



TODAY'S NEWS

Wednesday, 27th December 2023

A more automated version of *Today's News* will be provided on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. It will still capture the main media stories, but will not include an Executive Summary. The report will be emailed to subscribers at the later time of 7:30 am.

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister Wells](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#)
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| [Health Workforce](#) | [Technology Assessment and Access](#)
| [Medicare Benefits and Digital Health](#) | [Benefits Integrity](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **The Australian** (page 1) reports the Australian Lawyers Alliance has labelled the ACT's proposed voluntary assisted dying laws as unclear and lacking "vital" safeguards, but backed the participation of "suitably qualified" nurses in the scheme.
- **The Australian** (page 1) reports St Vincent's Health is yet to discover if healthcare records were stolen in a cyber attack last Tuesday, but government sources say they believe only a relatively small amount of data was stolen. *Also reported by:* [ABC Online](#), [Channel 10](#), [Radio National](#)
- The **Herald Sun** (page 1) reports 1,500 fans took part in free heart health checks at the Boxing Day Test at the MCG as part of charity the Shane Warne Legacy's drive to test more than 500,000 Australians by the end of 2024. *Also reported by:* [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Courier Mail](#)
- The **Northern Territory News** (page 1) reports the Territory's healthcare sector has seen a 63 per cent rise in violence across 2022-23, with 1,570 assaults perpetrated against healthcare

workers and 598 against patients and their families over the period.

- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 5) reports cancer patients are delaying tests and vital care due to the rising cost of living, while Cancer Council Victoria saw a 50 per cent rise in calls to its free helpline between January and November this year.
- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 6) reports three of ten urgent care clinics opened in Victoria are operating with fluctuating hours due to doctor shortages despite a federal government pledge of a daily 8am to 10 pm service.
- [The Australian](#) (page 8) reports Health Minister Mark Butler has rejected claims the government's shingle vaccine program is failing to meet demand, saying doctors should expect "substantial" supply in January. *Also reported by:* [9News](#)
- The [Adelaide Advertiser](#) (page 11) reports a proposed restructure of South Australia's Public Health Division could hamper the state's ability to combat outbreaks of infectious diseases, whistleblowers say.

MINISTER BUTLER

'No delay' on vax for shingles

The Australian, General News, 26/12/2023, Eleanor Campbell, Page 8

The federal government has denied claims of delays in its \$800m free shingles vaccine rollout, despite some GPs alerting to a lack of supply. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said almost half a million vaccines have been delivered since October, two months after the government announced that five million Australians would be able to access a free dose starting November 1.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Urgent care not open all hours

Herald Sun, General News, 26/12/2023, Jade Gailberger, Page 6

Almost a third of urgent care clinics in Victoria continue to operate at reduced capacity, despite the Albanese government promising they would open between 8am and 10pm daily. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the Carlton clinic would be open for "extended hours seven days a week" to take pressure off the Royal Melbourne Hospital - where one in three presentations is for nonurgent or semi-urgent care.

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

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Mark Butler says DIPG funding 'on the radar' but makes no commitment to desperate families

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 24/12/2023, Cydonee Mardon

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says he is weighing up his options for funding into brain cancer research and clinical trials. After several meetings with devastated parents who have already lost children but are fighting for others, and mums and dads desperate to give their dying children a chance, the minister told The Sunday Telegraph that "the government has this on their radar".

[Read More](#)

Australians left waiting for shingles vaccine after major rollout announced

9News, Other, 24/12/2023, Yashee Sharma

Seniors wanting to receive a free shingles vaccine have been forced to wait due to a lack of supply at GPs. The federal government this year announced the new Shingrix vaccine would be extended to Australians over the age of 65 – about 5 million people – from November. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler rubbished claims there was a shortage in supply.

Channel 9, National Nine News, 26/12/2023, Melissa Downes

Potentially life-saving drugs will become affordable when they're added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme in January. The PBS allows Australians to access crucial medications at a fraction of the price and one of the drugs is Orkambi, used to treat cystic fibrosis. Infants aged just one will be able to access the medication, with research showing that treating patients as young as possible can slow the progression of the disease. Health Minister Mark Butler says about 30 babies and their families will benefit from this new listing of Orkambi.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 7, Seven News (Weekend), 24/12/2023, Blake Johnson

Doctors are slamming the Albanese government over its shingles vaccine rollout, labelling it uncoordinated and disorganised. It comes as five million shingles vaccines were supposed to be available from November, but GPs say they've already run out. Mark Butler, Federal Health Minister, says what he encourages GPs to do is to use the order system that they've have in place.

