



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Tuesday, 24th October 2023

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Herald Sun](#)** (page 1) reports that Swimming Victoria chief executive Jason Hellwig has told a Victorian parliamentary inquiry that more than 2000 children are forced to wait a year for swim lessons, with the swimming body previously relying on the 2026 Commonwealth Games to maintain infrastructure.
- **[The Courier Mail](#)** (page 1) reports that Federal Infrastructure Department secretary Jim Betts has stated that the 2026 Commonwealth Games is unlikely to go ahead. *Also reported by:* [Australian Financial Review](#), [The Australian](#), [The Australian](#), [Herald Sun](#)
- **[Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 4) reports that 250 NSW doctors have applied to be authorised voluntary assisted dying practitioners when the state makes VAD legal from November 28.
- **[The Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 4) reports that NSW Health only employs seven people to inspect convenience stores suspected of selling illegal nicotine vapes amid a rise in the availability of illegal vapes.
- **[The Courier Mail](#)** (page 12) reports that two urgent care clinics have opened up in Brisbane South and Murrumba Downs from 8am to 8pm. Health Minister Mark Butler stated that the

three urgent care clinics already open have seen more than 2200 patients in the 10 weeks, "taking pressure off Queensland hospitals and ensuring patients get the urgent care they need."

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Open small hours

Courier Mail, General News, 24/10/2023, Matthew Killoran, Page 12

Two more urgent care clinics in Queensland have opened operating at fewer than the promised 14 hours a day promised at the election including a new facility in South Brisbane. The Brisbane South urgent care clinic at Woolloongabba opened on Monday, Health Minister Mark Butler will announce, saying it will take pressure off Mater Hospital, Queensland Children's Hospital, and the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

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

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### RACGP President meets with Health Minister to discuss 'pain points'

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/10/2023

From payroll tax reform to telehealth, the NDIS and urgent care clinics, Dr Nicole Higgins sat down with Mark Butler to ensure GP voices are being heard. RACGP President Dr Nicole Higgins and Health Minister Mark Butler at Parliament House.

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### Standard GP consultation fees to increase from November 1 as government triples doctor incentives for bulk billed services

Sky News Australia, Other, 23/10/2023, Heloise Vyas

General practitioner fees are set to be hiked for the third time this year starting next month, in yet another financial hit to Australians feeling crippled under soaring costs of living. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the new bulk billing incentive will be the most significant progress in seven years.

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### ABC North Queensland, Breakfast, 23/10/2023, Michael Clarke

Interview with Mark Nolan, Cassowary Coast Mayor. Nolan says he went to Canberra and met with the Federal Health Minister, Mark Butler, in company of their local member, Bob Katter, who set up the meeting. He explains their commercial in-confidence funding model which was drafted by North Queensland Primary Health Network CEO Robin White. He says they already took out a lease at deserted medical centre at Mission Beach under a 12-month trial. He notes they need state and federal government to step up.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### 50 grand up for grabs in aged care home design competition

Aged Care Insite, Other, 23/10/2023, Erin Morley

The federal government last week announced a competition where architects can submit aged-care home designs to test the new National Aged Care Design Principles and Guidelines for a chance to win \$50,000. [...] Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells said this competition will tell the government if the guidelines have been successful in supporting innovative aged care home design that will better meet the need of future generations.

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## Federal Government Announces \$50,000 Prize Competition for Innovative Aged Care Home Designs

Aged Care Online, Other, 23/10/2023

The competition, known as 'Reimagining Where We Live', is open to design entries for both metropolitan and regional locations that adhere to the principles recommended by the Aged Care Royal Commission: Enable the person: To support people living in a place that maintains their health, wellbeing and sense of identity. [...] Minister for Aged Care, Anika Wells, expressed the hope that this competition will serve as a litmus test for the effectiveness of these guidelines in fostering innovative aged care home designs that are better suited to the needs of future generations.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

