



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Monday, 9th October 2023

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister Wells](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [**Courier Mail**](#) (page 3) reports Queensland's government has announced a \$78.5 million investment to expand mental health aftercare and psychosocial support to all 16 of its hospital and health services.
- [**The Australian**](#) (page 5) reports common prescription amphetamines can boost the low cognitive and physical motivation associated with ADHD, new Australian research has found.
- [**The Australian**](#) (page 9) reports low staffing levels and a lack of state government funding have seen elective surgery waitlists remain backlogged in the wake of the COVID pandemic, the Australian Medical Association and the National Joint Replacement Registry say.
- The [**Daily Telegraph**](#) (page 9) reports motor neurone disease should be put on the notifiable disease list to improve diagnosis tracking and research for a cure, health experts and patients say.
- The [**Herald Sun**](#) (page 19) reports psychologists should be incentivised to prescribe and monitor patients using digital therapy apps through the Medicare Benefits Schedule, the Black Dog Institute says, following randomised trials showing the apps were as good as face-to-face

treatments. Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph](#), [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Hobart Mercury](#), [Northern Territory News](#)

- The [Geelong Advertiser](#) (page 4) reports a major refurbishment of the high-containment laboratories at the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness in Geelong is stuck in the design phase despite being scheduled to begin work this month.
- [ABC News](#) reports older and at risk patients will be given free access to a new shingles vaccine through the National Immunisation Program from November, following Health Minister Mark Butler's announcement of an \$826.8 million investment by the federal government. Also reported by: [Canberra Times](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle](#), [Channel 7](#), [Channel 10](#)
- [The Guardian](#) reports patients and healthcare workers may face challenges voting in the Indigenous Voice referendum, the Australian Medical Association says, following an AEC decision to continue a COVID-era policy not to send polling officials into hospitals.

MINISTER BUTLER

Bitter pill for this tiny town to swallow

Launceston Examiner, General News, 09/10/2023, David Ellery, Page 10

Trundle, the locals will tell you, is all the town you'll ever need. That might not be entirely true, but the community of just under 400 people - located about as close as it gets to the centre of NSW - has managed to retain some of the businesses and essential services that other country towns have seen fade away. [...] While the policy reduces costs for patients, the Pharmacy Guild warns it jeopardises the viability of local pharmacies - concerns Health Minister Mark Butler dismisses as "a cynical scare campaign".

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Free shingles vaccinations for older Aussies

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 09/10/2023, James Campbell, Page 4

Australia will be only the second country in the world to offer free shingles vaccinations for everyone over the age of 65 under an \$826 million initiative announced on Sunday by Health Minister Mark Butler. From next month, almost five million more Australians will become immediately eligible for free jabs to protect them from the herpes zoster virus, which most commonly causes chickenpox in children and the rashes and blisters known as shingles in later life.

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Free shingles jab coming for millions of Australians

Canberra Times, Other, 08/10/2023, Andrew Brown

Over-65s will soon be able to get free protection against shingles as part of a multimillion-dollar vaccination program. More than five million people will be eligible for a vaccination against the virus from November 1 as part of the National Immunisation Program. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the shots would provide 10 years of protections from shingles.

Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Canberra\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Sunraysia Daily \(Mildura\)](#), [The New Daily \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Federal government funds free shingles vaccinations for older Australians

ABC Online, Other, 08/10/2023

Older and immunocompromised Australians will be given free access to a new, more effective shingles vaccine from next month. [...] Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler said the federal government was investing \$826.8 million to provide the Shingrix vaccine under the National Immunisation Program (NIP).

[Read More](#)

Restrictions on gay men donating blood should be scrapped, Queensland health minister says

The Guardian, Other, 09/10/2023, Ben Smee

The Queensland health minister has called on the federal government to consider scrapping restrictions that prevent most gay and bisexual men from donating blood. [...] Her letter to the federal health minister, Mark Butler, urged the commonwealth to "expedite" the consideration of applying individual risk assessments to whole blood donations "should the research support making the change".

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NPs made to wait

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 08/10/2023, Julianne Bryce and Anmf Senior

After more than a decade of lobbying and advocacy, the May Federal Budget saw the introduction of funding for long-awaited reforms for NPs and for, most importantly, the people for whom they provide care. [...] The ANMF, along with our colleagues at nursing colleges with NP members, wrote to the Federal Health Minister and Assistant Health Ministers, Mark Butler, Ged Kearney and Emma McBride, to voice our deep concern and disappointment that this increase is not being implemented as a matter of urgency.

