

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 8 NOVEMBER 2017

## POLITICIANS REMINDED OF RADIOLOGY CRISIS ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RADIOLOGY

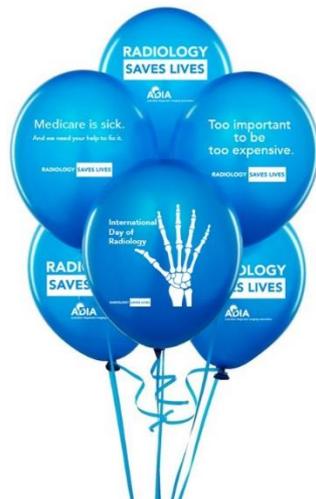
Hundreds of politicians across the country will receive balloons and a card today on behalf of radiologists and their patients, to remind them that this International Day of Radiology, Australians have precious little to celebrate.

That's because this year marks the twentieth year of frozen Medicare rebates for radiology services.

Celebrated annually on November 8<sup>th</sup>, the International Day of Radiology commemorates the discovery of x-rays by Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen in 1895.

It's usually a chance to acknowledge the important work done by radiologists, the lives radiology has saved, and a pivotal part that it plays in modern medicine. This year's celebration highlights the place of radiology in emergency medicine.

Instead, the Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association (ADIA) will be marking the occasion by imploring Australian politicians to take action and end the 20-year rebate freeze.



“What is usually a celebration of the lifesaving work of radiologists is now a sobering reminder that many Australians can't afford vital scans,” said ADIA President Dr Christian Wriedt.

“The government has been contributing the same Medicare rebate for radiology services for two decades, passing the rising costs of providing scans onto patients and practices.

“Radiology is now the hardest to access of all primary care services with the highest upfront costs, the highest patient gaps and the lowest bulk billing rate.

“We are reminding politicians that this is seriously affecting the health of every day Australians.

“It’s their responsibility to take action on behalf of those people and end the freeze on rebates.

“Almost 300,000 Australians don’t get diagnosed every year because they simply cannot afford it. Unless Medicare rebates are re-indexed, that number will continue to grow.

“That’s hardly a cause for celebration.”

*ADIA represents radiology practices throughout Australia, both in the community and in hospitals. It promotes the ongoing development of quality accreditation standards and appropriate funding settings so that Australians can have affordable access to quality radiology services. This supports radiology’s central role in the diagnosis, treatment and management of a broad range of conditions in every branch of medicine.*

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