

Accreditation of Pathology Laboratories in NSW Health

Summary This Policy Directive describes the requirements for Accreditation of NSW Health Pathology Laboratories as required by the Commonwealth to meet uniform standards of practice, competently perform tests and examinations, and produce accurate and reliable results in order to attract Medicare benefits.

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Functional group Clinical/Patient Services - Governance and Service Delivery, Pathology

Applies to NSW Health Pathology, Specialty Network Governed Statutory Health Corporations

Distributed to Ministry of Health, Public Health System

Audience All Pathology Laboratory Staff

Secretary, NSW Health

This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this directive is mandatory for NSW Health and is a condition of subsidy for public health organisations.

ACCREDITATION OF PATHOLOGY LABORATORIES IN NSW HEALTH

PURPOSE

NSW Health Pathology is required to ensure that the accreditation of pathology laboratories is maintained. By maintaining accreditation it is expected that laboratories will meet uniform standards of practice, competently perform tests / examinations and produce accurate and reliable results for the tests for which they are accredited.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

The Commonwealth requires that for a pathology service to attract Medicare benefits the pathology laboratory is to be accredited for the kinds of services that are being provided.

The standards used to assess accreditation for pathology laboratories are Standards for Pathology Laboratories developed by the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (“NPAAC”). These set out the minimum standards acceptable for good pathology practice in Australia. It should be noted that the NPAAC Standards also require the laboratory to be certified to *AS ISO 15189: Medical laboratories – Requirements for quality and competence* and other Australian and International Standards.

The Commonwealth has chosen the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) to act on its behalf to undertake the accreditation and certification of laboratories.

Full information on the Commonwealth’s requirements for obtaining accreditation are in the Medical Benefits Schedule Category 6 – Pathology Services which can be obtained from <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/Downloads-201605>

IMPLEMENTATION

- The NSW Health Pathology Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring pathology laboratories in NSW Health are accredited.
- The Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring pathology laboratories at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead are accredited.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Amendment notes
May 2017 (PD2017_011)	Deputy Secretary, Population and Public Health	Implementation section clarified that the governance of the pathology laboratories at Westmead Hospital is with The Children’s Hospital.
February 2017 (PD2017_005)	Deputy Secretary, Population and Public Health	Updated reference to the Australian Standard and implementation requirements added.
August 2006 (PD2006_064)	Director General, NSW Health	New policy

ATTACHMENTS

None