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Channel 7, Weekend Sunrise, 08/10/2023, Monique Wright and Matt Doran

Health Minister Mark Butler will today announce a new vaccine to become available under the National Immunisation programme \$800 million will be spent over the next four years to give access to those aged 65 and over from 1 November. First Nations people over 50 and immunocompromised people over 18 will also have access.

[Play Now](#)

2GB, 14:00 News (Weekend), 08/10/2023

All Australians over the age of 65 will soon be able to access a shingles vaccine for free from the 1st of November. The \$560 jab will be made available at no cost to eligible patients. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says shingles can have serious effects on the body.

[Play Now](#)

5AA, 12:00 News (Weekend), 08/10/2023

Almost 5 million people will soon be able to access a free vaccine to protect against severe disease caused by shingles. All Australians over the age of 65 will be eligible to receive shingrix at no cost under the national immunisation programme. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says other vulnerable groups will also get the jab for free.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Sydney, 18:00 News (Weekend), 08/10/2023

Around 5 million Australians will get access to a new free shingles vaccine from next month at a cost of more than \$800 million to the federal government. The Shingrix vaccine will be available for free to over 65 seconds Indigenous Australians over 50 and to immunocompromised people over 18 from the start of next month. The Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, says the Shingrix vaccine is more effective than the previous vaccine on the market.

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MINISTER WELLS

Hot conditions prompt water safety warning: national drowning report

2023 released

pittwateronlinenews.com, Other, 08/10/2023

With predictions of a long, hot summer, new research from the Royal Life Saving Society Australia in partnership with Surf Life Saving Australia has prompted urgent calls to keep water safety top of mind when planning a day in, on or near the water. The which was released on Monday September 11 by Hon Anika Wells MP Minister for Sport, found there were 281 drowning deaths over the past 12 months, which is 17 per cent lower than last year (339), and returns the annual drowning toll closer to pre-pandemic levels.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCCARTHY

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DEPARTMENT

No relevant coverage

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CORONAVIRUS

AGEING AND AGED CARE

\$5m redevelopment project under way

Daily Advertiser, General News, 09/10/2023, Taylor Dodge, Page 2

Additional rooms and a new kitchen are just a couple of the grand changes set for a Riverina aged-care facility. A \$5 million redevelopment project, which will include a new state-of-the-art building to bolster capacity, will begin at Respect's Woodhaven centre in Lockhart next week. The not-for-profit organisation has been working on getting the project under way for the past three years and on Saturday it was finally able to launch the works with a special sod-turning ceremony.

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Thanks for your support

Daily Advertiser, General News, 09/10/2023, Maree McCabe, Page 11

Thank you to the people impacted by dementia, community members, councils, businesses and healthcare professionals who marked Dementia Action Week 2023 from September 18-24. Across Australia, individuals and organisations supported our campaign to 'Act Now for a Dementia-Friendly Future' encouraging everyone to take simple actions which make our communities more dementia-friendly.

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The age pension and your assets: retirement's big balancing act

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 09/10/2023, Anthony Keane, Page 12

Fresh changes to pension assets tests have opened the door for more people to get more money from the government, but first they must navigate the complexity of means testing. When the age pension rose on September 20, so did the assets test limits, above which no pension gets paid.

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Aged care provider TriCare offers try before you buy service

The Senior, Other, 09/10/2023, Therese Murray

The decision to move a loved one into permanent care is often confronting and filled with mixed emotions, but industry experts say it doesn't have to be. Leading aged care provider TriCare offers families considering aged care the opportunity to experience the service before making a long-term commitment.

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POPULATION HEALTH

For deep sleep, lay off the sweet and fatty foods

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 09/10/2023, Sarah Berry, Page 14

The closest most of us get to food while we are sleeping is to dream about it, so how important can the relationship between our diet and sleep possibly be? It's a surprisingly intimate and complex one that researchers are still trying to understand. A new study sheds some light. How sleep affects our diet Experts know that eating when we are meant to be sleeping, for instance, increases the risk of weight gain and cardiometabolic disorders.

