

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000212

OUTCOME: 3 - Access to Medical and Dental Services

Topic: Western Blot Tests

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Madigan, John

Question:

Why do laboratories who provide Medicare funded Western blot tests, not report the full Western blot result by band?

Answer:

Reporting of test results is a matter for laboratories. The National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) sets standards against which laboratories providing medical pathology services can be accredited as providing safe and reliable services to patients. NPAAC does not specify assays or report contents for diagnostic tests.

The NPAAC *Requirements for Medical Pathology Services* states that the selection of the test method and procedure are the responsibility of the laboratory supervisor. In addition, the laboratory must provide a consultative service, including providing advice on the precision and accuracy of the methods used and the scientific basis of results and the test procedure must be validated and/or verified, with method references or source documented.