GUIDE

Better and Faster Access

18 December 2025 – v2.0

Sharing reports with My Health Record by default

Information for **pathology** and **diagnostic imaging** service providers

Background 2

What is 'Share by Default'? 2

Who helped to inform these changes? 2

Upload requirements 3

Who will be required to upload information to My Health Record by default? 3

When does the requirement to share by default commence? 3

Are there any exceptions to uploading reports? 3

What happens if a healthcare provider doesn't comply with the upload requirements? 4

What can pathology or diagnostic imaging services do to get ready? 4

Do you offer assistance with the registration process? 4

Considerations for providers 5

Is patient consent required to view and upload to a patient's My Health Record? 5

Results 6

When can healthcare providers view results in My Health Record? 6

When can patients view their results in My Health Record? 6

Who can decide that results should not be uploaded to My Health Record? 7

Can a patient control access to their reports? 7

Is there any guidance for patients about their results? 7

Training for your staff 8

Information for your patients 8

Supporting patients to understand Pathology Results 8

Printable resources for your waiting rooms 8

Further links and resources 8

Contact us 8

Background

The Australian Government is making changes to provide better and faster access to pathology and diagnostic imaging reports in My Health Record. The changes have been introduced in response to recommendations of the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report, to modernise primary care and were announced in May 2023 by the Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Ageing. These changes also respond to patients' demands for improved access to and greater control over their health information, to enable them to more effectively manage their health.

What is 'Share by Default'?

Historically, healthcare providers were not required to upload health information to My Health Record. That is now changing. The *Health Legislation Amendment (Modernising My Health Record—Sharing by Default) Act 2025* was passed into law in February 2025 and provides a framework for key health information to be shared to My Health Record by default

The requirement to upload information to My Health Record by default applies to healthcare services and record types that are prescribed in the Health Insurance (Share by Default) Rules 2025 and the My Health Record (Share by Default) Rules 2025—collectively referred to as the Share by Default rules. The Rules set out what health information must be shared to My Health Record and by which healthcare providers.

Better Access

Pathology and diagnostic imaging providers will be the first healthcare providers required to share test results to My Health Record. These changes will ensure patients and their healthcare providers have better and faster access to key health information when and where it is needed.

While the legislation will not come into force until July 2026, it is already driving information sharing, for example, as at September 2025, around 4 million pathology and 400,000 diagnostic imaging reports are uploaded weekly to My Health Record, with more than 1.4 million weekly views by patients. This represents a significant increase and the growth in uploads and views is continuing.

Who helped to inform these changes?

A committee known as the Clinical Reference Group was established by the Agency and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to provide strategic advice and clinical oversight to support safe implementation of these reforms. It had 24 members from relevant peak bodies, professional associations, consumer groups (including people with lived experience) and other stakeholders involved in pathology and diagnostic imaging services. It was chaired by prominent clinicians from the Agency and the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

Upload requirements

Who will be required to upload information to My Health Record by default?

Initially, the requirement to share to My Health Record by default will apply to written pathology and diagnostic imaging reports prepared by or on behalf of a pathologist or radiologist. This includes reports where Category 5 and 6 Medicare rebates are claimed (all organisation types), as well as reports prepared by a Constitutional Corporation (even if Medicare rebates are not claimed). The upload requirement does not include images.

In the future, if the Minister decides that additional health information should be shared with My Health Record by default, other healthcare providers may be affected by this change. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing will undertake further consultation prior to introducing requirements for additional healthcare providers or health information.

The legislation makes the following changes to the *My Health Records Act 2012* and the *Health Insurance Act 1973*:

- Under the *My Health Records Act 2012* healthcare providers and the organisations they work for, who deliver particular health services, can be required to upload specific health information to My Health Record. Initially, requirements will only be made for pathology and diagnostic imaging services and they will only apply to written reports about the results.
- Under the *Health Insurance Act 1973*, in order to claim Medicare benefits, healthcare providers who deliver particular health services, must upload health information to My Health Record after they deliver a service. If the organisation the healthcare provider works with uploads information for them, this will meet the new requirements. Initially, requirements will only be made for pathology and diagnostic imaging services and will only apply to written reports about the results.

When does the requirement to share by default commence?

The requirements will come into effect on 1 July 2026.

In certain circumstances, Healthcare provider organisations that are unable to comply with the new Rules by mid-2026 may be eligible to apply for an extension. Applications for an extension will open in March 2026. Details on will be available on the Better and Faster Access to health information webpage, once the extensions process opens.

Are there any exceptions to uploading reports?