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Picking up debris of e-scooters

Courier Mail, Edition Changes - Metro, 09/10/2023, Samantha Scott, Page 10

A traffic cop has opened up about having to search for teeth following horrific crashes on e-scooters, as new data shows riders are presenting to emergency departments in record numbers and with serious injuries. On the same night a 60-year-old man died after falling from an e-scooter in Fortitude Valley in June, up to 30 riders were fined for flouting speed, helmet and double-riding rules, we can reveal.

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Special families

Hobart Mercury, General News, 09/10/2023, Genevieve Holding, Page 1

Despite fearing for her unborn child's future, Geilston Bay mother Amy Campbell always knew she would continue her pregnancy. After IVF treatment for her second child with husband Chris, prenatal testing at 16 weeks diagnosed their daughter Elsie with Down syndrome. Initially shocked by the results, Amy and Chris were immediately put in touch with "good contacts and medical care support", something Amy credits as key to moving through the journey of bringing Elsie into the world.

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Personalised diets may help young people eat more vegetables

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 09/10/2023

Supporting young Australians to eat a healthy diet goes beyond doctors, dietitians and nutritionists; it is a responsibility of government and community and health systems. Australian young adults aged 18-30 years have some of the poorest diets of all age groups.

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Call to act on cruel disease

Daily Telegraph, Edition Changes, 09/10/2023, Madeleine Bower, Page 9

Health experts and motor neurone disease patients are calling on the NSW government to put the fatal condition on a national register, with experts warning that cases could increase and more data was needed to determine its causes. Healthcare practitioners are required to report "notifiable diseases" to the government, allowing them to be better monitored, however motor neurone disease (MND) a rare condition that progressively damages the nervous system and affects one in every 11,434 Australians is not on the register.

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Fall shock

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 09/10/2023, Tamara McDonald, Page 1

Tripping over some rocks on a weekend away led to Lara's Kym Walker being diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. The 64-year-old was in Apollo Bay with husband Peter and some friends in 2021 when she broke her back. [...] Mrs Walker is a prolific People can donate to Cancer Council Victoria anytime during the year at fundraising.

Similar coverage reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#).

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Paint it Pink, breast awareness campaign launched from Bathurst Health Service

Bathurst Western Advocate, Other, 08/10/2023, Alise McIntosh

Following the success of the 2022 initiative - Paint Keppel Street Pink - organisers of the event have taken it up a notch for October 2023, Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Shopfronts along the popular street were adorned with everything pink and pretty, with pink streamers and balloons aplenty across several window displays.

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Dalby mother says cervical cancer fight exposed inequality in Australia's health system

ABC Online, Other, 08/10/2023, David Chen

Katrina Reed's hallucinations were "strange but beautiful". They were also a sign something more sinister was happening inside her body. [...] It's what Cancer Council Australia refers to as financial toxicity.

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Woman diagnosed with aggressive blood cancer after taking fertility test

NEWS.com.au, Other, 08/10/2023, Clareese Packer

The Sydney local was planning her dream wedding when the sinister discovery was made. Now, her loved ones have begun fundraising. The loved ones of a Sydney woman have raised over \$140,000 after a fertility test revealed a horrifying discovery. Hannah Thomas had just turned 30 when she took a fertility test last March. Channel 7 reported that she was in the midst of planning her dream wedding with her now husband, Simon, when things took a turn.

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Breast cancer screening rates questioned for women with diabetes

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 09/10/2023

We urgently need to use Australian data to understand the breast cancer screening rates of Australian women with diabetes, compared with those without the condition. More than one million people in Australia currently live with cancer and incidence rates are on the rise globally.

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PRIMARY CARE

Hospitals failing to clear waiting lists for surgery

The Australian, General News, 09/10/2023, Natasha Robinson, Page 9

Hospitals have failed to recover from pandemic lockdowns to lift the volume of elective surgeries performed sufficient to clear waiting lists, with the number of joint replacement operations performed last year as low as it was at the height of the pandemic. [...] The AMA in NSW has stated that operating theatres in hospitals are sitting empty because the public system cannot staff them.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Saving remote Aussie lives for 80 years

Canberra Times, General News, 09/10/2023, Katelyn Catanzariti, Page 10

Joanne Mahony was a final-year nursing student when she was posted to the Charleville base of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in rural Queensland two decades ago. It was love at first flight. She quickly learned that a rural and remote practice was the best place to gain diverse experience in every facet of health care. "You'd look after everything, from antenatal patients to geriatric care," Ms Mahony said.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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It's fifty years of love and service

West Australian, General News, 09/10/2023, Bethany Hiatt and Claire Sadler, Page 16

A hospital in the Perth Hills which has been an integral part of the community for 50 years is now helping care for patients at the end of their life. Memories swirled and old stories were retold when former staff, patients and their families gathered on Saturday to celebrate the anniversary of Kalamunda Hospital, which officially opened on October 7, 1973.

