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Media Release

AMA agrees with Pathology – Action must be taken on Collection Centres

Pathology Australia CEO Liesel Wett said today she was pleased the AMA had publicly raised with all Australians the issue of the high and above market rents being paid for Pathology Collection Centres.

Ms Wett said that presently consumers were unaware of rents being paid.

“We support the AMA on this position – we want to see efforts to stamp out rental or other arrangements that seek to influence the referral patterns of GPs,” she said.

“The solution proposed is 100% consistent with the AMA’s policy on Medical Practitioners’ Relationships with Industry 2010 (revised 2012).

“These changes, which the Pathology sector is working collaboratively on with both government and other stakeholders such as the GP groups, are needed for sustainable health care delivery into the future.”

Ms Wett said that by clarifying the existing regulation, both GP referrers and pathology providers would be crystal clear on how to comply with the law, the regulation, and indeed how it would be monitored.

“This will also serve to ensure everyone including patients know about these arrangements, and where appropriate, the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services have the means to enforce the legislation. It also means that patients will continue to be able to access quality, world class pathology services when and where they need them at the right price.

“As the AMA knows, this practice is not new. By the AMA’s own admission, this is costing around \$150 million a year, and has been for many years.

“That’s why the Pathology sector has been working collaboratively for some time to ensure we get a solution on this issue. The AMA is supporting a solution and policy changes as is Pathology Australia. The difference is that PA is supporting the Government’s proposed solution which included consultation with general practice.”

Ms Wett said Pathology Australia and its members looked forward to continuing to work with its GP colleagues and the Turnbull Government on the implementation of the solution to this long-standing issue.

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