



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 17th December 2023

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sun Herald \(page 1\)](#)** reports that following claims by the Greens that proposed new safety laws will create a legal basis for storing nuclear waste from US and UK submarines, Defence Minister Richard Marles has confirmed Australia will not be doing so under the AUKUS deal.
- **[The Sunday Telegraph \(page 1\)](#)** reports that Kathie Potts, a mother who lost her child to DIPG brain cancer is calling on the federal government to increase funding for clinical trials and research needed to find a better treatment for DIPG.
- **[The Sunday Herald Sun \(page 1\)](#)** reports that the husband of Katica Perinovic who killed their three children before committing suicide has launched legal action against his wife's general practitioner Dr Abid-Ur Rahman and Melbourne Health, alleging they were negligent when treating and managing his wife's mental health.
- **[The Sunday Times \(page 1\)](#)** reports that doctors and the Therapeutic Goods Administration are warning WA parents that they risk criminal prosecution by bypassing Australian drug regulations and shopping online for gummy bears containing the sleep-inducing substance melatonin.

- [The Sunday Canberra Times \(page 3\)](#) reports that health advocates are calling for action to get children to eat more fruit and vegetables in an effort to curb obesity after results of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' National Health Survey found only one in 20 children ate the recommended daily serve of vegetables and almost 6 per cent did not eat fruit daily.
- [The Sunday Herald Sun \(page 3\)](#) reports that the Department of Health and Aged Care has confirmed that the National Coronavirus Helpline was shut down in early December with callers now being directed by a pre-recorded message to call Healthdirect's general triage phone number.

MINISTER BUTLER

COVID hotline service quietly hung up

Sunday Age, General News, 17/12/2023, Mary Ward, Page 16

The federal government has quietly closed its dedicated COVID-19 hotline, as more Australians seek booster shots ahead of the Christmas break. The Department of Health and Aged Care confirmed that the National Coronavirus Helpline was shuttered on December 4, as part of the end of funding for Healthdirect's Living with COVID service. [...] Questions to federal Health Minister Mark Butler were referred to the department, which provided data showing calls to the helpline had slowed over this year.

Also reported by: [Sun Herald \(Sydney\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#), [Brisbane Times \(Online\)](#), [The Age \(Online\)](#).

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We just want our little girl back

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/12/2023, Cydonee Mardon, Page 13

As four-year-old Flo bravely faced another gruelling round of radiation this week, researchers and doctors caring for children with deadly DIPG brain tumours met with federal health department officials and begged for funding to save suffering children. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler told The Sunday Telegraph he was sympathetic to the cause and said research to develop effective treatments into DIPG was desperately needed.

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\$12m push to improve Indigenous health

Sunday Territorian, General News, 17/12/2023, Talara McHugh, Page 11

Seven Top End researchers from Menzies School of Health Research have received more than \$12m in funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council to improve First Nations healthcare and research infectious diseases including malaria and tuberculosis. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the grants supported "groundbreaking, world-class research that addresses some of the nation's greatest health challenges."

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More kids skipping fruit and veg

Sunday Examiner, General News, 17/12/2023, Page 9

Public health advocates are calling for action to curb obesity after fewer Australian children were found to be eating fruit and vegetables. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the first step was to work with states and territories.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#), [Perth Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications

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Desperate call for cancer treatment funding as families speak of heartbreaking diagnosis

7news.com.au, Other, 16/12/2023, Sowaibah Hanifie

Families and medical experts are calling on the Federal Government to commit more funding to find

treatments for a rare and aggressive childhood cancer that kills about 20 Australian kids every year. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the Commonwealth Government was investing \$700,000 to develop a new treatment that targets DIPG.

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Number of Australian children skipping fruit and vegetables on the rise, survey finds

The Guardian, Other, 16/12/2023

Public health advocates are calling for action to curb obesity after fewer Australian children were found to be eating fruit and vegetables. [...] Federal health minister Mark Butler said the government was working with states and territories to identify priority areas for preventing obesity and implement treatment policies.

