

# Public Pathology - Community First, Always Campaign



Public Pathology  
AUSTRALIA

## “Maintaining vigilance during the COVID-19 vaccination program”

17 MAY 2021

Australia’s response to the COVID-19 global pandemic has been exemplary. This has been driven by Public Pathology Services. [Public Pathology Australia](#) advises that ongoing vigilance and testing is required to maintain an effective response to the pandemic despite the commencement of the vaccination program. The WHO recently stated that current vaccination rates will not eliminate the virus and that public health measures and COVID-19 testing remain critical.<sup>i</sup>

This message coincides with the launch of Public Pathology Australia’s new **Public Pathology – Community First, Always** campaign.

Australia’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic is recognised as one of the best in the OECD – with only 29,947 cases and 910 deaths.<sup>ii</sup> Australia’s exemplary response to the COVID-19 global pandemic has been driven by Public Pathology Services who developed the test for the virus that causes COVID-19 before commercial tests became available, scaled up testing services and conducted genomic sequencing to identify new outbreaks and clusters. Public Pathology Services also developed confirmatory testing to identify rare vaccine induced blood clots.

To highlight the critical role of Public Pathology Services during the COVID-19 pandemic, Public Pathology Australia has launched a national campaign with an engaging **new video located [here](#)**.

Since January 2020, Public Pathology Services have conducted around half of all the COVID-19 tests across Australia. In some States and Territories Public Pathology Services have tested over 95% of all COVID-19 samples. These government owned and operated pathology services continue to play a critical role during the COVID-19 pandemic to keep our community safe.

President of Public Pathology Australia and Microbiologist Dr Petra Derrington says “The impact of COVID-19 has been far-reaching and unpredictable. It has profoundly affected all of us – personally, professionally, physically and psychologically. Never before have we been so isolated yet connected; united by fear of a virus yet resolved to saving lives.

Here in Australia, the swift and effective efforts of Public Pathology Services have been critical to keeping our community safe. Public Pathology experts have been central to the national response since the devastating virus first arrived on our shores. From testing for the virus to working with Government in COVID-19 control centres across the country – Public Pathology has demonstrated how it puts our community first.”

Seventeen months since the start of the pandemic, it is important that the community does not become complacent. Public Pathology Australia is asking for the community to be vigilant despite low case numbers and the start of the vaccination program. Remember, even though the COVID-19 vaccination program has commenced, if you have any COVID-19 symptoms or have been otherwise advised to get a COVID test – please get tested.

**Community First, Always.**

Infectious Diseases Physician Associate Professor Sanjaya Senanayake from the ANU says “It is important that members of the community receive the COVID-19 vaccination when it’s their turn. We don’t yet fully understand the duration of immunity or risk of transmission with the vaccines, nor the impact of the vaccines on any new variants of the COVID-19 virus. That’s why it is important to get tested if you have any COVID-19 symptoms or have otherwise been told to get a COVID-19 test.”

The incidence rate of blood clots from the COVID-19 vaccine is very low. After the vaccination, if you have any symptoms associated with blood clotting such as a persistent headache that doesn’t go away with analgesia, pain in your stomach, persistent bleeding, multiple bruises, leg pain or swelling, please seek medical advice. Public Pathology Services located in most public hospitals across Australia can test whether a patient has developed these rare blood clots from the COVID-19 vaccination.<sup>iii</sup>

We are fortunate in Australia that we have Public Pathology who put the Community First, Always.

**Public Pathology Australia is the national peak body for public pathology services in Australia.**

More information about Public Pathology Australia and its members are available at [www.publicpathology.org.au](http://www.publicpathology.org.au).

*This media release is available online.*

**Interview opportunities are available with:**

**Dr Petra Derrington**



**Associate Professor Sanjaya Senanayake**



**For all media enquiries contact Ms Jenny Sikorski, CEO, Public Pathology Australia, on 0466 576 221, [ceo@publicpathology.org.au](mailto:ceo@publicpathology.org.au)**

**The video can be used across your media network. Public Pathology Australia also has other COVID testing photographs and experts available for comment on COVID and pathology.**

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<sup>i</sup> [WHO videoconference](#) held via social media on 13 May 2021.

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/>

Australian Government - <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-current-situation-and-case-numbers> viewed on 13 May 2021.

<sup>iii</sup> Thrombosis & Haemostasis Society of Australia & New Zealand, viewed 14 May 2021.

<https://www.thanz.org.au/documents/item/577>

<https://www.thanz.org.au/news/vitt-multidisciplinary-guideline-for-doctors>

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