### NBN Central Coast, NBN News, 23/10/2023, Natasha Beyersdorf and Gavin Morris

Tuggerah Lakes Private Hospital has announced it will cease operations next month due to rising costs. Health Care CEO Matt Hanrahan has reassured federal member for Dobell, Emma McBride, that the hospital building is looking to be repurposed to provide other local health services. As to what form that takes, that will be again a decision of health care. McBride says two Commonwealth funded Medicare Urgent Care Clinics, one in Umina and one at Lake Haven, are opening very soon.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

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## DEPARTMENT

### Vape shop temporarily shut

Albany Advertiser, General News, 24/10/2023, Eliza Kavanagh & Georgia Campion, Page 5

A controversial vape shop has closed until further notice, just over a month after it first opened, with the City of Albany saying the business was selling items prohibited for sale in the regional centre zone. [...] While vapes are offered by some medical professionals as a smoking cessation device, the Department of Health and Aged Care's website says there is "insufficient evidence" to back this up and that scientists "do not consider them safe", citing "hazardous substances" and potentially "higher levels of toxicants" than conventional tobacco products.

Also reported by: [Kimberley Echo \(Online\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Online\)](#), [Great Southern Herald \(Online\)](#), [Sound Telegraph \(Online\)](#), [Geraldton Guardian \(Online\)](#).

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### Bureaucrat's flip-flop flap on future of Gold Coast's bid

The 2026 Commonwealth Games are unlikely to go ahead so tickets "wouldn't be worth the paper they're printed on", a top bureaucrat has declared in a blow to the Gold Coast's bid for the event. [...] Officials from the PM&C told the hearing that they learnt the event was being dumped from the federal Health Department just 20 minutes prior to the public announcement by Mr Andrews.

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## **Bowel Cancer Australia says screening will start at 45**

Australian Doctor, Other, 23/10/2023, Kemal Atlay

Patients with average bowel cancer risk are now recommended to start two-yearly screening at age 45, rather than 50, according to Bowel Cancer Australia. [...] "Questions about the specific process for updating the guidelines and the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program should be addressed to Cancer Council Australia (which developed the guidelines) and the Department of Health and Aged Care (which administers the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program), respectively."

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## **Just nine out of 30,000 specialists have listed their fees on govt's \$17 million cost-finder website**

Australian Doctor, Other, 23/10/2023, Rachel Carter

Is it the taxpayer rather than patients who have been price gouged? [...] The Federal Department of Health and Aged Care says it is still trying various methods to boost specialist participation, including face-to-face briefings for the leaders of colleges, societies and craft groups and "online drop-in and sign-up sessions at times convenient for specialists".

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## **CORONAVIRUS**

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## **AGEING AND AGED CARE**

### **Hit the retirement homes and beat the housing crisis**

Daily Telegraph, General News, 24/10/2023, Daniel Gannon, Page 13

An affordable housing option is available to a growing cohort of Sydneysiders in an otherwise tough housing market and it's hiding in plain sight. Retirement communities are a housing answer, given the great Australian dream of home ownership is becoming a nightmare.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#)

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### **More help with health and energy needed for pensioners 'living in poverty', seniors group says**

The Australian, Other, 23/10/2023, Stephen Lunn

A new special concession card offering cheaper energy and discounted health care should be offered to pensioners living in poverty using an assets and income test that precludes wealthier pension recipients, a peak advocacy group says. [...] This was a recommendation of the Aged Care Royal Commission.

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### **Residential aged care is all about making the right choice**

Canberra Times, Other, 23/10/2023

Since aged care homes are not all the same, it's time for a bit of myth-busting. My Aged Care, a service of the Australian government, describes aged care homes as places that have been designed for older people who can no longer live at home and need ongoing help with everyday tasks or health care.

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## **Aged care reduces hospitalisations for Australians with dementia**

Aged Care Insite, Other, 23/10/2023, Arshmah Jamal

Australians living with dementia who move into residential aged care after a hospital stay are less likely to be readmitted to a hospital within 12 months. A new report published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) explored how people living with dementia move between hospitals and residential aged care and their use of health services following hospitalisations.