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MINISTER WELLS

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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DEPARTMENT

COVID hotline service quietly hung up

Sunday Age, General News, 17/12/2023, Mary Ward, Page 16

The federal government has quietly closed its dedicated COVID-19 hotline, as more Australians seek booster shots ahead of the Christmas break. The Department of Health and Aged Care confirmed that the National Coronavirus Helpline was shuttered on December 4, as part of the end of funding for Healthdirect's Living with COVID service. [...] Questions to federal Health Minister Mark Butler were referred to the department, which provided data showing calls to the helpline had slowed over this year.

Also reported by: [Sun Herald \(Sydney\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#), [Brisbane Times \(Online\)](#), [The Age \(Online\)](#)

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As four-year-old Flo bravely faced another gruelling round of radiation this week, researchers and doctors caring for children with deadly DIPG brain tumours met with federal health department officials and begged for funding to save suffering children. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler told The Sunday Telegraph he was sympathetic to the cause and said research to develop effective treatments into DIPG was desperately needed.

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COVID helpline closes

Sunday Herald Sun, Edition Changes - 2nd Edition, 17/12/2023, Page 3

The National Coronavirus Helpline has been quietly shut down despite an increase in Aussies seeking out booster shots ahead of the end of year break. The Department of Health and Aged Care confirmed the dedicated Covid-19 hotline had shut in early December.

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Killer in the heat

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 17/12/2023, Courtney Gould, Page 52

Community pools, libraries, shopping centres and cinemas must be kept accessible in a bid to stop Australia's secret killer: heatwaves. [...] The Department of Health and Aged Care also raised awareness about heatwave mitigation planning.

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National Coronavirus Helpline shut down as case numbers continue to concern experts

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 16/12/2023, Amanda Sheppeard

Australia's National Coronavirus Helpline has closed as the federal government takes another step away from its Covid pandemic response. [...] The Department of Health and Aged Care has released data showing a decline in the number of calls to the service.

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

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Desperate call for cancer treatment funding as families speak of heartbreaking diagnosis

7news.com.au, Other, 16/12/2023, Sowaibah Hanifie

Families and medical experts are calling on the Federal Government to commit more funding to find treatments for a rare and aggressive childhood cancer that kills about 20 Australian kids every year. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the Commonwealth Government was investing \$700,000 to develop a new treatment that targets DIPG.

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CORONAVIRUS

Listen to us not pollies, AMA tells inquiry

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 17/12/2023, Steven Deare, Page 11

Australia's peak medical body says the nation's response to future pandemics must focus on listening to experts and not be influenced by politics. The Australian Medical Association (AMA) is among groups to have a say on the federal government's COVID-19 Response Inquiry and argues Australia's success in handling the virus in the first 18 months was due to government leaders listening to medical experts.

Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Sunday Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications

Adelaide widow whose husband died after devastating reaction to Covid vaccine wins compensation

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 16/12/2023, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker

An Adelaide widow has been awarded a six figure compensation payment in recognition that a recommended Covid vaccine caused the paralysis and eventual death of her late husband. It is believed to be one of the most significant payments of its kind to date in South Australia, administered as part of the federal government's "Covid-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme".

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

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

No relevant coverage

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POPULATION HEALTH

Experts alarmed as more kids skip fruit, veg

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 17/12/2023, Steven Deare, Page 3

Public health advocates are calling for action to curb obesity after fewer Australian children were found to be eating fruit and vegetables. The number of children eating the recommended amount of fruit has dropped substantially, according to the results of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' National Health Survey.

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Rural Aussies 'crying out' for health equality

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 17/12/2023, Stephanie Gardiner, Page 17

People in rural Australia are 24 times more likely to be hospitalised due to domestic violence than those in the city. [...] The snapshot, based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, also showed rural people used Medicare up to half the rate of those in the city.

Also reported by: [Sunday Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications. Similar coverage reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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Aussie paramedic's warning: Why you should never assume someone's watching your kids in the water

7news.com.au, Other, 16/12/2023, Cindy Tran

Former paramedic Nikki Jurcutz has shared a terrifying surveillance footage showing a toddler falling into a swimming pool — as two quick-thinking adults raced to pull the helpless child out. However, as the video shows, the panicked couple took five seconds before realising the child had fallen into the water.

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Australians are eating more ultra-processed foods amid the rising cost of living. How can we turn that around?

