



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 15th October 2023

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sunday Canberra Times \(page 4\)](#)** reports that the Royal Australasian College of Physicians have warned there is an urgent need to appoint additional consultants to address the trainee supervision issues in Canberra Hospital's cardiology department, citing a lack of specialists to supervise in electrophysiology.
- **[The Sunday Times \(page 7\)](#)** reports that Beyond Blue chair and Australia's first female prime minister, Julia Gillard, and former Aboriginal Affairs minister Ken Wyatt say the defeat of the indigenous Voice referendum will take a toll on the mental health of Indigenous Australians.

MINISTER BUTLER

Referendum debate highlighted a host of problems that need fixing so we can close the gap

Sunday Herald Sun, Wrap, 15/10/2023, David Mills and Julie Cross, Page 8

The Voice campaign has raised many issues around Indigenous disadvantage and the government can't be seen to walk away from those problems after Saturday night's result. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has highlighted health issues that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, including the incidence of rheumatic heart disease (the world's highest), and an increasing cancer mortality rate.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#).

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NHMRC backs bowel screening expansion to start at 45

The Limbic, Other, 14/10/2023, Geir O'Rourke

Australians could soon begin receiving bowel cancer screening test kits from age 45 and upwards after the NHMRC backed an expansion of the national screening program. [...] However Minister for Health Mark Butler is yet to commit to the expansion, which would reportedly add an extra \$33 million annually to the cost of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program.

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MINISTER WELLS

Today is Allied Health Professions Day: The need for it in aged care

Inside Ageing, Other, 14/10/2023, Alwyn Blayse

The benefits of allied health and the need for their specialised skills in the care of older people are not in doubt. [...] Minister Anika Wells denies there is an issue with allied health, and that clinical levels are currently adequate.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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DEPARTMENT

Long Covid patients 'falling through cracks'

Gold Coast Bulletin, Other, 15/10/2023, Tamara McDonald

Michael Yeo contracted Covid a year ago, but only recently started to feel better. [...] A federal health

department spokesman said the government had invested to build a stronger Medicare, which would have positive impacts on complex and chronic disease management.

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Today is Allied Health Professions Day: The need for it in aged care

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CORONAVIRUS

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Financial pressures force retirees back

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 15/10/2023, Poppy Johnston, Page 10

Many Australians in their twilight years are jumping out of retirement and back into the workforce to make friends, regain a sense of accomplishment and keep up with rising living costs. A survey of Australians aged 60 years and above by online marketplace Fiverr found one in 10 had returned to some kind of work after retirement and another 13 per cent were considering it.

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MND, too old for help

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 15/10/2023, Evangeline Polymeneas, Page 23

Asked what it is like to live with motor neurone disease, John Brown's silence between question and answer is long. The "evil" disease has caused the muscles in his throat to stop working, so he can no longer speak.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#)

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IRT to demolish Woonona buildings

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 14/10/2023, Connor Pearce, Page 20

IRT will close and demolish two complexes at its Woonona aged care home, temporarily adding to the already crippling shortage of aged care beds in the Illawarra. The move follows a review of the site which found two of the 1970s-era buildings were not up to scratch.

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New weather-sensing technology created to stop 'preventable' heat-related fatalities in Queensland's elderly

ABC Online, Other, 14/10/2023, Janelle Miles

As the temperature rises in the lead up to summer, Queensland researchers have launched a project to develop an in-home early warning system for elderly residents during extreme heat. With El Nio expected to deliver a scorching summer to Australia, a team at Griffith University will trial a system to alert the over-65s when temperatures inside their homes becomes dangerous, and provide personalised cooling advice to reduce the health risk.

POPULATION HEALTH

Climate change to hasten hay fever symptoms

Sun Herald, General News, 15/10/2023, Laura Chung, Page 16

Did your hay fever start earlier than usual this spring? The coughing, the sneezing, those terrible itching eyes? You are not alone, and it might get worse in coming years as climate change extends the season, experts say. About 15 per cent of Australians have hay fever, with those aged between 25 and 44 most likely to suffer during spring.

Also reported by: [Sunday Age \(Melbourne\)](#).

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My allergy is nothing to sneeze at

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 15/10/2023, Aneeka Simonis, Page 11

A woman highly allergic to pepper claims she was repeatedly fed it while locked up in the state's maximum-security women's prison. The 37-year-old mother is suing the state over her hellish stint behind bars, claiming repeat allergic reactions at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre caused her to develop a rare life-altering condition that could kill her.

