



MEDIA RELEASE
6 December 2016

Privately insured patients missing out on medical technologies

Today in the [Daily Telegraph](#) the Medical Technology of Australia (MTAA) calls on the Government to change the definition of what can be included on the Protheses List (PL).

Presently, a benefit is only payable in respect of surgically implanted prostheses, human tissue items and other medical devices list.

The MTAA would like to see non-implantable medical technologies that meet an agreed eligibility criteria included on the PL.

Industry believes the PL is the best regulatory system as its independence ensures patient access to the most appropriate medical technologies.

The current criteria is outdated and needs to be expanded to improve patient access to advancements in technology, including non-implantable medical technologies.

Andrea Kunca, co-lead of the Medical Technology Association of Australia said:

“The Medical Technology Association of Australia (MTAA) is fully supportive of the Government’s efforts to achieve meaningful fact based reform of medical device benefits.

“As a member of the Protheses List Advisory Committee, MTAA will be working with all stakeholders to deliver reform recommendations to Government.

“There are several options to amend the existing arrangements to allow for the inclusion of a limited range of high tech, single use, non-implantable devices backed by evidence of cost effectiveness and which are not adequately covered under existing arrangements.

“Currently, we have a 2005 definition that doesn’t reflect 2016 medical technology. As a result, a financial disincentive exists in our private healthcare system whereby private health funds do not reimburse non-implantable medical technologies.

“This is forcing private hospitals to make a financial decision despite these technologies being less invasive, more efficient and freeing up hospital beds quicker.

“Many technologies that don’t meet the PL criteria for listing are not available to patients in private hospital, but are in our public hospitals.

“The MTAA believes privately insured patients have a right to these medical technologies.”

ENDS

Media contact:

Polo Guilbert-Wright | 0409 631 828 | polo@mtaa.org.au

Notes to Editors:

In response to the below article:

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/lifestyle/health/private-health-fund-members-stuck-with-outdated-treatments-due-to-loop-hole/news-story/8469cba73c4dce4ab7493549e0f8ee8d>

Did you know?

1. The medical technology industry currently employs more than 19,000 people and generates approximately \$11 billion in revenue.
2. The industry is highly skilled with over 52% of employees having a tertiary qualification, and 25% having a postgraduate qualification.
3. More than half of Australian medical device companies have grown from start-ups. 40% of all medical device businesses have been established since 2000.
4. In 2013-14, Australia exported medical devices to 167 different countries around the world for a total value of \$2.1 billion.
5. Medical technology (7.76%) is second only to Civil Engineering (8.5%) and pharmaceuticals in third (6.3%) when it comes to filing patents for innovative technology.

About MTAA

The Medical Technology Association of Australia (MTAA) is the national association representing companies in the medical technology industry. MTAA aims to ensure the benefits of modern, innovative and reliable medical technology are delivered effectively to provide better health outcomes to the Australian community.

MTAA represents manufacturers and suppliers of medical technology used in the diagnosis, prevention, treatment and management of disease and disability. The range of medical technology is diverse with products ranging from familiar items such as syringes and wound dressings, through to high-technology implanted devices such as pacemakers, defibrillators, hip and other orthopaedic implants. Products also include hospital and diagnostic imaging equipment such as ultrasounds and magnetic resonance imaging machines.

MTAA members distribute the majority of the non-pharmaceutical products used in the diagnosis and treatment of disease and disability in Australia. Our member companies also play a vital role in providing healthcare professionals with essential education and training to ensure safe and effective use of medical technology.