



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 22nd October 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sunday Telegraph \(page 1\)](#)** reports that non-bulk billed GPs will raise their standard consultancy prices to \$102 per session, with the medicare rebate also set to rise by an extra 20 cents. Health Minister Mark Butler has alleged that the rising costs can be attributed to the previous Coalition government's Medicare rebate freeze.
- **[The Sunday Herald Sun \(page 20\)](#)** reports that nationwide protests by hundreds of union workers at Bunnings have taken place over the sale of a kitchen benchtop that has been linked to silicosis disease.
- **[The Sunday Territorian \(page 4\)](#)** reports that the NT government has expanded their Healthdirect out-of-hours helpline services to now include GPs as well as nurses.

MINISTER BUTLER

\$100 to visit GP

The cost of visiting your GP will rise to \$100 for a standard consultation as doctors' fees rise for the third time this year. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler pointed the finger at the previous governments.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#).

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MINISTER WELLS

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

'Can't I just enjoy my bottle of red in peace': Push for new health warnings on alcohol labelled 'paternalistic nonsense' that 'treats us like children'

Sky News Australia, Other, 21/10/2023, Patrick Hannaford

A push to mandate health warning labels be slapped on alcoholic beverages similar to cigarette packets has been ridiculed as "paternalistic nonsense". [...] Despite the criticism, the Albanese government seems to be taking the proposal seriously, with Assistant Minister for Health and Ageing, Ged Kearney, revealing she had sought advice from her department on how best to raise awareness about alcohol-related harms.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCCARTHY

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DEPARTMENT

We must fix the rebate rip-off

Sunday Telegraph, Editorials, 22/10/2023, Page 84

With GP fees set to breach the \$100 threshold next month, access to medical care will get even harder for many Australians. [...] The complex formula used by the Department of Health to increase the Medicare rebate has never kept up with medical cost inflation.

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"Mental Health is a Basic Human Right": WHO

Pulse 94.1, Other, 21/10/2023

More than two in five Australians aged between 16 and 85 have experienced a mental disorder in their lifetime, according to data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics last Thursday. [...] The study surveyed close to 16,000 Australians and was funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care as part of the Intergenerational Health and Mental Health Study.

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CORONAVIRUS

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Nursing home's big fail

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 22/10/2023, Madeline Crittenden, Page 25

The Cooma nursing home where grandmother Clare Nowland was tasered has been found "non-compliant" by the government regulator after ruling the facility had failed to properly report and investigate a separate incident that same month. Yallambee Lodge's risk management systems and practices were deemed non-compliant by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission last month, after assessors from the Commission showed up unannounced to the facility on July 5, to audit its performance against requirements of two of the eight Aged Care Quality Standards - personal and clinical care and organisational governance.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Clare Nowland: Alleged exchange between police and great-grandmother tasered in her Cooma nursing home revealed

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 21/10/2023, Sarah Liversidge

The alleged shocking exchange between police and a 95-year-old great-grandmother in the moments before she was tasered at her nursing home and later died has been revealed in court. Clare Nowland, who suffered dementia, was hit with a Taser by police at the Yallambee Lodge aged care facility near Cooma, in the NSW Snowy Mountains, on May 17.

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Homesick for ourselves – the hidden grief of ageing

Your Life Choices, Other, 22/10/2023

Anyone parenting young children will be familiar with the phrase there'll be tears before bedtime'. But in a quieter, more private way, the expression seems perfectly pitched to describe the largely hidden grief of ageing.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Would you like insects with that? Chef leads new generation

Sun Herald, General News, 22/10/2023, Laura Chung, Page 14

A wooden table is laden with an array of brownies, avocado on toast, pesto pasta and chips. The food, prepared by New York chef Joseph Yoon, also has a secret ingredient: insects.

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

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Classes stop for smoko

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 22/10/2023, Toby Crockford, Page 6

A Queensland special school allows students of all ages to take smoking and vaping breaks, former staff say, in a tactic said to be aimed at reducing the children's stress and disruptive behaviour. The Sunday Mail understands the policy has been in effect for at least two years and was brought in despite staff raising student health concerns when it was proposed.

Similar coverage reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Plea to get on top of air pollution

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 22/10/2023, Sue Bailey, Page 5

A Tasmanian researcher, hailed internationally for his research on the health impacts of smoke pollution, is hopeful the community will adapt to more intense and frequent extreme weather events. Dr Nicolas Borchers Arriagada has been selected by Research Australia as a finalist for the 2023 national health and medical research awards for his work in advancing Australia's climate change mitigation and public health strategies.