Under the legislation, there are certain circumstances when information does not need to be uploaded to My Health Record by default, because one of the following exceptions apply:

- The patient does not have a My Health Record
- The patient requests that the information is not uploaded to their record
- The patient's authorised or nominated representative requests that the information is not uploaded to My Health Record
- The information cannot be shared due to circumstances outside the reasonable control of the provider, such as an unplanned system outage or technical issue.
- A healthcare provider reasonably believes that the information should not be uploaded because of a serious concern for the health, safety or wellbeing of the patient.

Healthcare providers who are required to upload test results to My Health Record will be required to keep records for a period of 2 years, if they do not upload because one of the above exceptions applies.

A provider does not need to upload to My Health Record by default if an extension of time to comply has been granted or preserved privacy laws apply (under selected state or territory legislation that is prescribed in the *My Health Records Act 2012* for this purpose).

In addition, the rules specify that sharing is optional for

- pathology and diagnostic imaging reports that are generated for the purpose of workplace drug or alcohol testing, court ordered testing or law enforcement
- pathology testing that relates solely to research and clinical trials (where the pathology reports are not otherwise provided to the patient or their healthcare providers).

What happens if a healthcare provider doesn't comply with the upload requirements?

If an organisation fails to comply with the requirement to share to My Health Record by default, they could be instructed to repay money they received for that service under the Medicare Benefits Scheme. In some cases, civil penalties may also apply.

Where an organisation is required to upload information to My Health Record by default and they are not doing so—for example, because they have been granted an extension of time to comply—they must display a notice informing patients of this. The notice must be visible at the provider's premises and on their website. Not displaying the notice may result in a civil penalty.

What can pathology or diagnostic imaging services do to get ready?

First, they must **register** for My Health Record.

- If an organisation is not already registered, they should register now. For information on how to do this, refer to the implementing My Health Record in your healthcare organisation webpage.

Second, they will need to ensure that their **software** is ready to upload to My Health Record.

- If they are not sure, they can check with their software provider or secure messaging vendor.
- Additional information is available on the implementing My Health Record in your healthcare organisation web page. You can also refer to the quick reference guide - pathology and diagnostic imaging conformant software for more details and the Conformance Register.

Do you offer assistance with the registration process?

The Australian Digital Health Agency routinely contacts healthcare provider organisations that are not yet registered for My Health Record, to support them to register.

Our Digital Adoption Support (DAS) team assists organisations with the My Health Record registration process, offering a personalised step by step process tailored to the organisation's needs. We are currently focusing on supporting organisations whose radiologists and pathologists produce reports, to ensure they are ready to upload information to My Health Record by default.

Considerations for providers

My Health Record is a secure online summary of key patient health information. Healthcare providers can access the system to view and add information. While it is not a complete health record, it can be used to supplement other sources of information about a patient.

When information is included in a person's My Health Record, it is available to all providers involved in a person's care. This helps to overcome information gaps that can occur, when people receive health and care services in a variety of different settings, move from one geographical location to another, or undertake extended travels.

The requirement to share pathology and diagnostic imaging reports to My Health Record will help to bridge this gap by enabling providers to view results that have been ordered by another member of a person's treating team. Better access to this information will make it easier for healthcare providers to coordinate care and make well-informed clinical decisions.

Critical results management

Where a pathology or diagnostic imaging provider identifies a critical result, they should follow their organisation's critical results management procedures to support appropriate handling of the result. For example, this may include contacting the requesting provider directly to alert them of the result or following local processes to ensure patients are informed of any required escalation of treatment.

In addition, if a provider has a reasonable and serious concern that uploading particular information to My Health Record will be harmful to the health, safety or wellbeing of the patient, they can decide that a specific result will not be uploaded to My Health Record. This decision should be made in consultation with the patient or the requesting provider, where possible. A record of the reason for not uploading must be retained, for 2 years.

Is patient consent required to view and upload to a patient's My Health Record?

In most cases, it is not necessary to obtain a patient's consent to upload pathology and diagnostic imaging. However, there are a number of things to be aware of, which are summarised below.

Under the *My Health Records Act 2012*, staff members authorised by a healthcare organisation can access, view and upload information to a patient's record for the purpose of providing that patient with healthcare, and provided it is in accordance with any access controls. In addition to clinicians, a healthcare organisation may authorise other staff to access the system as part of their role in healthcare delivery.

Healthcare providers must comply if a patient requests that information not be uploaded to My Health Record. If a patient requests this, the healthcare provider should inform the patient that Medicare information relating to the clinical encounter may be visible in My Health Record, as this is uploaded by Medicare. If the patient does not want this to be included, they will have to remove or manage access to that information themselves by logging into their record via myGov, or they can call the My Health Record helpline for assistance with this (1800 723 471). This is particularly relevant where the information may be regarded as sensitive.

Generally, there is no need to obtain a patient's consent to upload information to My Health Record, except where requirements under a state or territory law are recognised in the My Health Records Regulation 2012. These laws require consent, if the information relates to HIV (ACT, NSW, QLD), notifiable conditions (ACT, QLD), contagious conditions (QLD), environmental health events (QLD) and perinatal history (QLD).

