[Date]

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: [Patient’s name]**

Please note that I have declined to order the following diagnostic test/s for the patient:

* [Specific diagnostic test/s]

I write to explain why I have declined to order these tests.

* All health practitioners have a responsibility to safeguard patients’ wellbeing. Unnecessary testing can harm patients through out-of-pocket expense, inconvenience, anxiety, distress, and insurance exclusions and loadings. Perhaps the most harmful effect is the potential to expose patients to clinically inappropriate diagnoses and treatments.
* Under the requirements of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS), any test that a GP orders through Medicare must be ‘clinically relevant’:[[1]](#footnote-1) that is, the GP (and his or her professional peers) must feel confident that the test is necessary to the patient’s treatment.
* GPs who order tests at the request of, or on behalf of, another practitioner place themselves at medico-legal risk, as they have a responsibility to review the results of all tests they order.

[Patient’s name] has been provided with some information on this subject.

It may be possible for you to order these tests for the patient. If you choose to do so, please be aware that you will need to inform the patient of the costs involved and follow up on the results.

Yours sincerely,

[GP’s name]  
[GP’s title]

1. Australian Government Department of Health. Medicare Benefits Schedule Book. Canberra: DoH, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)