Extra rescue chopper training

Launceston Examiner, General News, 09/10/2023, Joe Colbrook, Page 4

In what could be its final funding allocation, the body responsible for raising money for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter has committed thousands to better-train police officers. The Westpac Rescue Helicopter Trust has committed \$150,000 to up-skill Tasmania Police aircrew.

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Piper wants consultation on future of Morisset Hospital site

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09/10/2023, Matthew Kelly, Page 6

The future of the Morisset Hospital site remains unclear, despite confirmation that services and patients will be relocated to a new facility at Maitland. The government announced on Friday that planning was underway for a new, purpose-built facility that would offer a transitional model of mental health care and include general and forensic mental health services. This will involve the relocation of the Morisset Kestrel medium secure forensic unit as well as the adult acute and older persons services unit.

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Urgent care clinic has 'soft' opening date

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 09/10/2023, Jonathan Hawes, Page 5

Patients seeking immediate medical care will soon be able to breathe a sigh of relief as a much-anticipated urgent care clinic officially has a soft opening date: October 30. The Tamworth Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) is designed to take the pressure off the region's hospital emergency department, and will soon start offering bulkbilled services to patients seven days a week.

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Urgent help

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 09/10/2023, Daniel Shirkie, Page 1

A 72-year-old pensioner has labelled the Patient Transfer Subsidy Scheme a failing system as he prepares for spinal surgery at huge cost to himself. Hugh Connell is planning a trip to Brisbane for help after the wait-times for surgery in the North mean he must travel or face never walking again.

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ED statistics show pressure faced by smaller hospitals

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 09/10/2023

We need to begin collecting data from rural hospitals all over Australia to address inequities in health care and workforce shortages. In 2021/2022, more than 280 000 emergency department (ED) presentations were due to a mental health reason (here). [...] The statements or opinions expressed in this article reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official policy of the AMA, the MJA or InSight+ unless so stated.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

'Limit children's access to risky gender drugs'

The Australian, General News, 09/10/2023, Rosemary Neill, Page 8

Leading Australian psychiatrists say puberty blockers should be restricted to children enrolled in rigorous clinical trials, after a new British analysis found the mental health of one-third of adolescents deteriorated while they were taking the controversial drugs. The new UK analysis of an earlier, landmark study found 34 per cent of children aged 12 to 15 reported their mental health had deteriorated after taking puberty blockers for one year, while 29 per cent of children saw their psychological health improve.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

ICU head asked family for advice

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 09/10/2023, Laura Banks, Page 3

As John Genca was forced to hold down his son's legs, with a nurse restraining his arms, the pair had to scream for help. Genca said he was told by the nurse at The Children's Hospital, Westmead, "we are not trained for this we don't know what to do when this happens". His son, Matthew, is autistic and non-verbal. On that day, he was waking from open-heart surgery and had become distressed.

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Highlight

Daily Telegraph, Sport, 09/10/2023, Dean Ritchie, Page 45

Kangaroos prop Lindsay Collins joining workers at Sydney's Gateway Project to discuss the importance of workplace mental health and suicide prevention. The building trade has the highest rate of suicide of any industry in Australia.

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Psychologist apps fill gaps

Herald Sun, General News, 09/10/2023, Julie Cross, Page 19

Android psychologists are as good as human clinicians and could help fill the shortage in the mental health workforce, a leading charity says. Associate professor Jill Newby from the Black Dog Institute said randomised trials showed guided internet cognitive behavioural therapy programs were as effective as faceto-face treatment. They are also cheap or free.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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\$78.5m for at-risk mental health support

Courier Mail, General News, 09/10/2023, Madura McCormack , Page 3

Critical follow-up support for Queenslanders who have attempted suicide or are in a mental health crisis will be expanded across the state under a \$78.5m injection of funds. Ten of Queensland's 16 hospital and health services (HHS) currently provide after-care and psychosocial support. Health Minister Shannon Fentiman confirmed the programs would be expanded to include all 16 HHS by July 2024.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#).