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A review is proposing changes to the NT's alcohol laws. What could that mean?

ABC Online, Other, 21/10/2023, Thomas Morgan

A wide-ranging review of the Northern Territory's liquor laws has been tabled in parliament in the past week, further stoking debate about the best way to deal with the issue of alcohol addiction. Notably, the review openly states its recommendations would lead to more people being barred from buying takeaway alcohol.

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Nutritional psychiatrist Felice Jacka: 'The global food system is the leading cause of early death'

The Guardian, Other, 22/10/2023, Callum Bains

We usually think of food as having an effect on us from the mouth down. Why study its impact on our brain? Our gut microbiome affects virtually every aspect of health. It affects our metabolism, our blood glucose, our body weight.

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Looking at obesity through a different lens

Australian Doctor, Other, 21/10/2023, Rosemary Atkinson

Approaches that focus on health parameters, rather than size and weight outcomes, aim to improve healthcare engagement, health behaviours and psychological outcomes for people with obesity. There is ongoing debate about the actions required in response to rising rates of obesity globally.

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Facility to help women ease the squeeze

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 22/10/2023, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 15

Patients are able to control how much their breasts are squeezed during mammograms in a state-of-the-art breast cancer screening suite at Princess Alexandra Hospital. The remote-control technology designed to ease discomfort, combined with a sensory suite and special 3D technology, makes the public hospital facility the first of its kind in Australia.

Also reported by: [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications

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Signs of melanoma: Aussie in 'complete shock' after deadly symptom dismissed

7news.com.au, Other, 21/10/2023, Cindy Tran

Courtney Mangan was leading a seemingly normal life in her 20s when her world came crashing down. [...] How to check your skin According to Cancer Council, always remember the ABCDE' of skin cancer when checking your skin: A symmetry does each side of the spot or mole look different to the other?

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PRIMARY CARE

Helpline service expands

Sunday Territorian, General News, 22/10/2023, Page 4

Territorians will now have better access to out-of-hours health care after the NT government expanded its Healthdirect helpline service to include general practitioners as well as nurses. People who need a consultation but cannot immediately see their normal GP can now access the option of a virtual GP service after hours.

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

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Let the fun begin!

Sunday Times, General News, 22/10/2023, Claire Sadler and Joe Spagnolo, Page 1

TV favourite Dr Chris Brown is a frequent visitor to WA, but this weekend he is back for a very special reason Telethon. "I'm not sure if people in WA realise this event has quite the reputation all around the country," Brown, making his first appearance at the fundraiser, said.

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A-grade effort by generous A-listers

Sunday Times, General News, 22/10/2023, Andrei Harmsworth, Page 6

The annual Telethon Ball lived up to its reputation as Australia's most exclusive and generous invitation-only black tie event on Saturday night with millions of dollars raised for sick children by a guest list that ranged from billionaire philanthropists to influential politicians and bosses of the nation's biggest companies.

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Pushing through

Sunday Times, General News, 22/10/2023, Page 9

A Perth gym's extraordinary 24-hour challenge has not only set a new world record, it's also raised a mammoth amount of money for sick kids in WA. Members of iamFIT Training pushed a gym sled loaded with 100kg for 24 hours straight to raise more than \$20,000 for a high-tech rehab device for Telethon beneficiary Perth Children's Hospital.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Emails help form Dhulwa breach probe

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 22/10/2023, Lucy Bladen, Page 3

The ACT Integrity Commission is considering more than 365,000 emails in its investigation into alleged privacy breaches from staff at Dhulwa Mental Health Unit. It only took three weeks for the commission to decide to investigate the matter after receiving a report, the commission's annual report revealed.

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It just crept up on me

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 22/10/2023, Rebecca Whitfieldbaker, Page 32

Aged 42, life was good for successful career-woman mum of two Erin Morton until she was struck with debilitating anxiety and depression, seemingly out of nowhere. The self-confessed, high-energy go-getter who'd worked in medical research for more than two decades admits she was floored by her first experience with mental health.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications

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Super plan to battle bullies

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 22/10/2023, Jeremy Pierce, Page 27

Call it a super power for mental health. Former boxing world champion Jeff Horn and beauty queen Larissa Hlinovsky are joining forces to battle bullies and empower young Queenslanders to protect their mental wellbeing.

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There is a scary new epidemic: loneliness

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 22/10/2023, Elisabeth Shaw, Page 45

It's time to recognise chronic loneliness as the mental illness that it is. The famous missionary Mother Teresa once said of loneliness: "The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved."

