



COLLEGE of AMERICAN
PATHOLOGISTS

7 Ways Pathologists Help Patients Make Informed Decisions



Pathologists have a long history of helping patients make informed decisions when it comes to diagnoses and treatment options for a variety of illnesses – from cancer and genetic diseases to the new strains of COVID-19.

However, at a time when pathologists have played an increasingly critical role in public health, Medicare’s declining reimbursements coupled with inflationary pressures threaten the stability of pathology practices.

The College of American Pathologists (CAP), the leading organization of board-certified pathologists, is committed to ensuring that every patient with an illness can access comprehensive care and diagnoses – regardless of insurance. When physicians cannot get proper reimbursement from the Medicare program for their work, a very real domino effect takes place that disrupts timely patient care.

By diagnosing diseases that patients are facing, pathologists’ work touches every aspect of the health care continuum.

Here are seven reasons why pathologists are critical to delivering better health care results for patients:

01

Unlock Answers at the Cellular Level

Pathologists are medical doctors combining scientists' understanding of testing with physicians' knowledge to correctly diagnose patients.

02

Offer Patients a Comprehensive Care Team

Most Americans have had blood drawn or given a specimen at some point but have never met the person examining it: a pathologist. Working with patients' health care teams, pathologists analyze samples using advanced equipment and techniques to determine diagnosis, inform treatment options, decode other illnesses and offer continuous improvement in communities.

03

Decode Diagnoses and Empower Patients Through Information

Receiving a diagnosis can be scary and overwhelming. Pathologists give patients the information that they need to ask the right questions and participate in their own care. Accuracy and laboratory quality matter to pathologists because a patient's health depends on it.

04

Diminish Fears and Uncertainty Around a Diagnosis

Pathologists have an obligation to share results in a way that avoids confusion and eliminates questions. Alongside primary care doctors and oncologists, they help give patients a complete picture of their disease process and reduce fear and uncertainty.

05

Translate Complex Results

Sometimes a report from a pathologist may lead to additional questions from the patient about the diagnosis. Pathologists not only discuss results with doctors, but also can consult with patients to provide more in-depth information about a diagnosis.

06

Ensure All Patients Can Receive a Diagnosis

All patients deserve access to pathology services. To guarantee this, pathologists depend on Congress for payment stability. With year-over-year cuts to the physician fee schedule, some patients continue to suffer as physicians struggle to adjust to excessive reimbursements cuts.

07

Preserve Dependable and Consistent Care for All

If cuts take effect, patients could suffer as pathologists struggle to adjust to unpredictable and excessive reductions in reimbursements. That is why pathologists are urging for greater financial stability of the Medicare program and payment stability for pathology and laboratory medicine.

Join pathologists and the patients who they serve in urging lawmakers to prioritize patient access to pathology, so people across the U.S. can make the best decisions related to their health and can live healthier lives.

[LEARN MORE](#)