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## **Aged care provider combats homelessness with affordable housing for women over 55**

HelloCare, Other, 23/10/2023, Alex Jacobs

A not-for-profit aged care provider in Sydney has extended its support to women at risk of or experiencing homelessness, partnering with the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter to provide affordable housing to women over 55 in its retirement villages. Women over 55 are among the fastest-growing demographic to experience homelessness in Australia, with over 7,000 reported to be homeless in the 2021 Census.

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## **POPULATION HEALTH**

### **Territorians hit the bottle**

Northern Territory News, General News, 24/10/2023, Annabel Bowles, Page 3

Territorians are drinking more but going out to pubs and restaurants less, new data reveals. It comes as the government considers a string of changes to liquor laws including barring more people from buying takeaway alcohol and cracking down on public drinking.

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

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### **Exercise can lead to better bones in later years**

Canberra Times, Other, 23/10/2023

Charles Sturt University experts recommend Australian seniors begin to look more closely at exercise and their health, focusing on their bone density and strength. Osteoporosis, a disorder of the skeleton that results in less dense and frail bones, now affects 1.2 million people in Australia and is more common in people over the age of 50.

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

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### **Queensland eating disorders jump 400 per cent alongside social media rise**

Townsville Bulletin, Other, 22/10/2023, Taylah Fellows

Queensland has seen a 400 per cent increase in eating disorder hospitalisations since the advent of social media, but one particular app appears to be most responsible for the damage, accounting for a 92 per cent spike in admissions. Queensland has seen a disturbing 400 per cent increase in eating disorder hospitalisations since the introduction of social media more than 20 years ago, new health data shows.

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### Screening age drops to 45

Daily Telegraph, General News, 24/10/2023, Page 18

The bowel cancer screening age has been lowered to 45 for people at average risk. For the first time, population screening is recommended every two years for those aged 45-74 (previously 50-74), along with a lowering of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program start age from 50 to 45.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#).

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### Rachel's crucial Alice role

Northern Territory News, General News, 24/10/2023, Annabel Bowles, Page 12

With one in seven Australian women diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime and that figure continuing to climb, services like Rachel Power's are priceless. Ms Power, a registered nurse for almost three decades, has been the dedicated McGrath Foundation breast care nurse based in Alice Springs since April.

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### Screening is the best option

Cairns Post, General News, 24/10/2023, Sandhya Ram, Page 6

There's a one-in-seven chance for women to be diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer and for Angela Estcourt, who had no trace of the disease in five generations of her family, it was never a thought. Getting a breast screen was not on her radar as she cared for her sick husband, maintained a household, and worked full time in childcare until one GP visit changed her life forever.

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

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### Belmont woman with BRCA1 mutation in clinical trial

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/10/2023, Tamara McDonald

A Belmont woman with a gene mutation that means she is more susceptible to breast cancer is participating in research which hopes to help prevent the disease. Megan Daniel, 39, will have her ovaries removed in coming months, and is on a waitlist for a preventive mastectomy and reconstructive surgery due to the BRCA1 gene mutation.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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### 'Step forward' for advanced cancer treatment in regional Australia

Canberra Times, Other, 23/10/2023, Anna Houlahan

Regional Australians may soon have access to more locally-accessible cancer treatment after five major hospitals launched a program to train country doctors. These tests are used to identify cancer mutations and tailor effective treatment for patients but they require specialist training.

Also reported by: [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#).

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### Psoriasis is a common and sometimes debilitating skin disease – but its real toll is hidden

ABC Online, Other, 23/10/2023, Lily Nothing

Don Flood-Warren long avoided picking up his grandkids because they didn't like his "scaly bits". The disability pensioner, 69, has struggled with psoriasis for 15 years and says the skin condition contributed to his depression.