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Time for inquiry with teeth

West Australian, General News, 09/10/2023, Joe Spagnolo, Page 14

The father of Aishwarya Aswath the girl who died at Perth Children's Hospital has reignited calls for a royal commission into the WA health system after allegations a 13-year-old girl was raped at the same facility. Aswath Chavittupara said the case was mounting for a royal commission into the beleaguered health system.

Similar coverage reported by: [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#).

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Parents struggle for help

Ballarat Courier, General News, 09/10/2023, Michelle Smith, Page 1

Parents of young children reaching out for mental health support are struggling to get appointments as staff shortages and increasing demand hamper services' ability to help. New appointments are limited at St John of God's Raphael and Mental Wellbeing Services, with some desperate parents offered telehealth consultations and others deemed "too complex" are referred elsewhere.

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Cowboys tackle students' mental health

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 09/10/2023, Jami Roberts, Page 3

A new program led by the North Queensland Cowboys which aims to tackle student mental health is taking over the region as end-of-year exams roll around. The Head in the Game program is being delivered to students in years 10, 11 and 12 and discusses topics such as enrolling to vote, driver safety, building resilience and healthy relationships.

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AI bot was a lifesaver

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 09/10/2023, Julie Cross, Page 14

Digital mental health apps have been a lifeline for both Delanie Sky, 46, and her teenage daughter, 13, who has a history of self-harming and anorexia, and lives with depression and anxiety. Ms Sky said her daughter, who did not want to be named, waited more than a year to see a psychologist in northern Tasmania, and even then was only allocated a provisional psychologist, despite her daughter being a complex case.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#)

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Gaining confidence

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 8

Almost half of all Australians have experienced an episode of poor Amental health in their life. However, a dramatic shortage of mental health nurses puts a heavy burden on individuals and nurses. To address the ongoing problem, Edith Cowan University (ECU) is looking to upskill nurses through new postgraduate courses. Director of postgraduate studies in nursing and midwifery Dr Yvonne Middlewick said the courses aimed to help nurses navigate the skills and experience needed to negotiate the often-complex mental-health challenges faced in their workplace.

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Course correct

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 16

A mental health nurse graduated with her master's degree, hoping to climb the ranks to help patients at her rural hospital. Sonia Bayley was a consultant liaison nurse at Alice Springs Hospital when she realised she needed to further her studies to help her local community. "We're very short-staffed in Alice Springs," Ms Bayley told Nursing Review.

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Hayden is flying a plane around Australia. He doesn't need to be 'fixed' or 'cured'

SBS, Other, 08/10/2023, Aleisha Orr

A 22-year-old autistic man from regional Western Australia has taken to the skies on a mission. Hayden McDonald is part way through a solo 14,000-km journey that will see him circumnavigate the country. He took off from his hometown of Esperance on 8 September. Along the way, he hopes to dispel misconceptions about neurodivergent people and prompt a rethink of the "inflexible process" required to obtain a pilot's licence for private or commercial purposes.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

Bush babies

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 2

The Queensland Government has introduced new initiatives to boost regional maternity services in rural and remote areas. As part of the \$42 million funding package announced in June, five new actions have been introduced following stakeholder feedback from the Ministerial Maternity

Roundtable. Queensland Minister for Health Shannon Fentiman said the initiatives were crucial in putting together a "much broader piece of work".

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Removing barriers'

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 4

Peak nursing and midwifery bodies have countered warnings around regulations restricting who can prescribe the abortion pill in Australia. In Australia the drugs used in these pills are mifepristone and misoprostol, sold as MS-2 Step medication. National Association Specialist Obstetricians and Gynaecologists presiden Dr Gino Pecoraro recently told the media that allowing nurses to prescribe these would see "lesser trained practitioners" administering the medication.

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'Crucial training'

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 6

A new project will allow student nurses to learn how to negotiate verbal and physical abuse without being put in harm's way. IVADE is an immersive computer simulation program by Edith Cowan University (ECU), made to help nurses and nursing students practise making decisions when faced with a hostile patient.

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'Painful memories'

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 10

"I'm sorry." These are the words that Naomi Bowden repeated as she tearfully attempted to get through her opening statement to a New South Wales parliamentary inquiry into birth trauma in Wollongong held in early September. Ms Bowden tearfully spoke about her daughter, Bella, who was born stillborn 14 years ago at Wollongong Hospital.

