

OFFICIAL: Sensitive – NSW Government

13 January 2026

Mr Gerard Hayes
Secretary
Health Services Union
Locked Bag 3
Australia Square NSW 1215
By email: secretary@hsu.asn.au

Dear Mr Hayes,

NSW Health Pathology (NSWHP) is consulting with staff and stakeholders on a proposed service redesign impacting data entry staff currently working within the Central Specimen Reception (CSR) team at John Hunter, The Calvary Mater, and Maitland Hospitals.

The introduction of our Pathology Laboratory Information Management System (Beaker), a component of the Single Digital Patient Record (SDPR), will change how specimens are collected and managed. These changes form part of a large-scale, statewide technological transformation. Many pathology requests will transition to electronic orders (eOrders), enabling fully digital workflows.

Key workflow changes include:

- Collectors will use Beaker to manage pathology requests and capture collection details electronically.
- Patient information will be retrieved or entered in Beaker prior to collection.
- Specimens will arrive at the laboratory already registered and will be received by scanning labels applied at collection.

These changes mean the data entry function currently performed in CSR will move to the point of collection. Data entry staff will continue performing their duties, supporting accurate data entry and patient interactions, but at outpatient collection centres rather than within the laboratory. For some staff this may mean remaining on the same hospital campus but working in the hospital-attached collection site rather than the laboratory, while for others it may mean a change of work location. There will be minimal changes to work duties.

Staff engagement and influence

We have met with impacted staff, and their feedback has directly shaped the proposal, including ergonomics needs, training format, uniform arrangements, flexibility options for role alignment, and the EOI approach to site preferences. Initial consultation sessions have commenced and will continue through the EOI and implementation phases.

Classification and location strategy

Historically, CSR staff hold different classifications, Technical Assistant (TA) and Administration Officer (AO). In the post-Beaker digital workflow, two operating environments have emerged:

- Non-hospital based larger collection sites (Clinical Pathology Collection Service/standalone with no on-site laboratory): Primarily require front-of-house workflow support with technical handling and throughput coordination; TA classification is the best fit for these sites.
- Hospital-attached collection sites (with on-site laboratory): Require close administrative coordination with laboratory interfaces, escalations, and inpatient/outpatient mix management; AO classifications can be utilised in these centres, specifically Royal Newcastle Centre (JHH), Maitland, and the Mater Hospitals.

To enable flexibility and preserve choice in work location, NSWHP is open to current AO staff who are interested in working at a non-hospital based larger collection site voluntarily transitioning to TA classification with salary grandfathering (no financial disadvantage). This option will be explored through the EOI process and individual discussions. Current AO staff who are placed at one of the 3 hospital-attached collection sites will maintain their AO classification, and current TA staff who transition to a non-hospital-based collection site will maintain their current TA classification.

If more staff than available positions express an interest in a particular collection centre, NSWHP will follow a merit-based selection process to determine which staff are the best fit for that site; other staff will be placed at the next available location in accordance with their list of preferences.

Locations for Expression of Interest (EOI)

Staff will be invited to express interest in working at the following sites, aligned to classification needs.

Collection Centre	FTE Requirements	Classification
Raymond Terrace	1.0	TA
Warners Bay	1.0	TA
Mater CPCS	1.3	AO
Royal Newcastle Centre CPCS	1.6	AO
Cessnock	1.0	TA
Maitland CPCS	1.0	AO
High Street	1.0	TA
Edgeworth	1.0	TA
Adamstown	1.0	TA
Wallsend	0.5	TA
Medowie	0.5	TA
Belmont Providence	0.2	TA

Training, ergonomics, and role clarity

- Training & orientation: Tailored front-of-house Beaker training (supported by superusers and CSR trainers) will be provided to all affected staff ahead of location changes; training will occur during paid time and include site orientation.

- Ergonomics: We will conduct ergonomic assessments at sites to ensure safe and fit-for-purpose setups.
- Uniforms: Patient-facing staff will be supplied with pathology-funded uniforms, with laundry allowance applicable.
- Minor duty changes: Staff may assist with stock management, patient bookings, and KIMMS follow-up including patient contact.

Industrial consultation, obligations, and union engagement

NSWHP is committed to consultation with staff and the HSU, consistent with applicable industrial instruments and NSW public sector obligations). We will continue to provide relevant information, meet regularly, and consider feedback prior to final decisions.

Timelines and decision points

To provide transparency and planning certainty, our indicative schedule is below subject to consultation.

- EOI opens: 19 January 2026
- EOI closes: 30 January 2026
- Preliminary placement advice to staff: 6 February 2026
- Final confirmations 13 February 2026
- Change of work location takes effect: Week commencing 23 March 2026

We will maintain regular union engagement throughout this period and schedule follow-up meetings after preliminary advice and final confirmations to address any residual concerns.

NSWHP remains committed to delivering high-quality, efficient pathology services while supporting the wellbeing and development of our staff. If you would like to arrange a meeting or require further information, please contact Associate Director of Human Resources, Tarquin Pollock at Tarquin.Pollock@health.nsw.gov.au



Tammy Boone
A/Director, People and Culture
NSW Health Pathology