

ELECTRONIC REQUESTING OF PATHOLOGY

Information for GPs

What is eRequesting?

eRequesting, electronic requesting or ePathology, is a process that transfers requests from general practice clinical information systems (CIS) directly to the pathology provider, via secure electronic communication.

The process is intended to speed up the delivery of results to GPs and other requesters, and to streamline the patient experience, with faster collection, less waiting and lower chance of transcription errors. The use of eRequesting enables results to be uploaded to My Health Record by the pathology provider.

How does it work?

Your local CIS needs to be set up for eRequests by the pathology provider and you need to refer patients to pathology providers who also have the necessary software to receive eRequests.

Once your practice is enabled, an eRequest is automatically sent to your nominated provider when you create a request from a patient record in your local CIS. A paper request form is printed at the same time as the eRequest, allowing your patients to choose a different provider if they wish.

At present, an individual eRequest can only be sent to one provider, though GPs can be connected to multiple providers and choose a different one for each separate request. Some pathology providers also have SMS of pathology requests directly to the patient's mobile phone.

If you want to start eRequesting now, you can check the list of general practice CIS and participating providers on the [Australian Digital Health Agency \(ADHA\) website](#).

How do I get my practice set up for eRequesting?

The first thing to do is to ensure that you are using a compatible CIS. If you do not have the latest version of a compatible CIS, you will need to contact your IT provider for an upgrade.

You will then need to contact each of your preferred participating pathology providers to have eRequesting set up between your systems.

Setup is usually straightforward, taking around five minutes with the pathology provider completing the process remotely. They will however ask you to go into team viewer to allow enabling of the process. This will connect your CIS so you can use existing patient data to generate requests.

Once the functionality has been turned on, it will be the GP and patients' choice for which pathology provider to use, with eRequesting taking place automatically. A barcode will now also be visible at the bottom of the pathology request form.

How do eRequests work with My Health Record?

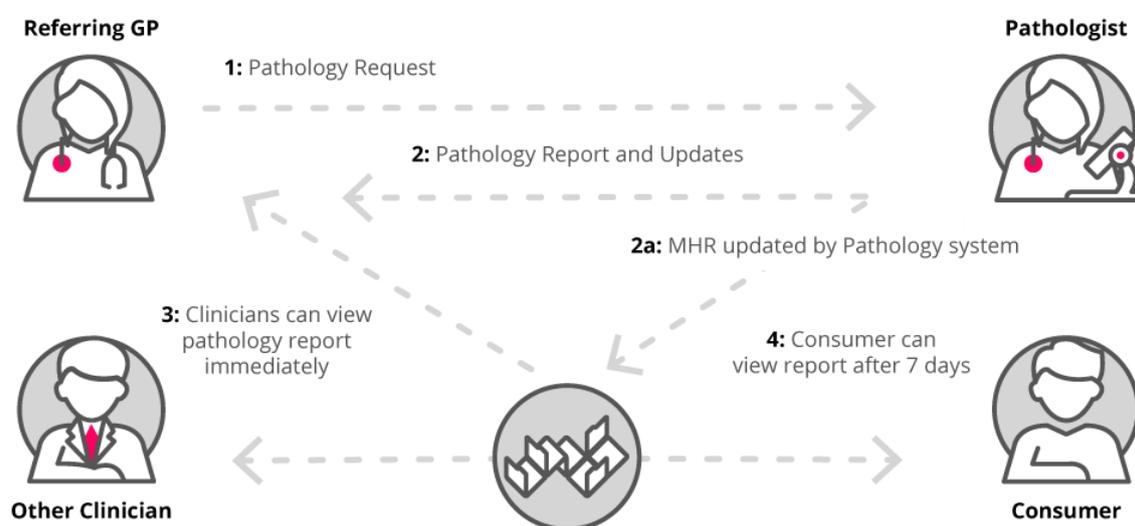
Pathology reports you have requested either electronically or via paper requests, will always be sent directly to you using the existing processes in your practice.

Pathology providers can also upload eRequested results directly into your patient's My Health Record. The reports will be immediately available to GPs and other healthcare providers accessing the patient's My Health Record.

Patients can also view their results in My Health Record seven days after the report is uploaded. This gives practitioners the time to review the report and contact the patient to discuss the results before they are available in their My Health Record.

The only exception to the seven-day rule is COVID-19 pathology reports, which are available after 24 hours. When reports are uploaded to My Health Record, patients have better access to their own healthcare information, which they can share with other healthcare providers. Patients can more easily keep track of and monitor their results.

Having results available in My Health Record can help to reduce unnecessary and duplicate testing and help to improve health outcomes.



How can I view my patient's pathology or diagnostic imaging reports in My Health Record?

You can access patient reports in My Health Record via your CIS as an 'overview', which groups test results together to support clinical decision making, or in 'list view', which displays reports in a full list not grouped together. More information about viewing reports in My Health Record is available on the [ADHA website](#).

If your CIS is not set up to access My Health Record, you can find out how to access your patient reports through the National Provider Portal via PRODA (Provider Digital Access).

Most metropolitan and rural public hospitals now upload pathology or diagnostic imaging reports to My Health Record and the number of private pathology and diagnostic imaging providers uploading to My Health Record will continue to increase over time.

What if my patient doesn't want their report uploaded to My Health Record?

If your patient asks you not to upload their report, you can communicate this directly as part of the eRequest, if your CIS has been updated to include the 'Do not send reports to My Health Record' tick box. The [ADHA website](#) has a full list of CIS with this functionality.

A request to not send a report to My Health Record applies to all tests included in that eRequest. If test results could be considered sensitive, you may wish to discuss with your patient whether to upload the report or not.

Test results will not be uploaded to the My Health Record where existing state or territory legislation prohibits the disclosure of sensitive information without the patient's express consent. The [ADHA website](#) provides information to help you understand when you can view and upload information to My Health Record.

If your patient wants to remove a report after it has been uploaded, they can do this by accessing their My Health Record online or by calling the telephone support line on 1800 723 471.

Where can I find more information?

The ADHA has a range of resources to support general practice to use eRequesting:

- [Pathology reports in My Health Record](#)
- [Diagnostic imaging reports in My Health Record](#)
- [Diagnostic imaging and pathology providers uploading to My Health Record](#)
- [My Health Record online training](#)
- [Clinical software simulators and demonstrations](#)

Who can I contact for support?

If you're interested in learning more, need advice or are looking to integrate new technology, contact Murray PHN's Digital Health team: digitalhealth@murrayphn.org.au

- Dale Pymer, Digital Health Consultant
- Vicki Dane, Digital Health Consultant
- Michelle Kelly, Digital Health Consultant

References

[eRequesting for pathology and diagnostic imaging – RACGP](#)