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Channel 9, National Nine News (Sunday), 24/12/2023, Lizzie Pearl

Seniors wanting to receive a free shingles vaccine have hit a hurdle a lack of supply at their GPs to a new vaccine would be extended to everyone over the age of 65. This despite a Federal Government announcement that access to a new vaccine would be extended to everyone over the age of 65. Mark Butler, Health Minister, says the program was already running for eight weeks but already they have delivered half a million doses of the vaccine with almost half a million due to be delivered in January alone.

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Channel 9, Today on Sunday, 24/12/2023, Lara Vella and Gavin Morris

A fresh vaccine fight is brewing between GPs and the Federal Government over the supply of the free shingles jab. It comes as five million Australians over 65yos and with compromised immune systems were promised access to a free shingles vaccine from 1 November, but many are struggling to find an appointment because GPs are having to ration supplies of the shots. Health Minister Mark Butler insists there is no supply shortage, claiming the rollout is proceeding as planned.

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5CC, 08:00 Regional News, 26/12/2023

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler is confident Australia's free shingles vaccine rollout is running on schedule, despite GPs claiming there aren't enough doses. Butler says more than half a million Shingrix jabs have already been delivered, and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of vaccines have been ordered.

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[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER WELLS

Channel 10, The Project, 26/12/2023, Waleed Aly and Georgie Tunny

Report on the residents of Feros Village in Byron Bay standing their ground, fighting eviction. It comes after Feros Care announced plans to close its Bay aged care village in February. According to Feros Care, it had no option but to close the village because it could not meet the higher government requirements for residential aged care. Federal Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells said the government is not forcing the village to close and it is a business decision taken by Pharos Care.

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

DEPARTMENT

All's not well in our world of words

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 26/12/2023, Joanne Anderson, Page 33

Our language still overflows with words that use 'ing'. Let's keep it that way. I want my "ing" back. It doesn't have to come beautifully wrapped with a bow on top, I but those who took it need to hand it over unharmed. [...] The federal Department of Health and Aged Care unashamedly offers "wait time information" for home care packages.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [The Age \(Online\)](#).

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CORONAVIRUS

Disease again raises its head

Hobart Mercury, General News, 26/12/2023, Tia Ewen, Page 8

In a time of festive celebrations with loved ones, sharing food and bonbons, medical professionals are reminding Tasmanians to take precautions and stay safe from Covid. "The message is really unchanged. If you're crook stay at home, if you're crook get tested, if you're crook don't visit elderly family and friends," Australian Medical Association Tasmania president and GP Dr John Saul said.

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

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COVID-19 variant JN.1 is now the leading cause of infections in the US. Here's what you need to know

9News, Other, 26/12/2023

Earlier this week, the variant was already dominant in the region, causing about a third of new infections at the time. Globally, JN.1 continues to be reported in multiple countries, and its prevalence has been rapidly increasing. The World Health Organisation named it a variant of interest on Tuesday because of its "rapidly increasing spread" but noted that the additional public health risk remains low.

[Read More](#)

For those with health vulnerabilities, keeping safe from COVID-19 this Christmas is as important as it was last year

ABC Online, Other, 24/12/2023, Harvey Biggs and Amelia Walters

For many Australians, COVID-19 is not crossing their minds this Christmas, but for others, it is still a time to take the highest precautions. This week, various states throughout Australia have reported an increase in COVID hospitalisations, with chair of epidemiology at Deakin University Catherine Bennett telling the ABC the trajectory of the current wave was unclear

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[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

How to have 'that' talk about aged care

Canberra Times, Business News, 27/12/2023, Rachel Lane, Page 32

I often refer to this time of year as "aged care season". It's a time when families have come together, maybe for the first time since last Christmas, and notice that Mum or Dad (or both) need care. Quickly the conversation over lunch turns into a discussion about "what are we going to do to help Mum?" So, if you are faced with navigating aged care for a loved one this festive season, here's my top tips for getting it right.

Also reported by: [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Ballarat\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Warrnambool\)](#).

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Remaining elderly Byron Feros residents to stay on

Echo NetDaily, Other, 26/12/2023, David Lowe

Queensland's new Premier Steven Miles has arrived in the big chair at a dramatic time. One week into the job, he's already faced one of the worst natural disasters in the state's history, and taken on the fossil fuel industry. The bloke clearly doesn't lack guts, or ambition. The eight remaining residents will remain at Feros Village Byron Bay after it closes on January 29, 2024, with the Department of Health and Aged Care taking on responsibility for their care.

