Interoperability and the PITUS 18-20 Project

Interoperability is defined as the ability of a range of health information systems, devices or applications to connect in a coordinated manner, within and across organisational boundaries. This allows health practitioners to access and exchange data with unambiguous meaning. This is necessary to make healthcare safer, more efficient and more effective for individuals and the community. In relation to the PITUS Project, interoperability underpins each of the 5 objectives:

1) Develop standards, information models and terminology reference sets for safe pathology reporting to registries, including the My Health Record.

2) Ensure standards, information models and terminology reference sets are comprehensive, current and accessible for laboratories.

3) Propose a compliance framework for modern pathology requesting and reporting that can be used by laboratories and regulatory bodies.

4) Develop best practice in the use of clinical information systems for the requesting of pathology, records management and follow-up of pathology reports.

5) Drive uptake, compliance and accreditation through promotion and adoption of the standards across the pathology profession and its stakeholders.

The potential long-term benefits associated with interoperability may be realised not only by the Project but by laboratories, health practitioners and individuals in several ways, including:

- Accurate and streamlined uploading of pathology results to the My Health Record
- Increased productivity and enhanced patient privacy by reducing manual data entry and interventions
- Reduced costs through fewer manual interventions
- Reduction in risk of error caused by manual transcription of results
- Improved timeliness of reporting vital information by simultaneous transmission to a range of clinicians and consumers
- Improved clinical decision making through access to trends in results and linkages to RCPA Manual and Lab Tests Online AU
- Reduction in the misinterpretation of information via the use of standardised report formats, pathology terminology and units of measure.
- Automated uploading of results for specified processes, e.g. National Registries and hospital discharge summaries
- Improved quality of health data available from various sources