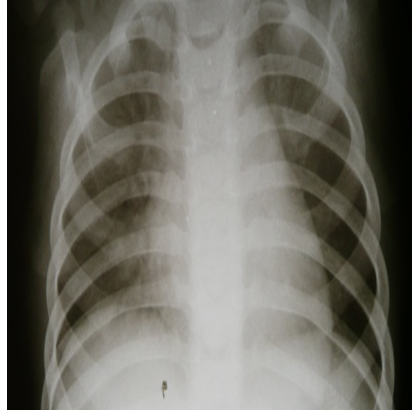




Unread X-Ray Backlog Investigated in Australia



A backlog of more than 40,000 unread x-rays has been uncovered at the Gold Coast Hospital in Queensland, Australia. It has further emerged that the health board responsible had been aware of the issue for more than five years. While the x-rays had been read by the referring doctor, none had been read and reported on by a radiologist.

Lawrence Springborg, the state's Health Minister has ordered an independent investigation after the issue was discovered by the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service Board and its Safety, Quality and Engagement Sub-Committee.

The minister noted that treating doctors had viewed the x-rays, but where the system had broken down was in the subsequent formal reporting by radiologists.

The minister further announced that the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service Board had proposed a three-part response to the problem:

1. The newly-amended arrangements of the GCHHS for the future reporting of medical imagery including plain film x-rays should be subject to external monitoring, at least in the short to medium term.
2. Robust protocols and procedures to prioritise and address the backlog are required and external scrutiny of that process is desirable.
3. Finally, an investigation to report to the public on this issue, its causes and consequences and to recommend further remedial and other appropriate action should be considered.

Sources: Gold Coast Bulletin, Queensland Government
Image source: Wikimedia Commons, credit [Nevit Dilmen](#)

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