Ultra-processed foods like chicken nuggets, sweet breakfast cereals and fizzy drinks aren't entirely bad. They're often cheap and easy to prepare, and they keep for longer on the shelf.

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Channel 10, 10 News First (Weekend), 16/12/2023, Chris Bath

Data from Australian Bureau of Statistics has revealed Australians' obesity rate has nearly doubled in the past 20 years. Excessive drinking might be to blame.

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Cycle of shame

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/12/2023, Cydonee Mardon, Page 1

Heartbroken mum Kathie Potts lost daughter Annabelle to a monster brain tumour almost five years ago and she's sick of watching other families live through the same cycle of empty funding promises. "A child is diagnosed, gets attention, then passes and is forgotten - until the next time," she said.

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The US hosting a trial of hope

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/12/2023, Cydonee Mardon, Page 12

When Annabelle Potts was diagnosed in December 2016, her parents were told she had just nine months to live and to go home and make memories. In the face of no treatment on offer in Australia, the Canberra family flew to Mexico to trial experimental chemotherapy.

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Australians feeling pretty crook overall

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/12/2023, Page 33

Eight in 10 of us (81.4 per cent) have at least one long-term health condition, according to Australian Bureau of Statistics data. The National Health Survey 2022 revealed that the number of adult daily smokers has more than halved over 20 years, but more than one in four adults (26.8 per cent) drink more than the guidelines recommend.

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We'll be watching cancer fight closely

Sunday Telegraph, Editorials, 17/12/2023, Page 102

The response to the first day of our campaign last week to raise awareness and money for research into aggressive brain tumours, particularly in young children, was overwhelming. The heartbreaking stories from parents whose children were either fighting for their lives or who had already died struck a chord with readers who were as dumbfounded as we are as to why there was so little funding for such an aggressive and hideous condition.

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RAH in push to prevent diabetes

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 17/12/2023, Brad Crouch, Page 6

Researchers at the Royal Adelaide Hospital are developing a new cell therapy they hope could prevent or delay the onset of type 1 diabetes. [...] Jacqui Scaffidi from the Central and Northern Adelaide Renal and Transplantation Services, with the support of Professor Toby Coates and a team of researchers, this month received a \$60,000 2024 Diabetes Australia Research Program grant to take their CAR-T cell study to the next phase.

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Rising toll of asthma mystery

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 17/12/2023, Bella Fowler, Page 7

Health experts are growing increasingly concerned about the death rate of asthma in South Australia, with a leading body unable to pinpoint why. [...] There were 467 asthma-related deaths recorded in Australia in 2022, up from 355 deaths in 2021, according to Australian Bureau of Statistics data published by the National Asthma Council Australia in November.

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

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Men urged to pull their fingers out this Christmas

Canberra Times, Other, 16/12/2023, Katelyn Catanzariti

It's the notorious physical exam that leaves men squirming in their seats and quickly changing the conversation. But prostate cancer survivors and the families of those who didn't make it want more men to know they only need to ask their GP for a simple blood test - not the dreaded digital rectal exam - to find out if they are at risk.

Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications

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Hervey Bay's Soul Sisters 'boob choir' provides music therapy to women impacted by breast cancer

ABC Online, Other, 16/12/2023, Lucy Loram

Twila Whittingham always thought of music as medicine, so when doctors found a pre-cancerous tumour in her breast mid-2022, she knew she would need more than conventional treatment to cope. So, she formed what she cheekily describes as a "boob choir" — an ensemble of women whose lives have been impacted by the disease.

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Women with endometriosis share their struggles with infertility and family pressures to have children

ABC Online, Other, 16/12/2023, Angelica Silva

"These diseases are only for rich people. Doctors want money so they tell patients they have lots of diseases." This was the response from Harsha Sanjay Sen's father-in-law when she tried to explain that she had endometriosis, which made it even more difficult to fall pregnant.

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Young siblings diagnosed with childhood dementia after concerns 'dismissed'

NEWS.com.au, Other, 16/12/2023, Brielle Burns

A Brisbane mum had her concerns "dismissed" by multiple doctors before her two children, aged 7 and 10, were diagnosed with childhood dementia. Brisbane mum Jill O'Grady was continuously brushed off by doctors before her son was diagnosed with a form of dementia at six years old.