## Mammograms a game of Where's Wally for dense breasts

The Senior, Other, 23/10/2023, Katelyn Catanzariti

Up to half of older Australian women have such dense breasts, detecting cancerous tumours becomes as difficult as finding "a polar bear in a snow storm". Breasts are made up of a combination of fatty tissue and fibroglandular tissue, which includes the glands and ducts that support breastfeeding.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Doctors eye up assisted dying roles

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 24/10/2023, Alexandra Smith, Page 4

About 250 doctors have applied to be authorised voluntary assisted dying (VAD) practitioners when NSW next month becomes the last state to allow terminally ill people to choose the timing of their death. From November 28, terminally ill adults experiencing "intolerable suffering" can apply to end their lives. The first patients will be able to take a VAD substance five days later.

Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#).

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### New satellite hospitals stem rush to EDs

Courier Mail, General News, 24/10/2023, Madura McCormack , Page 4

South East Queensland's two new satellite hospitals are diverting hundreds of people away from busy emergency departments (EDs), early government data has revealed. State government data shows the Ripley and Redlands satellite hospitals collective cared for more than 4600 people from August 30 to October 15.

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### Heart health admissions twice as high in Red Centre

Northern Territory News, General News, 24/10/2023, Zayda Dollie, Page 12

The Alice Springs hospital is marking five years of operations for its oncology and cardio service in Central Australia. Established in 2018, the service was designed to meet a dire need in the community.

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### Australians to pay more than \$100 to visit their doctor

Cairns Post, General News, 24/10/2023, Page 6

Australians are set to be charged more than \$100 for a standard non-bulk billed GP appointment. The fee of a standard GP consultation will rise to \$102 in November, after the Australian Medical Association recommended doctors lift their prices to battle rising practice costs.

Also reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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### Privacy breaches found

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 24/10/2023, Page 13

An audit of Department of Health staff in Tasmania identified a "significant number" of hospital employees had accessed patient records "not in connection with performance of their duties". In documents accessible to all staff, health bosses said "all employees have a legal obligation to safeguard" personal information.

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

## Melbourne Metro testing may stop due to medical equipment access

The Courier Mail, Other, 23/10/2023

Train testing on Melbourne's \$14 billion Metro Tunnel could be stopped if nearby hospitals need access to lifesaving equipment. Due to its proximity to the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre and the Royal Melbourne Hospital, there are concerns the tunnel's electromagnetic fields will interfere with medical equipment.

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## Great opportunity: Child-specialist GPs for original, shared-care paediatric clinic in Elsternwick

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/10/2023

Paediatric People is a brand new, multidisciplinary paediatric clinic in Elsternwick, Melbourne, bringing together paediatricians, GPs, allied health and nursing to provide premium care to children

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## Private ambulance service in northern suburbs loses contract

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 23/10/2023, Brad Crouch

A private ambulance service transferring up to 700 patients a month will have its contract terminated from next week, putting pressure on SA Ambulance Service. A private ambulance company transferring up to 700 patients a month in the northern suburbs will have its contract ended on October 27, despite ongoing chronic ramping.

[Read More](#)

## ABC, 7:30, 23/10/2023, Sarah Ferguson

Report by Adele Ferguson into flaws in Australia's medical system. The 7.30 report reveals how government health schemes are being exploited in podiatry with bogus billing and fake referrals, turning vulnerable WorkCover patients and veterans into under-policed pots of gold.

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## Channel 7, Sunrise, 23/10/2023, Natalie Barr and Matt Shirvington

Interview with Dr Danielle McMullen, Vice President, AMA. The Australian Medical Association has recommended doctors raise their fees for a standard non-bulk billed consultation to \$102. McMullen says they had an extra round of indexation earlier this year, the same way government is doing an extra round of Medicare indexation. She notes they'll push the Federal Government to recognise that the Medicare rebates for those consultations are really not meeting that cost of delivering the care.

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## 5AA, Breakfast, 23/10/2023, Will Goodings and David Penberthy

Interview with Dr Nicole Higgins. RACGP President on the Australian Medical Association recommending doctors raise their fees for a standard GP consult to \$102. Higgins says the cost of delivering medical care has also gone up exponentially. and the government rebates over the last ten years have been frozen, haven't kept up with the cost of providing care.