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Isolated Balwyn senior finds connection through visitor scheme

The Senior, Other, 25/12/2023, Rowan Cowley

Apart from her twice weekly visits to Balwyn Evergreen Centre, 82-year-old Jill Butler doesn't spend much time in the company of others. That is all set to change, with the centre signing on to take part in the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme. The federal government scheme aims to reduce social isolation by connecting older Australians with trained volunteers, providing connection and support.

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[Back to Top](#)

POPULATION HEALTH

Ambos' warning on locked cars

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 27/12/2023, Page 2

Ambulance Victoria is urging Sunraysia residents to never leave children or elderly people in hot cars after Mildura ranked equal fifth in the state for ambulance callouts. Victorian paramedics responded to more than 310 reports of people locked in cars in the past three months and a total of 1240 similar callouts from December 1 2022 to November 30 this year.

Similar coverage reported by: [Sunraysia Daily \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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New book How to Stay Healthy argues man flu is real because female immune system is stronger

West Australian, Other, 26/12/2023, John Naish

The amount of COVID detected in Perth's wastewater has reached its highest level in 12 months. This means the traditional family jibes about men who take to their beds complaining of debilitating symptoms while similarly affected women soldier on with work, chores and childcare will probably reach their highest level too.

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Why does alcohol make my poo go weird?

The Guardian, Other, 26/12/2023, Vincent Ho

As we enter the festive season it's a good time to think about what all those celebratory alcoholic drinks can do to your gut. Alcohol can interfere with the time it takes for food to go through your gut (also known as the "transit time"). In particular, it can affect the muscles of the stomach and the small bowel (also known as the small intestine).

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Aussie paramedic's warning about garden hoses everyone needs to know: 'This is scary'

7news.com.au, Other, 26/12/2023, Cindy Tran

A former paramedic has warned parents about the dangers of using a garden hose over summer — after a baby boy suffered serious burns from scalding hot water. Nikki Jurcutz, a paramedic for eight years with Ambulance Victoria, explained how the water inside a hose can heat up quickly between 55C and 60C under the scorching sunlight when not running.

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Fed up to the back teeth: rural dental divide revealed

Canberra Times, Other, 24/12/2023, Stephanie Gardiner

Nicole Stormon gave a little boy a superhero-themed electric toothbrush to encourage him to clean his teeth. "The next day I excitedly went to him and said, 'How did you go with your Spiderman toothbrush?'" Dr Stormon told a Senate inquiry into access to dental care earlier this year. "He said, 'I gave it to my younger brother because my teeth are rotten, but he has a chance'."

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Expect the same old Territory from this new Chief Minister

The Australian, General News, 27/12/2023, Kylie Stevenson, Page 9

Last month, Northern Territory Treasurer and education minister Eva Lawler was booted during parliamentary sittings by a Labor colleague following an angry outburst that one member referred to as "unhinged". [...] The Northern Territory leads the country in rates of domestic violence, homelessness, alcohol abuse and incarceration. It has more heart disease, diabetes and kidney disease than anywhere else in Australia, and subsequently the lowest life expectancy.

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Howzat for a heads-up

Herald Sun, General News, 27/12/2023, Carly Douglas and Edward Bourke, Page 1

Rail, hail and shine, nothing was going to stop diehard fans paying a lasting tribute to Shane Warne at the Boxing Day Test. Standing proud on Tuesday on the second level of the MCG members' area were his biggest fans of all. And as they waved their Shane Warne Legacy floppy hats at 3.50pm, the spin

king's children Jackson, Brooke and Summer saluted not just the legend who wore baggy green No.350, but also the cricket lovers who had joined them in helping build a new tradition.

Similar coverage reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#)

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Costly cancer 'whammy'

Herald Sun, General News, 27/12/2023, Sarah Booth, Page 5

Cancer patients are delaying important tests and foregoing essentials to cover the cost of their illnesses as the state's peak cancer body copes with record demand. Cancer Council Victoria figures show calls to its free helpline, 13 11 20, skyrocketed this year, jumping more than 50 per cent on the same period, January to November, last year.

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Heartfelt thanks for our boy's gift of life

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 26/12/2023, Brad Crouch, Page 7

Little David Glass and his family will spend Boxing Day giving thanks for his gift of life. David's parents, Liam and Cindy, say their son - now a healthy, happy seven-year-old - would not be alive if he had not received a heart transplant four years ago. Now, they have founded the Run for Hope - a fun run that takes place along the Esplanade between Noarlunga and Moana from 8am on Boxing Day - to pay tribute to donors and their life-giving legacy.