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

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ABC News, ABC Evening News (Weekend), 16/12/2023, Mariam Saab

Interview with Scott Maggs, Founder and CEO, Skin Check Champions. Maggs discusses the high rates of skin cancer cases in Australia, and the issue of the price of skin checks.

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ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 16/12/2023, Fauziah Ibrahim and Kathryn Robinson

Early detection of breast cancer is becoming more important as diagnosis rates continue to rise across Australia. A group of women in South East Queensland is using music therapy to help raise awareness for the disease. Choral director Twila Whittingham shares how music heals her.

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PRIMARY CARE

State's free wi-fi network expands

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 17/12/2023, Grace Baldwin, Page 5

Free public wi-fi zones will be expanded across Tasmania under an initiative from the state government. The Statewide Wi-Fi Access Program, SWAP, will be stretched out to encompass more areas including public hospitals, community health centres and libraries.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Hopes detainee deaths can spur lasting change

Sunday Age, General News, 17/12/2023, Charlotte Grieve, Page 1

Moses Kellie was ordinarily a quiet and clean man who attended church and had a knack for drawing. But in his final days, his lips trembled, there was grass in his dreadlocks, his face was greasy and a foul odour followed him.

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Terrified of fog and helicopters: extreme weather events take a lasting toll on children

Sun Herald, General News, 17/12/2023, Amber Schultz, Page 8

When the Black Summer bushfires engulfed Batemans Bay, families had to evacuate to the beach as many of their homes were destroyed. Four years later, those children still get anxious when taking a trip to the beach or seeing fog on the water that resembles smoke.

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It's no time to be a tight-arse

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/12/2023, Scott Pape, Page 18

Last week I did an (unpaid!) gig for Australia's largest mental health support organisation, Beyond Blue. Unbeknownst to me, an eager beaver from their comms team went ahead and entitled the presentation "Take the pressure down: A guide to navigating end-of-year stress with Beyond Blue and the Barefoot Investor."

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

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Time to lift Aussie philanthropy to world standard

Sunday Territorian, Business News, 17/12/2023, Caroline Gurney, Page 40

When leading fund manager Geoff Wilson founded Future Generation in 2014, his "big, hairy, audacious" goal was to raise \$100m for Australian charities by 2030. With seven years still to go, we've already raised more than three-quarters of that target. The money, almost \$80m, has supported youth at risk and youth mental health.

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Sick with worry, this mum has nowhere to go

Sunday Times, General News, 17/12/2023, Kim MacDonald, Page 15

Mother, support worker and girl guide mentor Leigh Anne Voss has been floored by the State's worst rental crisis, and it is literally breaking her heart. The 43-year-old has failed to secure a home after more than 40 rental applications in recent months, despite the \$60,000 in her savings account and an offer to pay months of rent up-front.

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Premier not surprised by reports of spike in self-harm at Unit 18

West Australian, Other, 16/12/2023, Jake Dietsch

Premier Roger Cook said he is "not surprised" at reports of a rise in self-harm incidents at Unit 18, as shocking revelations emerge that detainees have spent 24 consecutive hours in their cells. The Government has not said when Unit 18 — located inside the adult men's Casuarina prison — will close, but is funding a business case for a new alternative site next to Banksia Hill.

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

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Heart attack survivor leads push for peer support in rural Queensland to help with 'cardiac blues'

ABC Online, Other, 16/12/2023, Jasmine Hines

When Claudia Stephson woke up in the middle of the night nauseous and clammy with a weight on her chest she drove herself to her local rural hospital. She did not realise it but she was having a heart attack.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Tribute to home invasion victim

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/12/2023, Isabel McMillan, Page 18

The family of a heroic father murdered in a home invasion paid tribute to the "skilled, compassionate doctor". The family of Dr Michael Yung said his death had "left a hole" in their hearts.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Dad's bid for justice

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 17/12/2023, Laura Placella, Page 1

The heartbroken husband of Tullamarine mum Katica Perinovic who killed their three children before taking her own life has launched legal action against her doctor and hospital, alleging they were negligent when treating and managing his wife's mental health. Ms Perinovic, 42, was suffering from psychosis when she stabbed her children Claire, 7, Anna, 5, and Matthew, 3, to death inside their Tullamarine home and turned the knife on herself in a devastating murder-suicide.

