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Media Release

Pathology Australia welcomes MBS review

Pathology Australia today welcomed the announcement of the Government's review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and the fact that it will be led by clinicians. Pathology Australia said it looked forward to receiving further details about the review and how it will conduct its business.

Pathology Australia Chief Executive Officer, Liesel Wett, said having the review led by clinicians would ensure it did not focus on narrow cost cutting but rather would emphasise the more efficient delivery of services based on high-quality evidence.

The review was announced by Federal Health Minister Sussan Ley who said the audit of the MBS would consider how services can be aligned with contemporary clinical evidence and improve health outcomes for patients. This would include identifying procedures, investigations and treatments that were outdated, clinically redundant or not cost-effective.

Ms Wett said pathology was an essential medical service necessary to ensure a high-quality health system.

"Some 70 per cent of medical diagnoses are based on pathology testing and 100 per cent of cancer diagnoses use pathology testing," Ms Wett said.

"The private pathology sector has delivered enormous productivity gains over the past 15 year with the result that real pathology fees today are less than 50 per cent of pathology fees 15 years ago.

"This has enabled more and better testing to be provided to support high-quality health care delivery."

Ms Wett said Pathology Australia looked forward to being involved in the MBS Review process and making a positive and significant contribution.

"Given the history of our involvement with Government, our dramatic productivity gains and our commitment to evidence based practice, we are in a good position to contribute positively this review with a view to ensuring we have a sustainable and viable MBS moving forward," she said.

Pathology Australia is the peak body representing private pathology in Australia.

For further comment:
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