their patients get appropriate care," she said.

"Despite its importance, Medicare rebates for pathology testing remained stagnant for more than two decades. The partial indexation introduced in 2024 was welcome but we need to see indexation restored for all pathology services. This ongoing underfunding threatens the accessibility, affordability and safety of these essential services."

Dr McMullen emphasised it was critically important that whoever forms the next government commits to another round of consultation on the planned changes to MBS rebates for vitamin B12 testing and urine examination.

"These tests are fundamental to diagnosing and monitoring a wide range of conditions and we remained concerned that proposed changes do not align with appropriate clinical practice. Any changes to rebates must be carefully considered with proper consultation from medical practitioners to ensure patient care isn't compromised," she said.

The position statement emphasises that a properly funded pathology sector is essential for the entire healthcare system to function effectively and notes that investment in high-quality pathology services saves taxpayers from downstream costs in acute and chronic care while improving patient outcomes.

"Government policies and funding arrangements must recognise the true value of pathology services. Current funding remains inadequate, placing additional pressures on the industry and increasing the likelihood patients will bear out-of-pocket costs," Dr McMullen added.

The updated position statement also focuses on the importance of supporting a high-quality pathologist workforce, the integration of genomic testing into healthcare, and maintaining rigorous quality and safety standards.

"Pathology services underpin personalised medicine, allowing treatment and management of disease to be tailored to the individual," Dr McMullen said.

"For example, antibiotic sensitivity testing for bacterial infections and genomic testing for cancer and autoimmune diseases prevents unnecessary treatments and allows targeting of expensive therapies to the patients most likely to benefit."

Read the [position statement](#)

Read the [submission on vitamin B12 testing](#)

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