

Point of Care Testing 24/7 rural and regional pathology

Introduction

The state wide Point of Care Testing (PoCT) program has provided new devices to more than 150 small emergency departments (mainly rural and regional) that don't have access to 24/7 pathology laboratories onsite.

Key activities

The PoCT program is the largest managed point of care system in the world.

NSW Health Pathology oversees the governance of all point of care devices installed within this program across the state, ensuring all sites are accredited and participating in an external quality assurance program. NSW Health Pathology also worked with industry to establish middleware software that is connected to all testing devices. This allows device monitoring across the state in real time to quickly identify and rectify any technical issues.

The software is also used to integrate test results into the local medical record software which significantly improves safety and care for patients.

Initial training is held onsite for clinical and medical staff and update training is provided online.

The unique middleware software helps identify users who may not be performing tests correctly. These users can then be locked out of the system until they receive further training, ensuring the highest quality of testing is maintained.

Key achievements

The hand-held devices provide onsite analysis for common pathology tests emergency department (ED) teams rely on. Onsite analysis allows faster results, so the time to treatment is greatly improved. Costly air evacuations to larger hospitals can be avoided and results are available electronically in realtime.

NSW Health Pathology is working with local health districts to provide training for local pathology and ED staff to help ensure the devices are used correctly and is also monitoring the performance of the devices.