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'Particularly challenging'

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Elise Hartevelt, Page 12

A groundbreaking study is investigating the 'overlooked issue' of midwives coping with their own birthing trauma and its impact on their professional lives. It's estimated that one in three women who deliver a baby experience some level of trauma. According to PhD candidate at Southern Cross University, and registered midwife Lisa Charmer, there's a significant gap in research on how this impacts a midwife returning to the workforce.

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'Pressure points'

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 14

With the ongoing problems of overwhelmed emergency departments across Australia, calls are being made to utilise and increase nurses to alleviate the situation. Chief of the Australian College of Nursing Kylie Ward, said the lack of GPs contributes to overwhelmed emergency departments.

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'Remove barriers'

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Reema Harrison and Laurel Mimmo, Page 20

Australians are living longer than ever. But these extra years of life come with higher rates of long-term and complex conditions and greater health care needs. The government wants to improve Australians' access to primary care services. These services would usually be delivered by a GP. But as part of this change, a new review is exploring how other health professionals could expand their current scope of work to meet growing needs.

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'Time to step up'

Chronic shortages of midwives in hospitals are causing a number of serious workforce issues, such as ineffective leadership and burnout leading to a dire future for the midwifery workforce. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported a record number of babies being born in 2021, with an increase of 7 per cent. However, last year, the National Skills Commission found that there were midwife shortages across the nation despite there being a 100 per cent future demand.

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Closing the distance

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal, Page 28

Virtual reality (vr) is helping to create safer birthing experiences for Queensland mothers and their babies in remote towns. Nurses in the remote and predominantly Indigenous towns of north-west Queensland are learning how to prepare mothers for childbirth with the help of VR.

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Health students learn in \$6m hub

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 09/10/2023, Alex Gretgrix, Page 3

New simulated healthcare settings at university will be "invaluable" on the way to earning a degree, according to Sanjana Jijo. The Bendigo Biomedical Science student is now spoilt for choice as she learns about the human body and more in La Trobe University Bendigo's newly opened \$6 million Health and Biomedical Sciences Teaching and Research Hub.

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'Train, recruit and retain'

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Erin Morley, Page 22

The Minns government's much-anticipated first NSW budget was released on September 19, and included \$3.6 billion for essential services and the largest wage increase for healthcare workers in a decade. Calls for more investment into the nursing and healthcare sector have been heard by the government for months and this budget has delivered for nurses and other frontline workers.

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Growth spurt

Nursing Review, General News, 01/10/2023, Erin Morley, Page 26

The labour market update for 2023's September quarter found employment grew the most in the aged and disabled carer, registered nurse and child carer workforces in the year to June 2023. The Jobs and Skills Australia report recognised these top three jobs as caring services, which it says "underscores the continued need for the range of skills required to provide affordable, efficient and equitable access to care."

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Full scope of practice offered through rural placements

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 09/10/2023

Rural placements enable medical, nursing, midwifery, and allied health students to work at the top of their scope of practice, but that is just one advantage of practising in a rural area. Rural health care placements offer a range of students a broader scope of practice in their first years after graduation, according to a recent narrative review published in the Medical Journal of Australia.

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Beyond hospital hierarchies: why each doctor 'must be a leader'

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 09/10/2023

Although Australian hospitals follow a Victorian militaristic model of seniority hierarchy, every health care practitioner must be a decision maker when it comes to their patient's care. It doesn't matter who you are in health care, you will be a leader.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

The specialist fees for initial consults – how do you compare?

Australian Doctor, Other, 08/10/2023, Paul Smith

The figures are based on hundreds of thousands of Medicare claims. You may have only heard rumours about the Medical Costs Finder website. Set up by the Federal Government two years ago, its purpose is patient empowerment and the idea that you can prevent them experiencing bill shock'. Its value to patients is hotly disputed given the complexities of healthcare funding.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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SPORT

Seven 'clear winner' of TV ratings crown

The Australian, Media, 09/10/2023, Sophie Elsworth, Page 23

The Seven Network has declared victory in the television ratings stakes for 2023 after the latest results revealed it had been the most-watched network this year. Despite the official ratings year not concluding until December 2, Seven West Media's managing director and chief executive James Warburton said the network was "clear winner in 2023 no fine print, no disclaimers".