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## 6PR, Afternoons, 23/10/2023, Julie-anne Sprague

Interview with Dr Danielle McMullen, Vice President, AMA. The Australian Medical Association has recommended doctors raise their fees to a standard for a standard of consultation to \$102 cope with the rapidly increased costs of running a practise, the third increase just this year. McMullen cites increase in CPI and GP attendance items which had fallen so far behind the cost of providing care over the past decade for the increase recommendation.

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### There is a scary new epidemic: loneliness

Cairns Post, General News, 24/10/2023, Elisabeth Shaw, Page 33

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."

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### Radio National, PM, 23/10/2023, Sarah Dingle

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, affects one in 20 Australians or 1.2 million people. A senate committee is currently looking into the barriers people face in getting assessed for ADHD, and the support services available. Some people with the condition have spoken out about what it means for them.

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Job cuts at key WA hospitals

West Australian, General News, 24/10/2023, Claire Sadler, Page 18

One of the nation's biggest healthcare providers has cut staff at three key WA hospitals as workers claim the redundancies will lead to a litany of issues. Ramsay Health Care confirmed seven full-time employees at Hollywood Hospital had been let go and a further two staff at Peel Health Campus were made redundant.

Also reported by: [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

### Guild promotes Advance Australia founder to CEO

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 24/10/2023, Kishor Napier-Raman & Noel Towell, Page 2

Relations between the all-powerful Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Albanese government have been bumpy of late. The guild's national president, Trent Twomey, gave a teary press conference in Parliament House earlier this year as the lobby group waged war on the government's 60-day dispensing rules.

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

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### Etanercept changes

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 23/10/2023, Megan Haggan

From 1 November, authority requirements regarding etanercept for the treatment of children and

adolescents with severe chronic plaque psoriasis will change. The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee's recommendations led to the changes, which will see PBS listings for initial therapy change from Authority Required (Written) to Authority Required (telephone/ immediate online assessment).

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### Doc forged opiod scripts

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 24/10/2023, Page 8

A doctor caught forging prescriptions in the names of others including her patients so she could obtain opioid medication to feed an addiction has been convicted. Kylie Frances Austin, 54, of Tranmere, forged multiple scripts in the names of others between October 18, 2019, and February 25, 2020 to obtain prescriptions for herself.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

### War on vapes runs out of puff

Daily Telegraph, General News, 24/10/2023, James O'Doherty, Page 4

NSW Health only employs seven people to inspect convenience stores to crack down on illegal nicotine vapes. While illegal vapes are widely available at convenience stores across Sydney and the state, The Daily Telegraph can also reveal that NSW police are largely powerless to inspect shops to check if they are breaking the law.

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### Push for pill testing to reduce overdoses

Ballarat Courier, General News, 24/10/2023, Michelle Smith, Page 2

Ballarat Community Health is among dozens of Victorian health and community agencies calling for the introduction of pill testing. Seventy-seven groups have signed a statement from the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association in collaboration with RMIT University urging the state government to introduce drug checking and an enhanced public alert system through the use of mobile and fixed pill testing.

Also reported by: [3AW \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#).

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### Push for vapes to be regulated like alcohol and tobacco in Australia

Gold Coast Bulletin, Other, 23/10/2023, Ally Foster

Young people are helping create a "booming black market" in Australia, and it is all so they can get their hands on a controversial \$20 item. The ABF-led Illicit Tobacco Taskforce (ITTF) and partner agencies have shattered a large scale illegal tobacco syndicate in a series of raids across QLD and NSW in one of the biggest busts of its kind in recent years.

## Channel 9, National Nine News, 23/10/2023, Peter Hitchener

There are new calls for the Allan Government to introduce pill testing at venues and music festivals. The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association is behind the push, with the support of more than 70 health and community agencies. They want the Government to adopt the coroner's recommendations on drug testing to curb a spike in fatal overdoses.