Also reported by: [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Be a heart restarter and help save lives

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 15/10/2023, Sue Bailey, Page 3

Paul Meehan knew exactly what to do when a man collapsed and became unconscious at the Claremont RSL. He grabbed the club's defibrillator and set to work. Mr Meehan was having a drink after enjoying dinner on Thursday night when the unwell man walked in.

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Is 'Munchausen by Internet' on the rise? After a raft of cancer fakers fooled wellwishers from around the world, experts examine what makes people pretend to be gravely ill

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 14/10/2023, Jessica Taylor

It's a grave illness that has impacted almost every single person in the world - but despite enormous advances in scientific research over the years, there is still no cure for cancer. As a subject that is sensitive to many, cancer evokes strong emotions in people who rally around campaigners and high-profile people who are battling the illness - but what if these heartfelt cancer stories aren't what they seem to be?

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Forget the carrots, study reveals what fruit you should eat for your eyes

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 15/10/2023, Jim Leffman

It's not just carrots, eating grapes is good for your eyes as well, a new study reveals. Just a couple of handfuls of grapes a day for four months was shown to improve key markers of eye health.

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Experts issue dire warning about looming danger for people with respiratory illnesses: 'For some, this will be fatal'

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 14/10/2023, Erin Feiger

Respiratory experts have reported that increasing temperatures and changing weather patterns are exacerbating lung health problems, making breathing more difficult for many people. Their findings,

reported by the Guardian, state that our overheating planet likely poses the greatest risk to people with respiratory illnesses.

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Duo in race to combat cancer

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Madeline Crittenden, Page 19

TV star commentator Michelle Bishop's father was in "debilitating agony" in the months before he died, crippled by the pain from cancer. When her father Allan was diagnosed with prostate cancer earlier this year, there was little doctors could do.

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Why breast check is 'scarier than a croc'

Sunday Territorian, General News, 15/10/2023, Zizi Averill, Page 1

Given a choice between a 15-minute breast screen and a dip with a prehistoric monster croc, health worker Natalie Stokes said most women would chose the crocodile. The BreastScreen NT ambassador and two cancer survivors took the ultimate plunge on Friday, jumping into the Crocosaurus Cove pool with Leo a 750kg mass of teeth, scales, muscle and might to raise awareness for October's Breast Cancer Month.

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PRIMARY CARE

Bottleneck in detox beds

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 14/10/2023, Tamara McDonald, Page 26

Geelong does not have enough drug detox beds and a shortfall around Victoria can create a bottleneck for people battling addiction, a peak body says. Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association acting executive officer Scott Drummond said while Geelong had more detox beds than other regional centres, the number was still too few for a growing region.

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Health Minister Sanderson says Royal Perth Hospital 'needs some attention' as the ED celebrated 50 years

West Australian, Other, 14/10/2023, Claire Sadler

Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson has suggested the Royal Perth Hospital emergency department will be "next off the rank" for a revamp as the unit celebrated its 50th anniversary. The Minister was among former and current staff gathering on Friday to celebrate the milestone anniversary of the ED, which opened on October 5, 1973.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Upset? Try some counselling

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Daniel Cherny, Page 6

Australian cricketers have been told they have access to counselling services to deal with any disappointment they may feel should the Indigenous Voice to Parliament fail. Both Cricket Australia's

board and the Australian Cricketers' Association have publicly supported the Voice.

Also reported by: [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#), [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#).

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Finding peace in sadness is a stretch

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Adam MacDougall, Page 101

There are few people who understand the link between exercise and mental health more than Home and Away star Jessica Redmayne, who turned to yoga to help guide her during one of life's hardest moments. Jessica's mum was diagnosed with early onset dementia in 2014, beginning a heartbreaking journey that the TV star describes as like watching her mother's "light being switched off".

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Selena Gomez gives to Aussies

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Lisa Mayoh, Page 112

Aussies were front and centre with pop royalty Selena Gomez in LA last week, raising awareness for youth mental health, with the generous singer donating \$77,000 to local charity, batyr. Batyr's CEO Nic Brown and head of philanthropy Lucy Steggles attended the glitzy gala as Gomez launched her charity, The Rare Impact Fund, which like batyr, aims to reduce the stigma associated with mental health and provide young people with access to the resources they need.

