

# Australians facing 4.7-year wait for life-saving medical technologies

## *Public or private status can determine treatment access, new report warns*

Australians are waiting an average **4.7 years** for clinically proven, life-saving medical technologies, as outdated and fragmented reimbursement systems slow access and widen inequities between public and private patients.

A national report released today (**Tuesday, December 9, 2025**) highlights these delays and inequities, calling for urgent reform to improve patient access.

Developed by HTAnalysts in collaboration with Edwards Lifesciences, and informed by clinicians, hospitals, patient advocates, and sector leaders, the report shows Australia is falling behind comparable countries, where approval times are often less than half as long. The report underscores the urgent need to modernise health technology assessment and reimbursement process to ensure timely, equitable, and life-saving access for ALL patients.



**"For patients with severe heart conditions, waiting years can be the difference between life and death,"** said Cardiothoracic Surgeon, Monash Health and Victoria Heart Hospital, Professor Jayme Bennetts, Melbourne.

Clinicians warn these delays carry serious consequences, particularly for patients living with severe heart disease, while private patients can wait even longer when reimbursement processes stall access to newer technologies.

The report outlines systemic challenges and practical reforms to modernise health technology assessment and improve equitable, timely access across both public and private systems.

### **INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TODAY (SEE OVERLEAF)**

- **A health economist** on Australia's lagging approval timelines;
- **Cardiothoracic specialists** on the clinical impacts of delay;
- **Patient advocates** on the impacts of long waits, public-private inequities, and the need for reform;
- **Patients** sharing personal experiences of delayed treatment and how public or private status affected their care; and
- **Data and international comparisons** from the new report.

### **ACCELERATING ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES IN AUS REPORT**

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# AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW, VISION & PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

EXPERTS	
<b>Associate Professor Colman Taylor</b>	Health Economist, Policy Strategist & Chief Vision Officer, HTANALYSTS, <b>SYDNEY</b>
<b>Professor Stephen Worthley</b>	Structural Interventional Cardiologist, Mater Hospital, North Shore Private Hospital & Macquarie University & Clinical Professor, Macquarie University, <b>SYDNEY</b>
<b>Mr Ian Burgess</b>	Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Medical Technology Association of Australia (MTAA), <b>SYDNEY</b>
<b>Professor Jayme Bennets</b>	Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Monash University & Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Victoria Heart Hospital, <b>MELBOURNE</b>
<b>Dr Dale Murdoch</b>	General & Interventional Cardiologist, St Vincent's Private Hospital Northside, <b>BRISBANE</b>
<b>Associate Professor Ross Roberts-Thomson</b>	Director of Cardiology, Royal Adelaide Hospital, <b>ADELAIDE</b>
<b>Madeline O'Donoghue</b>	Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Pathology Technology Australia, <b>SYDNEY</b>
PATIENT ADVOCATES	
<b>Tanya Hall</b>	Founder & CEO of hearts4heart living well with atrial fibrillation, <b>PERTH</b>
<b>Dr Geoff Lester</b>	Vascular Medicine & Perioperative Physician, Yarra Vascular Surgeons; Marfan & Aortic Diseases Physician, Alfred Hospital Non-Executive Director, hearts4heart; National Ambassador, Heart Foundation; & Senior Lecturer, Monash University, <b>MELBOURNE</b>
<b>Dr Christian Verdicchio</b>	CEO, Heart Support Australia, Head of Corporate Affairs & Strategy, Advara HeartCare, Clinician-researcher & Clinical Senior Lecturer, University of Sydney & University of Adelaide, <b>ADELAIDE</b>
PATIENTS	
<b>Stuart, 54</b>	Consultant, father & grandfather whose answer to one question saved his life: 'Public or private?', <b>SYDNEY</b>
<b>David, 73</b>	How timely cardiac care helped a motorbike & travel enthusiast stay on the road, Trafalgar South, <b>WEST GIPPSLAND</b>
<b>Jilian, 63</b>	Small business owner, support worker, mother & grandmother saved by access to innovative heart surgery, <b>BRISBANE</b>
<b>Najee, 27</b>	Adventure enthusiast & husband, highlighting the value of access to innovative medical technologies, <b>ADELAIDE</b>
<b>Christopher, 76</b>	Retiree, handyman & husband who underwent heart valve treatment, <b>ADELAIDE</b>
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