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## SPORT

### Event expert scathing on Games chaos

Australian Financial Review, General News, 24/10/2023, Gus McCubbing, Page 10

The Victorian government's team in charge of delivering the 2026 Commonwealth Games was so inexperienced it would have struggled to host a 500-person conference, an inquiry has been told.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

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### Premier 'won't play' with bid to grab Games

The Australian, General News, 24/10/2023, Mackenzie Scott, Page 8

Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk has been accused of blocking a Gold Coast bid to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games, despite the business case calling for no direct funding from the state. An independent report commissioned by the Gold Coast Council suggests a "scaled-down" event could be delivered for about \$700m, with only "in-kind" support from the state government to fund policing and transport resources by using the infrastructure built when the region hosted the 2018 event.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#).

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### Games exit 'hit para-athletes hard'

Age, General News, 24/10/2023, Annika Smethurst, Page 3

Para-athletes missed a rare opportunity to be assigned to eligible disability classifications when the Victorian government cancelled the 2026 Commonwealth Games, a decision that local Games boss Craig Phillips described as the "most challenging time" for the international sporting event. Phillips yesterday detailed what he called the missed opportunities for athletes banking on the Games being held in Victoria in 2026 to a parliamentary inquiry into the event's cancellation.

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### End of line for Games

Courier Mail, General News, 24/10/2023, Matthew Killoran & Mitch Clarke, Page 1

The 2026 Commonwealth Games appear dead in the water with a top bureaucrat declaring tickets "won't be worth the paper they're printed on". Federal Infrastructure Department secretary Jim Betts dismissed the chances of the Games going ahead on the Gold Coast in a fiery exchange in Senate estimates yesterday.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#).

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### In at the deep end

Herald Sun, General News, 24/10/2023, Mitch Clarke & Jordan McCarthy, Page 1

Victorian kids are waiting more than 12 months to learn to swim in some parts of the state, sparking desperate calls for the government to build more pools. Swimming Victoria chief executive Jason Hellwig told a parliamentary inquiry on Monday that in Melbourne's west, about 2000 kids had to wait a year for lessons.

## Swimming Queensland makes stand against national body

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 23/10/2023

Powerhouse state body Swimming Queensland (SQ) says it refused to support a range of reforms to Swimming Australia (SA) last week because it believes the changes make the board of the national body less accountable. SQ was the only vote in an eight-one split to stand against the new constitution, ratified at a Special General Meeting last Friday.

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## Sky News Live, News Night, 23/10/2023, Unspecified

The Commonwealth Games Australia boss has been giving evidence at a state parliamentary inquiry examining Victoria's decision to walk away from the event. Craig Phillips told the hearing the Commonwealth Games Federation has delayed the payment of the cancellation fee as it works through how much tax it will be forced to pay.

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Wrap on Dubbo osteoporosis study after 30 years of testing

Daily Liberal, General News, 24/10/2023, Sarah Falson, Page 7

Five thousand people from the Dubbo region have been involved in a landmark osteoporosis study which was undertaken over the course of 30 years and the findings of which will help shape our knowledge of this "silent killer". In 1989, the Garvan Institute began the Dubbo Osteoporosis Epidemiology Study (DOES), under which thousands of participants from the 2830 postcode attended a clinic at Dubbo Hospital every two years so researchers could collect information about their bones.

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### Ex-Adelaide Crows captain Chris McDermott recognised for tackling childhood cancer, dementia

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/10/2023, George Yankovich

Chris McDermott could not believe the figure when he heard it: three-quarters of children with childhood dementia don't make it to 18. The former Adelaide Crows captain, now a nominee for South Australian of the Year, already raised millions to battle children's cancer when he decided this relatively unknown disease would be his next fight.

*Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#).*

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### Buttrose joins dementia research committee

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 23/10/2023

Ita Buttrose has been appointed chair of the CHeBA advisory committee. Launched in 2012, the UNSW Sydney's Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing is a research body that aims to change the future of age-related brain disorders specifically Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

*Also reported by: [Retail Pharmacy \(Online\)](#).*

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

## New focus on air quality and environmental health in East Arnhem Land

National Indigenous Times, Other, 23/10/2023

Menzies School of Health Research has received funding for a new project focused on improving environmental health, and environmental health awareness, in East Arnhem Land. The project, 'Air in East Arnhem: Crowdsourcing Air Quality, Temperature, and Health Data with Yolnu Citizen Scientists', is a collaboration led by Menzies, Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation and AirRater.