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

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Hot cross buns for a good cause? Hop to it!

Daily Telegraph, General News, 26/12/2023, Catherine Nikas-Boulos, Page 25

The Christmas lights are still up and Easter is still months away but that hasn't stopped Coles from rolling out hot cross buns on Boxing Day. Last year, more than 2.5 million hot cross buns were sold before New Year's Day had ticked over. Coles is hoping to repeat those sales figures with 20c donated to children's cancer charity Redkite from the sale of every six and nine-pack of Colesbrand hot cross buns until January 2.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#)

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Are medical stocks facing a massive sugar hit?

West Australian, Business News, 27/12/2023, Christina Berk, Page 42

For many struggling with obesity, new medications have been "a gift", as Oprah Winfrey recently described it in declaring she was "done with the shaming". Investors in drug manufacturers Novo Nordisk and Eli Lilly might use the same term for the returns they've realised over the past year. US-listed shares of Novo Nordisk, the maker of Ozempic and Wegovy, have climbed nearly 52 per cent this year, while Lilly's have gained 56 per cent over the same period.

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How 'little white lie' helped beat cancer

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 27/12/2023, Nadine Morton, Page 33

Tristan Knowles is a numbers guy and in his life there's been some pretty hard numbers to take. At nine years old he was diagnosed with bone cancer in his left leg and was given a 70 per cent chance of surviving. He had 10 courses of chemotherapy and an above the knee leg amputation. At 12 his cancer returned, this time to his lung. He had a lung lobectomy and 12 bouts of chemotherapy.

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How a little-known sport changed Jessi's life when she was diagnosed with a neurological disorder

ABC Online, Other, 26/12/2023, Elizabeth Wright

Jessi Hooper is so dedicated to boccia that she has gone without food to make sure she can afford to play. Boccia is a mix between bocce and lawn bowls and is the fastest growing Paralympic sport globally. Created for people with cerebral palsy, the sport is now also played by people with disabilities that affect motor skills.

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Indi was told she was lying about her pain by more than 30 doctors. Then a 6cm cyst burst, revealing endometriosis

7news.com.au, Other, 25/12/2023, Jacqueline Mey

Indi has endometriosis. More than 30 doctors told her she was 'lying' about her pain. With warm water spilling down her back, Indi Woollard stood hunched over in the shower, screaming and crying in agony. Her mum stood helplessly in the bathroom knowing exactly the cause of her daughter's excruciating pain — endometriosis.

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Australians urged to practice sun safety this summer, with more than 400,000 people diagnosed with skin cancer each year

ABC Online, Other, 24/12/2023

Emily Hayes can vividly remember what it was like being told she had melanoma. Last year Emily Hayes received a phone call that made her think her life was over. [...] Professor Anne Cust is the chair of Cancer Council's national skin cancer committee.

Similar coverage reported by: [Border Watch \(Online\)](#), [ABC News \(Sydney\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

Proposed VAD laws 'unclear'

The Australian, General News, 27/12/2023, Ellie Dudley, Page 1

The ACT is not being clear enough in sections of its controversial voluntary assisted dying laws and is failing to include "vital" safeguards to protect patients, Australia's peak body for lawyers says. However, the Australian Lawyers Alliance has backed a provision permitting nurses to participate in the voluntary assisted dying scheme, on the condition that they are "suitably qualified" to do so.

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

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St Vincent's clueless if private data was stolen

The Australian, General News, 26/12/2023, Jess Malcolm and Greg Brown, Page 1

One of Australia's largest health networks has no idea whether hackers stole private medical data almost a week after a significant cyber attack on its hospitals. St Vincent's Health on Monday confirmed it did not know whether sensitive health records had been taken, sparking concern the organisation had failed in its duty to protect sensitive patient information. [...] Australian Medical Association president Steve Robson said the hack underscored the need for hospitals to be "great custodians of patient data".

Similar coverage reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Perth\)](#), [Radio National \(Canberra\)](#).

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Red tape delays medical donations

The Australian, Business News, 26/12/2023, Jared Lynch, Page 19

Medical supplies donated from Australian skin graft-focused biotech Polynovo were held in customs for three weeks while the Israeli government attempted to charge "tens of thousands of dollars" in value-added tax. The products developed in Port Melbourne involve a foam used to treat burns and other wounds that disappears within four weeks, regenerating skin.