Staff must ensure they are familiar with the process for preventing an upload to My Health Record, if the patient requests that it not be uploaded or if consent required under a state or territory law has not been obtained.

Results

When can healthcare providers view results in My Health Record?

Healthcare providers can access results in My Health Record as soon as they are uploaded.

When can patients view their results in My Health Record?

Pathology

Since October 2025 patients have had the choice to access most pathology reports as soon as they are added to My Health Record. A list of applicable test categories is available on the Agency's website. This list will be updated as more tests are released to patients at the time of uploading.

For certain test categories (including anatomical pathology, cytopathology and genetic tests), patients won't be able to see their results until 5 days after they are uploaded to My Health Record.

If access to a result is delayed this does not indicate an adverse result, the delay will apply irrespective of whether the result is positive, negative, within or outside normal range. A link to Pathology Tests Explained is available within My Health Record to help patients learn more about pathology tests.

Diagnostic imaging

From March 2026, patients will be able to view x-ray reports for limbs (arms and legs) immediately after they are shared to My Health Record. They will be able to view other diagnostic imaging reports 5 days after they are uploaded. Prior to this date, results will be available 7 days after upload.

History

Until recently, pathology and diagnostic imaging reports in My Health Record were not available for patients to view until 7 days after they were uploaded. During the past few years, changes to this policy have been made to enable patients to access some results without delay. Initially, this resulted in immediate access for diabetes-related pathology (HbA1c), anti-coagulant monitoring tests known as the International Normalised Ratio (INR) and respiratory infection test results (such as influenza, RSV and COVID-19). These changes were well received, with patients requesting immediate access to more of their results.

A similar approach is being adopted within a number of jurisdictional and private sector health services that also provide patients with immediate access to their results.

Ongoing review and future changes

Over time, the Agency will continue to refine and adjust access settings for pathology and diagnostic imaging reports. Our governance approach includes ongoing advice from a committee of clinicians, health sector representatives and those with lived experience (patients and carers).

Who can decide that results should not be uploaded to My Health Record?

At any time, a patient can request that information is not uploaded to their My Health Record. Healthcare providers must comply with a request from the patient, or their authorised or nominated representative.

In addition, if a healthcare provider has a reasonable and serious concern that uploading particular information to My Health Record will be harmful to the health, safety or wellbeing of their patient, they can decide that a specific result not be uploaded. This decision should be made in consultation with the patient, where possible.

Where a decision is made to not upload specific information to My Health Record, the reasons should be recorded in the provider's notes. The provider that is subject to the requirement to share to My Health Record by default must keep a record of the reason for not uploading, for a period of 2 years.

Can a patient control access to their reports?

If a result is uploaded and a patient later changes their mind, they can delete it, hide it from view, or restrict access to the result or their entire record, in accordance with access controls set by the patient. Healthcare providers should keep this in mind and remember that My Health Record is not a complete health record and should be used to supplement other sources of information.

Is there any guidance for patients about their results?

A link to Pathology Tests Explained is available within My Health Record to help patients learn more about pathology tests and provides simple, clear information to help patients understand what the result might mean.

Training for your staff

As part of the implementation of My Health Record, an organisation's security and access policy must state that all users of My Health Record will undergo training before accessing the system for the first time.

To address this requirement, a range of My Health Record eLearning courses for healthcare providers is available, in addition to tailored information sessions (contact education@digitalhealth.gov.au).

The following cyber awareness services and resources have been provided to assist organisations to understanding obligations related to cyber security and the protection of information from cyber threats:

- eLearning module – Digital Security Awareness
- Tailored cyber awareness information sessions (contact cyberawareness@digitalhealth.gov.au)
- Sign up for Cyber Alerts specific to the Healthcare Industry and become a Cyber Champion

Information for your patients

Supporting patients to understand Pathology Results

- Pathology Tests Explained

Printable resources for your waiting rooms

Posters

- Now uploading reports to My Health Record (with QR code) – for pathology and diagnostic imaging

Brochure and flyers

- Consumer guidance – Your reports in My Health Record – A4 fact sheet and tri-fold brochure

Further links and resources

Australian Digital Health Agency

- Better and Faster access to health information
- My Health Record for healthcare providers
- Implementing My Health Record in your healthcare organisation
- Pathology and diagnostic imaging providers uploading to My Health Record
- eLearning courses for pathology organisations
- eLearning courses for diagnostic imaging providers
- 1800MEDICARE app

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

- Modernising My Health Record – Improved sharing of pathology and diagnostic imaging information

Contact us

Visit the Contact us page of our website or email help@digitalhealth.gov.au