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## Experts call for national register to help reduce rheumatic fever in Indigenous communities

National Indigenous Times, Other, 23/10/2023

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are among the world's highest sufferers of acute rheumatic fever (ARF) and rheumatic heart disease (RHD), yet only one in five patients received treatment in 2019, research reveals. Flinders University's Associate Professor Amanda Miller and Kerissa Govender conducted research that found an urgent need for a national RHD register to improve timely treatment of these two diseases among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, which also must involve more effective pain management and better involvement with patients.

Also reported by: [Retail Pharmacy \(Online\)](#).

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## OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

### Polio battle close to being won but fight not over yet

Hobart Mercury, General News, 24/10/2023, Mike Patten, Page 21

Today (October 24) is World End Polio Day when Rotarians and members of the health professions around the world celebrate how close we are to permanently eradicating the polio virus. The first recorded cases of polio were in the 1880s and the virus kept reappearing in Australia every few years in the early 1900s.

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### The Block slammed for promoting stone products containing a substance linked to an incurable disease that's killing tradies: 'The new asbestos'

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 23/10/2023, Monique Friedlander

he Block has been plunged into controversy for promoting products that contain a substance being referred to as 'the new asbestos'. Channel Nine renovation show has partnered with Spanish-based manufacturer Cosentino this season, with the company supplying a manufactured stone product called Silestone for contestants homes, including kitchen benchtops and laundry furnishings.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### 'The first thing I saw when he was born was skin missing from his leg'

The Courier Mail, Other, 23/10/2023, Josephine Agostino

"Every part of his body is affected," the Melbourne father said. "We wondered if we were subjecting our son to a life full of suffering."

Also reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

## TGA issues baclofen warning in response to overdose deaths

Australian Doctor, Other, 23/10/2023, Rachel Fieldhouse

The antispasmodic can help, but in rare cases, says Dr Hester Wilson. The TGA is urging caution with off-label baclofen prescribing for alcohol use disorder in the wake of coronial inquiries into two deaths.

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## OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

### Hope at this year's memorial for those lost to illicit drugs

Canberra Times, General News, 24/10/2023, Lucy Bladen, Page 3

Three-hundred and eighteen people. Daughters, sons, children, mothers, fathers, parents, brothers, sisters, siblings, partners and friends.

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### ACT drug decriminalisation: how will this work in practice?

Canberra Times, Other, 23/10/2023

There are plenty of quips to be had regarding the ACT's decriminalisation of drugs, which takes effect today. Wags may wax lyrical about our "cocaine capital" or a "cruise ship drug charter", but Canberra will be leading the way in a new approach to the problem of illicit drug use.

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## FOOD STANDARDS

### Overwhelming support for warning labels on alcohol

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/10/2023

A distraught mother is pleading for health warnings to be added to products, after her 26-year-old son died from alcoholic liver disease. A national poll of more than 1000 people found 78% support the addition of warning labels to alcohol.

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### Magnesium supplement recalled after 'tingling, burning and numbness' reaction

9News, Other, 23/10/2023, Lucy Slade

An Ethical Nutrients product is being recalled as it could potentially cause consumers "tingling, burning and numbness" if the recommended daily dose is consumed. [...] Food Standards Australia and New Zealand said it slightly exceeded the 100mg maximum recommended daily dose, due to a manufacturing error.

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## AICIS

### PFAS plume approaching Wagga water supply faster than predicted

Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser, Other, 23/10/2023, Taylor Dodge

New testing has revealed Wagga's PFAS plume is travelling faster towards the city's eastern bore

water supply than the previously estimated 50 years. Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) is a compound that was widely used in firefighting foam on Department of Defence bases, including at the Forest Hill Royal Australian Air Force base, from the 1970s to 2004.

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