

## FAQ: Genetic pathology

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31 July 2025

### **What does recognition of genetic pathology as a field of specialty practice mean?**

Specialist registration operates for the medical profession. Medical practitioners with approved qualifications in recognised specialties, or fields of specialty practice, can be granted specialist registration and are able to use the protected title associated with their specialist registration. Only medical practitioners with specialist registration are able to call themselves medical specialists.

Pathology is an existing approved medical specialty with seven fields of specialty practice (Anatomical pathology (including cytopathology), Chemical pathology, Forensic pathology, General pathology, Haematology, Immunology, and Microbiology). In June 2025, health ministers added genetic pathology to the fields of specialty practice within Pathology and the title 'Specialist genetic pathologist' is now a protected title under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.

When there is an approved qualification in genetic pathology, medical practitioners with the approved qualification can apply to the Medical Board of Australia for specialist registration in genetic pathology.

Only medical practitioners with specialist registration in genetic pathology can call themselves a 'Specialist genetic pathologist'.

There are transitional arrangements in place for specialist pathologists who are currently working in genetic pathology, that apply until six months after there is an approved qualification. Read more under the FAQ: *'What are the transitional arrangements until there is an approved qualification in genetic pathology?'*

### **I am a specialist pathologist with training in genetic pathology. What does specialist recognition of genetic pathology mean for me?**

There are no changes to your existing working arrangements or your ability to work in genetic pathology if you continue to work within the scope of your training, knowledge and skills.

Recognition of genetic pathology makes it an approved field of specialty practice for the purposes of specialist registration in the medical profession. The title 'Specialist genetic pathologist' is now a protected title under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.

Now that genetic pathology is recognised, medical practitioners with an approved qualification in genetic pathology can apply for specialist registration in genetic pathology. Because this field of speciality practice was only recognised in June 2025, there is not yet an approved qualification.

Only medical practitioners with specialist registration in genetic pathology can call themselves a 'Specialist genetic pathologist'.

There are transitional arrangements in place for specialist pathologists who are currently working in genetic pathology, that apply until six months after there is an approved qualification. Read more under the FAQ: *'What are the transitional arrangements until there is an approved qualification in genetic pathology?'*

## **What are the transitional arrangements until there is an approved qualification in Genetic pathology?**

The Medical Board has put transitional arrangements in place for specialist pathologists with training in genetic pathology. A qualification for the purposes of specialist registration can only be approved after health ministers approve a specialty.

If you are a specialist pathologist with training in genetic pathology, there are no changes to your existing working arrangements. You can continue to work in genetic pathology if you work within the scope of your training, knowledge and skills.

The transitional arrangements allow you continue to use the title genetic pathologist until six months after there is an approved qualification in genetic pathology.

When there is an approved qualification, you will be able to apply for specialist registration in Genetic pathology if you hold the approved qualification.

Read more about the approved qualification under the FAQ: *'What is the approved qualification for Genetic pathology?'*

## **What is the approved qualification for Genetic pathology?**

A qualification for the purposes of specialist registration can only be approved after health ministers approve a specialty.

Now that genetic pathology is a recognised field of specialty practice, education providers, such as the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA), can apply to the Australian Medical Council (AMC) to have training programs in Genetic pathology accredited by the AMC.

If the AMC accredits a training program in genetic pathology, they will provide a report to the Medical Board of Australia, and the Board will then decide if the training program and recommended qualification is approved for the purposes of specialist registration in genetic pathology.

The Board will publish more information when there is an accredited and approved qualification.

## **I completed my genetic pathology training with the RCPA before an approved qualification in genetic pathology was established. Can I apply for specialist registration in genetic pathology?**

Not yet. First, an approved qualification needs to be established.

The Board will publish more information on its website when there is an accredited and approved qualification.

## **I employ pathologists who work in different areas of genetic pathology. Can they continue to work in genetic pathology if they do not hold specialist registration in genetic pathology?**

Yes. There are no changes to existing work arrangements if medical practitioners continue to work within the scope of their training, knowledge and skills.

Employers can continue to credential medical practitioners to work in different areas of genetic pathology based on the individual's training, knowledge and skills.

When the transitional arrangements for genetic pathology end, six months after a specialist qualification has been approved, only medical practitioners with specialist registration in Genetic pathology will be able to use the protected title 'Specialist genetic pathologist'.

Read more about the transitional arrangements under the FAQ: *'What are the transitional arrangements until there is an approved qualification in Genetic pathology?'*