

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Australians are waiting an average **4.7 years** for clinically proven, life-saving medical technologies, as outdated and fragmented reimbursement systems slow access and widen inequities between public and private patients.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

Available today: medicaltechdelays.com.au/new-report



AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW, VISION & PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

EXPERTS	
Associate Professor Colman Taylor	Health Economist, Policy Strategist & Chief Vision Officer, HTANALYSTS, SYDNEY
Professor Stephen Worthley	Structural Interventional Cardiologist, Mater Hospital, North Shore Private Hospital & Macquarie University & Clinical Professor, Macquarie University, SYDNEY
Mr Ian Burgess	Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Medical Technology Association of Australia (MTAA), SYDNEY
Professor Jayme Bennetts	Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Monash University & Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Victoria Heart Hospital, MELBOURNE
Dr Dale Murdoch	General & Interventional Cardiologist, St Vincent's Private Hospital Northside, BRISBANE
Associate Professor Ross Roberts-Thomson	Director of Cardiology, Royal Adelaide Hospital, ADELAIDE
Madeline O'Donoghue	Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Pathology Technology Australia, SYDNEY
PATIENT ADVOCATES	
Tanya Hall	Founder & CEO of hearts4heart living well with atrial fibrillation, PERTH
Dr Geoff Lester	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, MELBOURNE
Dr Christian Verdicchio	CEO, Heart Support Australia, Head of Corporate Affairs & Strategy, Advara HeartCare, Clinician-researcher & Clinical Senior Lecturer, University of Sydney & University of Adelaide, ADELAIDE
PATIENTS	
Stuart, 54	Consultant, father & grandfather whose answer to one question saved his life: 'Public or private?', SYDNEY
David, 73	How timely cardiac care helped a motorbike & travel enthusiast stay on the road, Trafalgar South, WEST GIPPSLAND
Jilian, 63	Small business owner, support worker, mother & grandmother saved by access to innovative heart surgery, BRISBANE
Najee, 27	Adventure enthusiast & husband, highlighting the value of access to innovative medical technologies, ADELAIDE
Christopher, 76	Retiree, handyman & husband who underwent heart valve treatment, ADELAIDE
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MEDIA CONTACTS	Kirsten Bruce & Sophia Heather, VIVA! Communications M 0401 717 566 T 02 9968 3741 02 9968 1604 E kirstenbruce@vivacommunications.com.au sophia@vivacommunications.com.au