Similar coverage reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Prayers for 'fighter' in battle of his life

Daily Telegraph, General News, 09/10/2023, Dean Ritchie and Fatima Kdouh, Page 11

The sister of Nathan Merritt has labelled the former South Sydney star a "fighter" as she revealed he remains in a critical condition. Teanne Merritt's emotional words come as the rugby league community

united behind her brother, who was rushed to Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital on Friday after being found unresponsive.

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

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Cash on offer for sporting facilities

Hobart Mercury, General News, 09/10/2023, Alex Treacy, Page 9

Sports Minister Nic Street says hundreds of thousands of dollars are on offer for Tasmanian sporting clubs to improve their facilities. Inaugurating the new baseball season with a few wayward pitches at the Prince of Wales Bay Recreation Ground, before his fourth throw thudded sweetly into the catcher's mitt, Mr Street said he was passionate about Tasmanians being active.

Similar coverage reported by: [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#).

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Oz in new fighting league

Northern Territory News, General News, 09/10/2023, John Stensholt, Page 10

The fast-growing mixed martial arts Professional Fighters League (PFL) will launch a local league in Australia within 18 months as part of a global strategy to compete with giant rival Ultimate Fighters Championship (UFC). The PFL, valued at \$US500m (\$A785m) last year - and boasting shareholders ranging from investment firm Ares Capital to US baseball star Alex Rodriguez and rapper Wiz Khalifa - recently received a reported \$US100m funding injection from the Saudi Arabia Public Investment Fund that will help with its expansion plans.

Also reported by: [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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Diving in

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09/10/2023, Madeline Link, Page 1

Sandy beaches across the Hunter became a playground for kids at the weekend with the Nippers season getting into full swing. For parents like Elizabeth Baker, the program provides a safe space for her eight-year-old son Lachlan (pictured) to learn about water safety, make new friends and grow his confidence at the beach.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Amphetamines 'aid motivation in ADHD'

The Australian, General News, 09/10/2023, Joanna Panagopoulos, Page 5

An Australian study has shown for the first time that common prescription amphetamines improve one of the main symptoms of ADHD: low cognitive and physical motivation. Researchers from Monash University's Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health, The Alfred hospital and St Vincent's Hospital tested 20 people with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in effort-based decision making on and off amphetaminebased medications (dexamfetamine and lisdexamfetamine).

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Community hub launched

Shepparton News, General News, 09/10/2023, Murray Silby, Page 12

Disability support service provider Gallawah has celebrated its third anniversary by extending its

operations and opening a community hub. Barapa Barapa woman Tina Powney created the Shepparton-based service after her son, who has a disability, was imprisoned.

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Indigenous voice: electoral commission decision not to send mobile voting teams into hospitals condemned

The Guardian, Other, 08/10/2023, Henry Belot

Australia's peak medical body and a key group backing the Indigenous voice to parliament have raised concerns patients and medical staff may be disenfranchised in the referendum, after a pandemic-era decision not to send mobile voting teams into hospitals was made permanent. During the 2022 federal election, the Australian Electoral Commission decided it was not appropriate to send polling officials into hospitals, given the risk of Covid infection and transmission, and the AEC has confirmed the policy is still in place for the referendum.

[Read More](#)

'Why do Indigenous people have a shorter life expectancy?'

NEWS.com.au, Other, 08/10/2023, Zac Turner

Yes it is true. Yes it is shocking. The gap in life expectancy to the Australia average is 7.8 years for females and 8.6 years for males, though it wasn't so long ago that it was 20+ years. Why' is a big question. The answer to this question lies within conversations about health, science, economics and government. Many of these conversations are happening right now loudly across our nation.

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Overcoming health inequalities: Perspectives on the Voice

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 09/10/2023

As the referendum date approaches, InSight+ looks back on our coverage of the Voice to Parliament. On 14 October 2023, Australia will vote on whether to change the Constitution to establish the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, which would make representations to the Parliament and the Executive Government on matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Disease lab revamp set back by design

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 09/10/2023, Alexander Blain, Page 4

A major refurbishment of the high-containment laboratories at Geelong's Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness has been delayed due to the "complex and unique" needs of its design. Construction on the project was expected to start this month. However, a CSIRO spokeswoman said the project was still in the design development phase.

