

eRequesting for pathology and diagnostic imaging

Information for GPs



What is eRequesting?

eRequesting – electronic requesting – is a process that transfers requests from general practice clinical information systems (CISs) directly to the pathology or diagnostic imaging 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 some results to be uploaded to the My Health Record.

How does it work?

Currently, general practices can only send eRequests to pathology providers. Your local CIS needs to be set up for this process and you need to refer patients to pathology providers who also have the necessary software to receive eRequests.

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.

If you want to start eRequesting now, you can check the list of general practice CISs 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 ensure you're using a compatible CIS. You'll then need to contact your preferred provider to have eRequesting set up between your systems.

Setting up eRequesting will normally require you to download an application from your preferred provider. This will connect to your CIS so you can use existing patient data to generate requests. Once the functionality has been turned on, eRequesting takes place automatically.

How do eRequests work with My Health Record?

Pathology reports you've 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 into your patient's My Health Record. The reports will be immediately available to you and other healthcare providers accessing the patient's My Health Record.

Your patients can also view their results in My Health Record seven days after the report is uploaded. This gives you time to review the report and contact your patient to discuss the results before they're available in their My Health Record.

The only exception to this seven-day rule is COVID-19 pathology reports, which are available after 24 hours.

Where 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, and access them at any time.

Sharing results with the My Health Record can also reduce unnecessary duplicate testing and potentially improve patient care and 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).

Pathology or diagnostic imaging reports from most urban and rural public hospitals around Australia are now uploaded to My Health Record, and therefore can be viewed by GPs. 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 CISs with this functionality.

If your CIS does not have this functionality, patients can mark a tick box on the paper form to request that the report is not uploaded. Patients can also simply write on the form to not upload the report.

A request to not send a report to the 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 the My Health Record.

If your patient wants to remove a report after it's been uploaded, they can do this by accessing their My Health Record online or via the telephone support line, 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](#)

Disclaimer

The information set out in this publication is current at the date of first publication and is intended for use as a guide of a general nature only and may or may not be relevant to particular patients or circumstances. The RACGP and its employees and agents have no liability (including for negligence) to any users of the information contained in this publication.

© The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners 2021

This resource is provided under licence by the RACGP. Full terms are available at www.racgp.org.au/usage/licence

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and seas on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future