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Sound advice on offer

Weekend Post, General News, 14/10/2023, Sandhya Ram, Page 6

A Cairns-based recreational therapeutic musician who believes his music can unlock a listener's trauma, resulting in tears of emotional release, will showcase his wares at a symposium this weekend. Mario Celestino, a Native American music teacher who hails from Bolivia, has been involved with sound therapies for more than 20 years, helping for patients in aged care, mental health and hospital settings.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Extra staff for Headspace

Weekend Post, General News, 14/10/2023, Isaac McCarthy, Page 16

Cairns Headspace has been named the busiest in the country but is among 25 Queensland centres to receive a share of \$32.7m in funding. The state government will recruit 50 mental health clinicians for Headspace centres across the state with Cairns receiving at least two.

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Mates4Mates rolling out free programs across Townsville and Cairns for veterans

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 14/10/2023, Daniel Shirkie

Townsville-based veterans charity and support service Mates4Mates is set to unveil a range of free classes for veterans this month in order to better support their mental health. Mates4Mates' North Queensland Regional Manager Marcia Morgan, herself an army veteran of 15-years experience, said the centre would be rolling out free programs in order to step up their response during Mental Health Awareness Month and Veterans' Health Week.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#).

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Aussie cricketers competing in ODI World Cup over in India offered counselling if Indigenous Voice to Parliament isn't voted in

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 14/10/2023, Andrew Prentice

Australia's cricketers will be offered counselling services if the Indigenous Voice to Parliament isn't voted in on local shores. The likes of skipper Pat Cummins and David Warner voted last week at the

Consulate-General office in Chennai ahead of the side's World Cup opener in India.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Concerns at 'severe issues' in cardiology trainee supervision

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 15/10/2023, Lucy Bladen, Page 4

A training college is still concerned about "severe issues" facing trainee supervision in Canberra Hospital's cardiology department, despite improvements in other areas. Trainees also have to travel to Sydney for a portion of their training as there are not enough specialists to supervise in electrophysiology, documents released to The Canberra Times have shown.

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Greatest honour for champion of the homeless

Sun Herald, General News, 15/10/2023, Mary Ward, Page 8

When Sydney doctor Dr Daniel Nour received an email from the estate of late boxing legend Muhammad Ali, he couldn't believe it. So he didn't.

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Fears linger despite GP fix

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 15/10/2023, Rob Inglis, Page 13

A permanent general practice will be established at St Marys after the rural township was left without a doctor when the local GP resigned in August. And while the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has welcomed the news, it has warned that the GP "crisis" in Tasmania will continue without further intervention from federal and state governments.

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Better understanding the standards

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 15/10/2023, Megan Haggan

The PSA has officially launched the Professional Practice Standards Quality Improvement and Self-Assessment Implementation Program The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia says the program aims to help pharmacists better understand and implement the standards into their practice.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Breakthrough not just skin deep for mum

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Emma Cam, Page 35

A breakthrough biological treatment is giving new hope to Aussies living with the autoimmune disease psoriasis. The treatment, Bimekizumab sold under the brand name Bimzelx, was made available earlier this month by the Australian government on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for those living with severe psoriasis.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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SPORT

In over their heads

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Julian Linden, Page 31

Swimming Australia is plunging towards another crisis that threatens to sink the national federation. Already in deep water after a leaked document revealed the way female participants in the sport have been mistreated, it is now facing the risk of being expelled from the sport's world governing body if it doesn't accept a new constitution within days.

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Airing of swim report helps sport heal

Sunday Telegraph, Editorials, 15/10/2023, Page 90

There has been something amiss inside Swimming Australia. As the fallout continues over our exclusive report yesterday on a review of how female swimmers have been treated by the sport in the past, it remains clear there has been some work to do in the area of pastoral care and performance management.

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Club gets ready for junior influx

Ballarat Courier, General News, 14/10/2023, Nieve Walton, Page 16

Matildas fever continues to burn at the Ballarat Soccer Club as it gears up to welcome double its normal intake of junior players next season. This year the full season will be played on new grounds at Pleasant Street Reserve which has converted one of Ballarat muddiest sport grounds into a space players can be proud of.