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

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

New LGH nurse, midwife pay rise agreement locked in

Sunday Examiner, General News, 22/10/2023, Duncan Bailey, Page 8

Health Minister Guy Barnett was joined by Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) state secretary Emily Shepherd on Friday to welcome the new nurses and midwives agreement at the LGH. The offer was accepted by the Health And Community Services Union and the ANMF on Wednesday.

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RMIT's decision to cancel Chinese medicine program comes as 'shock' to students and practitioners

ABC Online, Other, 21/10/2023, Jason Fang and Jenny Cai

Students and practitioners have called on RMIT to reverse its decision to drop its undergraduate

program in Chinese medicine. The program will stop taking new students from next year, according to RMIT, but enrolled students will be able to finish their degrees.

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Junior doctors launch class action against Barwon Health over alleged excessive hours

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/10/2023, Tamara McDonald

Junior doctors have launched a class action against Barwon Health over alleged excessive hours and unpaid, unrostered overtime. It is expected to cover about 1500 plus junior doctors who have worked at Geelong hospital over the last six years.

Also reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#).

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Emails help form Dhulwa breach probe

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 22/10/2023, Lucy Bladen, Page 3

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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SPORT

Man behind new Mac Point plan

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 22/10/2023, James Bresnehan, Page 1

Dean Coleman vowed never to do projects in It's a mammoth number but don't let \$2.3bn make you weak at the knees that's the message from Macquarie Point Stadium 2.0 proponents on their commercially driven vision for Hobart's intergenerational urban redevelopment unveiled this week. Seemingly out of the blue, Melbourne-based Tasmanian engineer Dean Coleman and his Stadia

Consorti dropped a bomb on the stadium debate with a stunning alternative plan for the Macquarie Point urban redevelopment, its centrepiece a 23,000-seat roofed multipurpose venue.

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Aussie cricket's latest woke act will see players donate \$200,000 to netballers still reeling from being stripped of Gina Rinehart sponsorship

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 21/10/2023, Andrew Prentice

In the latest woke act from Australia's polarising cricketers, captain Pat Cummins has explained why the Australia Cricketers' Association (ACA) has elected to donate \$200,000 to the Aussie Diamonds netball squad. The 'fighting fund' comes as the Australian Netball Players' Association (ANPA) and Netball Australia are locked in an ongoing pay dispute.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Southern Launch's Koonibba rocket testing range to receive drugs made in space by US company

ABC Online, Other, 21/10/2023, Dixie Sulda, Emma Pedler and Jodie Hamilton

The Koonibba test range in South Australia's far west is set to become a launch pad for orbital manufacturing of pharmaceuticals in a joint project involving Southern Launch and United States company Varda Space Industries. California-based Varda Space Industries is a pioneer in orbital manufacturing, which uses the microgravity and vacuum conditions of space to produce goods that cannot be manufactured on Earth.

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Extra antibiotic does not prevent infection in arthroplasty: study

Australian Doctor, Other, 21/10/2023, Carmel Sparke

The Australian Surgical Antibiotic Prophylaxis trial included some 4200 patients undergoing joint replacement surgery. Adding vancomycin to antibiotic prophylaxis in patients undergoing arthroplasty does not prevent surgical site infections, shows a real-world Australian study.

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AI revives ancient Chinese practice of checking tongue to diagnose diseases

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 21/10/2023, Carl Samson

Artificial intelligence is backing the accuracy of the ancient Chinese medical practice of looking at a patient's tongue to diagnose diseases, a new study shows. What the ancient Chinese did: Chinese herbalists dating back to 2,000 years ago examined people's tongues for signs of disease.

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ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 21/10/2023, Kathryn Robinson and Jeremy Fernandez

Interview with Professor Doug Hilton, CSIRO Chief Executive and former director of Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research. Hilton discusses the direction he would like to take CSIRO in. He says he is focused on people, noting they have remarkable and hardworking people across Australia. He adds they have to optimise collaboration internally within the organisation and with other agencies doing science.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Benchtop protests hit Bunnings

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 22/10/2023, Steve Zemek, Page 20

Hundreds of union workers have staged protests outside Bunnings stores across the country to demand the hardware giant stop selling a popular kitchen benchtop that has been linked to an incurable disease. Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union members gathered in Victoria, Queensland, NSW, the ACT, WA and SA on Saturday to urge the company to stop selling engineered stone kitchen benchtops.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

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OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Nutritional psychiatrist Felice Jacka: 'The global food system is the leading cause of early death'

The Guardian, Other, 22/10/2023, Callum Bains

We usually think of food as having an effect on us from the mouth down. Why study its impact on our brain? Our gut microbiome affects virtually every aspect of health. It affects our metabolism, our blood glucose, our body weight.

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