Also reported by: [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#).

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All manor of money worries

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 17/12/2023, Andrew Hough, Page 9

A psychiatrist is again on the brink of losing her luxury Victorian-era North Adelaide mansion, at a forced auction, over claims she failed to pay almost \$130,000 in taxes, rates and other charges. [...] "The practitioner must not practise as a medical practitioner," states the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency record.

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

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Little Thea's home in time for Santa

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 17/12/2023, Samantha Landy, Page 1

Thea Hattersley is on track to spend her first Christmas at home with her family after receiving a "life-changing" liver transplant in Melbourne. [...] DonatLife is urging all Australians over 16 to take a minute this Christmas to register as organ and tissue donors at donatelifelife.gov.au, or via three taps in the Medicare app.

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

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SPORT

Full reason Khawaja humanitarian message was banned is revealed, with Cricket Australia backing the ICC's decision

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 16/12/2023

Cricket Australia boss Nick Hockley has declared allowing Usman Khawaja to wear a humanitarian message on his shoes in the first Test in Perth could have set a 'difficult' precedent and there was little room to move for the veteran opener who vowed to fight the ban.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Just one jab is bloody clever

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 17/12/2023, Brad Crouch, Page 4

Josh Pfeiffer is delighted he can kick a ball with his three children without his ankle "swelling up to the size of a football." In a remarkable breakthrough with global ramifications a single injection two years ago has effectively cured him of haemophilia, the bleeding condition where people cannot make a clotting agent.

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

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Scientists are bringing molecules back from the dead in quest to fight superbugs

9News, Other, 16/12/2023

The quest for new antibiotics is going back to the Stone Age. The urgency to identify possible candidates has never been greater as the global population faces nearly 5 million deaths every year that are associated with microbial resistance, according to the

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Tributes flow for top Adelaide paediatrician Michael Yung, as charity he established continues his legacy

ABC Online, Other, 16/12/2023, Candice Prosser

A few months before his alleged murder, much-loved paediatrician Michael Yung was celebrating a milestone very close to his heart; awarding the first Indigenous medical scholarship in honour of his late wife. It was the culmination of hard work and dedication, fuelled by love, and a passion he had shared with his wife for health equity and social justice.

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OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Nuclear waste claims denied

Sun Herald, General News, 17/12/2023, Lisa Visentin, Page 1

Defence Minister Richard Marles has maintained that Australia will not take nuclear waste from other countries under the AUKUS deal. The Greens claim that proposed new safety laws introduced to parliament last month will create a legal basis for storing nuclear waste from US and British submarines.

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

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Ban tipped to lift prices, delay building

Sun Herald, General News, 17/12/2023, Amber Schultz, Page 18

Home builders could face months-long delays and up to a 30 per cent price hike when looking for safer alternatives for soon-to-be-banned engineered stone benchtops Engineered stone will be banned from

July 1 after hundreds of stonemasons developed silicosis, an irreversible lung condition, from inhaling silica particles while cutting the stone.

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Mpox epidemic spreading again in Congo

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 17/12/2023, Page 35

The World Health Organisation has warned that the mpox epidemic in the Democratic Republic of Congo could spread internationally as sexual transmissions accelerate. The infectious disease, formerly known as monkeypox, was first identified in humans in 1970 in DR Congo.

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Vaccine call as young woman fights for life

Sunday Examiner, General News, 17/12/2023, Joe Colbrook, Page 2

A young Northern Tasmanian woman is fighting for her life after contracting a rare bacterial infection. The Department of Health said the woman is in a critical but stable condition after contracting invasive meningococcal disease - an illness caused by Neisseria meningitidis bacteria.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Kids' sleep lolly fears

Sunday Times, General News, 17/12/2023, Kate Emery, Page 1

WA parents are bypassing Australian drug regulations - and possibly risking criminal prosecution - to shop online for gummy bears laced with a sleep-inducing substance to make their children slumber, prompting warnings from doctors and the Therapeutic Goods Administration. Australian Border Force seizures of melatonin, a medicine used to mimic the effects of the hormone that helps people sleep, have nearly doubled in the past year. Melatonin-related calls to the WA Poisons Information Centre have also nearly doubled to 347 since 2018.

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OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

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