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Health warning amid 'high risk period' for asthma in NSW

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 09/10/2023, Kate McIlwain, Page 8

The combination of the springtime pollen explosion and an ongoing risk of bushfire smoke has prompted NSW Health to issue a warning for people with asthma. The health agency said October to December was the highest risk period for thunderstorm asthma events, which can cause very severe asthma attacks that develop quickly. While not common, thunderstorm asthma can occur when high pollen counts, thunderstorms and strong winds occur together.

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Thousands of Ballarat residents eligible for new shingles vaccine

Ballarat Courier, Other, 08/10/2023, Michelle Smith

People aged over 65 and those with compromised immune systems will get free protection against shingles as part of a national vaccination program from November 1. Shingles, a reactivation of the virus that causes chickenpox, develops in about one in three people over their lifetime and can lead to ongoing pain lasting months or years.

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Signs and symptoms of silicosis: Joanna would come home from work with a taste on her lips. 10 years on it could kill her

7news.com.au, Other, 08/10/2023, Jacqueline Mey

When Joanna McNeill used to come home from work, she noted a common occurrence. "I remember tasting dust on my lips and it was all over my clothes," the Melbourne woman tells 7Life "But I didn't know it was bad." Joanna, now 36, was in her 20s and working as an administrator in a demountable building just 90 metres away from a quarry.

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ABC, ABC News (Sunday), 08/10/2023, Jeremy Fernandez

Around 5 million Australians will get access to a free shingles vaccine from next month, costing the Federal Government more than \$800 million. Shingles is a viral infection that affects about 1 in 3 Australians. From 1 November, the new Shingrix vaccine will be available for free to over 65 seconds Indigenous Australians over 50 and immunocompromised people over 18. The vaccine provides around ten years of protection and would usually cost more than \$500.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 10, 10 News First (Weekend), 08/10/2023, Chris Bath

From next month, almost 5 million older indigenous and immunocompromised people can access the vaccine usually costing \$560. The federal government injecting more than \$800 million over the next four years to make it free. Other than Germany, this will be the most comprehensive shingles vaccination programme anywhere on the planet. The new vaccine will last about ten years and has around 90% efficacy rate compared to the old vaccine, which lasted just four years and was only 65% effective.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Vitamin maker Nature's Care up for sale; KordaMentha on hand

Australian Financial Review, Companies and Markets, 09/10/2023, Page 18

Street Talk can reveal vitamin manufacturer Nature's Care, which has had JPMorgan and UBS test buyer appetite in the past, is back on the block after it was said to have veered close to defaulting on its covenants.

Also reported by: [Australian Financial Review \(Online\)](#).

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Ozempic, weight loss and diabetes drug, shortage impacting patients like Canberra-based Anna

Canberra Times, Other, 08/10/2023, Lanie Tindale

Demand for a so-called celebrity weight-loss drug has left Canberrans who need the drug for serious conditions sick and without supply. [...] Ozempic supply is so low that in late September the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) asked doctors to stop prescribing it, warning them that stock will be unreliable until the end of 2024.

Similar coverage reported by: [Canberra Times \(Canberra\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#).

OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

Parks littered with needles

Courier Mail, General News, 09/10/2023, Andreas Nicola, Page 1

South East Queensland councils are spending more than \$100,000 to clean up parks littered with illicit drugs, sharps and syringes. Report P3 Drugs needles in parks Ratepayers' money going towards removal of syringes throughout SE Queensland South East Queensland councils are being forced to spend more than \$100,000 of ratepayers' money to clean up parks littered with illicit drugs, sharps and syringes.

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Music festival pill testing will save lives

Border Mail, General News, 09/10/2023, Page 16

Why has it taken an apparently preventable double tragedy at a Sydney music festival to reignite the pill-testing debate? It's now almost four years since a NSW coroner recommended the introduction of pill testing, the decriminalisation of personal drug use and the scrapping of sniffer dogs at music festivals.

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FOOD STANDARDS

No relevant coverage

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AICIS

Councils' weed-killing plans cop a spray

Age, General News, 09/10/2023, Henrietta Cook, Page 15

Every Melbourne council is using a weed killer that a World Health Organisation agency says probably causes cancer, despite residents and the council workers' union calling for it to be banned. Three councils Port Phillip, Frankston and Brimbank recently reintroduced glyphosate-based weed killer after phasing it out following community concerns about possible links to some types of cancer.

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