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Swimming's shocking culture exposed

Sunday Examiner, General News, 15/10/2023, Caden Helmers, Page 38

A toxic Australian swimming culture that has left female athletes "trying to suppress memories" is under intense scrutiny as a scathing report reveals that female athletes were physically and mentally abused, groped, body shamed and publicly humiliated. An independent report titled Beneath the Surface: The experiences of women and girls in swimming has come to light, with Chris Ronalds, Katherine Bates and professor Alex Parker lifting the lid on startling revelations from a group of 158 people including athletes, parents, coaches, officials and volunteers.

Anna Meares helps funding bid for Kenrick Tucker Velodrome resurfacing in Rockhampton

ABC Online, Other, 14/10/2023, Aaron Kelly

A crumbling concrete velodrome once home to Australian cycling champion Anna Meares is set to play a crucial role in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games. In a first of its kind in Australia, a cutting-edge transformation of Rockhampton's Kenrick Tucker Velodrome began this week.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Keep an eye out for this

Sunday Times, General News, 15/10/2023, Claire Sadler, Page 31

The APM Charity Trail at the Telethon Family Festival gives people a chance to see exactly how their donations are helping sick kids across WA. Money from last year's Telethon fundraising spectacular helped support 107 beneficiaries and 80 of them will be featured on the charity trail next Sunday.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Why Bob's mad as hell

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Page 6

Bob Katter said he had lost his temper with government officials behind closed doors and had threatened to "kinghit people" over how to improve health outcomes for Indigenous Australians. The outspoken federal MP vowed to spend the rest of his life improving life expectancy for Indigenous communities, no matter what the outcome of the referendum would be.

Also reported by: [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#)

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How we can fix a broken heart

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 15/10/2023, Page 8

The Social Justice Report 2005 revealed the disadvantages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people faced in health and life expectancy and sparked the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to introduce six Closing the Gap targets in 2008. Others have been added over the years.

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Wyatt, Gillard raise concerns over Indigenous wellbeing

Sunday Times, General News, 15/10/2023, Page 7

Australia's first female prime minister and the first Indigenous person to serve as Aboriginal Affairs minister have said the defeat of the Voice will take a mental health toll on Aboriginal and Torres Strait people. Beyond Blue chair Julia Gillard who served as PM from 2010 to 2013 and directors Ken Wyatt and Professor Helen Milroy issued a joint statement on behalf of the mental health charity.

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'Killing us': Lidia Thorpe lashes Voice, Aussie 'racists'

NEWS.com.au, Other, 14/10/2023, Samantha Maiden

Senator Lidia Thorpe has attacked the referendum campaign for "killing" her community and insisting Australia must commence treaty negotiations. Indigenous senator Lidia Thorpe has attacked the

referendum campaign for "killing" her community and insisting white Australia must now commence treaty negotiations.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#).

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OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Greens push debate on pill testing after deaths

Sun Herald, General News, 15/10/2023, Amber Schultz, Page 16

The Greens are trying to pressure parliament to debate their bill for a pill-testing trial after the death of two men at a music festival in Sydney last month. Greens MLC Cate Faehrmann will present her drug checking bill for a second reading.

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'Like an electric shock': Shingles is the ultimate nerve pain

Sun Herald, General News, 15/10/2023, Liam Mannix, Page 28

It's the nasty disease no one thinks about until the symptoms strike, writes Liam Mannix. Karin Cahill woke to nagging pain sliding along the top of her ribcage. Cahill, 59, had been pushing weights at the gym the day before; this is what comes of it, she thought to herself.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Concussion headway

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 15/10/2023, Brad Crouch, Page 22

"Head pulses" could help determine when a player is ready to return to competition after a concussion, according to new research at the University of South Australia. [...] Professor Norton stressed it might be several years before such a test was available for sports codes, due to the need for further tests and Therapeutic Goods Administration approval.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Type-two diabetes drug which has been dubbed 'King Kong' of weight-loss medication arrives in Australia

7news.com.au, Other, 14/10/2023, Bryce Luff

A promising new diabetes drug touted as a powerful rival to a weight-loss phenomenon has landed in Australia. [...] The TGA told 7NEWS.com.au Mounjaro is "not approved for use for weight loss", but conceded it is ultimately up to GPs to make that call.

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OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Playing it safe

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 14/10/2023, Page 12

More young Australians are washing their hands before handling food. Food Safety Information Council research shows a 9 per cent improvement in the number of young people who say they always wash their hands before touching food.

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