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**NEWSLETTER CONTENT – FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL USE**

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**Standard guides better colonoscopy care for all Australians**

In Australia, about 1 million colonoscopies are performed in hospitals and day procedure services each year, to prevent and detect bowel cancer and manage other bowel disease.

High-quality, appropriate use of colonoscopy is critical for reducing bowel cancer rates nationally and minimising unnecessary risk for patients.

To drive safe, high-quality care, the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) has published a new [Atlas Focus Report: Colonoscopy](https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/atlas-colonoscopy)and anupdated [Colonoscopy Clinical Care Standard](https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/colonoscopy-ccs) (2025).

The Atlas Focus Report explores 10 years of trend data for colonoscopy and repeat colonoscopy before 3 years. It shows an overall decrease in the national rate of MBS-subsidised repeat colonoscopy before 3 years, with widening differences between rates according to where people live and their socioeconomic status.

In 2023–24, people in major cities were four times more likely to have a colonoscopy than those in remote areas. These results suggest that some people may be having colonoscopies more often than required, while others are missing out.

The Clinical Care Standard provides a national framework highlighting key aspects critical to quality colonoscopy including appropriate referral, timely assessment, adequate bowel preparation, safe sedation, procedural quality and reporting to enable accurate follow up.

Updates in the Standard include strengthened guidance for safe and high-quality colonoscopy and new requirements to support appropriate follow-up, with a new self-assessment tool to aid health service implementation.

It is important that patients are offered follow-up treatment after colonoscopy or ongoing surveillance in accordance with evidence-based guidelines. However, difficulty accessing previous results can mean a colonoscopy is repeated that could have been avoided.

Improving the communication of results and follow-up plans with patients and GPs, and the use of shared electronic systems such as My Health Record, is critical to support appropriate and sustainable use of colonoscopy.

Healthcare services and clinicians can use the interactive data in the Report to view colonoscopy and repeat colonoscopy rates in their local area to understand gaps in care. Where there is variation, it is important to reflect on reasons and to act where needed.

Find out more at [safetyandquality.gov.au/colonoscopy](https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/colonoscopy)