Big takeover compo bill

Canberra Times, General News, 26/12/2023, Lucy Bladen, Page 1

Calvary has already been paid \$23 million in compensation by the ACT government following the takeover of its Bruce public hospital but the final amount is expected to be far greater. The territory government is still negotiating with the Catholic health care organisation about the final costs from July's compulsory acquisition. The organisation has put in several payout claims to the government around the acquisition but neither the government or Calvary will reveal what these are.

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Channel 9 Darwin, National Nine News, 26/12/2023, Paul Murphy

Some cardiac patients may not need to travel interstate for imaging, thanks to a CT scanner at Darwin Private Hospital. The technology has been utilised for almost a year now, helping more than 1300 patients. The scanner reduces radiation by around 60%, benefiting both young and elderly patients. The advancement promises improved outcomes for cardiac patients.

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6PR, Mornings, 26/12/2023, Gary Adshead

Interview with Michael Page, WA President, Australian Medical Association, regarding the AMA teaming up with the state trauma unit surgeons at Royal Perth Hospital to advocate for safety around the use of e-scooters because they appear to be one of those products that people just ignore the risk factors associated with them. Adshead says the more e-scooters there are on the streets, it appears to correlate with, the more e-scooter riders that end up in surgery. Page says about 12 people per week are admitted to the trauma unit at RPH with a whole range of injuries related to eRideable use.

Interview continues on: [6PR \(Perth\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Christmas wellbeing and support

Shepparton News Online, Other, 24/12/2023

The Deniliquin Mental Health Awareness Group (Deni MHAG) continues its digital and poster campaign, with a focus on raising awareness of confidential and free helplines. Whilst the funding for this initiative is concluding, the resources that have been produced and the website information remains for anyone to access 'anywhere, anytime'.

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[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

Christmas joy

Hobart Mercury, General News, 27/12/2023, Amber Wilson, Page 1

Come December 25 next year, South Hobart couple Camila Castro and Julian Munoz won't be putting up any Christmas trees or singing carols. Instead, they'll be placing a single candle in the centre of a cake to celebrate the first birthday of their Christmas babe, Bella Francesca. Mr Munoz said the couple had been expecting their first baby - who they were certain was going to be a boy - on December 22.

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NT bubs born in a rush

The miracle of childbirth can be a lengthy process. But sometimes it can happen so fast you don't have time to get out of the car. For 11 Territory families that was exactly the case this year and St John NT emergency medical dispatchers had to help coach the births over the phone.

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Tennant Creek nurse in national role

Northern Territory News, General News, 26/12/2023, Sierra Haigh, Page 33

The nation's peak remote health body has appointed a Tennant Creek nurse as its chair. John Wright has served on the CRANAplus board since 2005 but was promoted to the chair role thanks to his "commitment to remote health". CRANAplus chief executive Linda Kensington said Mr Wright who works as a nurse education and research co-ordinator in Tennant Creek Hospital brought a wealth of governance experience to the role.

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

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Brutal reality of Australia's cost-of-living crisis: Nurse reveals how her bills kept her separated from her family this Christmas

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 25/12/2023, Stephen Johnson

Storm Doncon, an agency nurse in Brisbane, spends \$220 a week living in a share house and another \$70 on petrol driving to hospitals and nursing homes for work. For helping those in need when permanent nursing staff are in short supply, those expenses account for more than a third of her \$832 weekly pay after tax. As a 28-year-old casual worker who recently graduated from Queensland University of Technology, her \$50,000 salary before tax isn't much more than the \$45,906 full-time minimum wage.

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William Foon: Launceston boy was among the ten smallest preterm babies ever delivered in Tasmania

The Mercury, Other, 24/12/2023, Rob Inglis

Weighing just 452g at birth, William Foon's chances of survival were considered slim – but the little warrior has defied the odds and is now "thriving" according to his overjoyed mum. Weighing just 452g at birth, William Foon's chances of survival were considered slim – but the little warrior has defied the odds and is now "thriving" according to his overjoyed mum Zoe Reynolds.

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[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

No spots for health staff

Daily Telegraph, General News, 26/12/2023, James O'Doherty, Page 25

Healthcare workers will need to start paying to park at Sydney hospitals from February after the Minns government quietly scrapped a Covid-era free-parking initiative put in place to encourage staff to avoid public transport. The Minns government said the free scheme had to come to an end at some point but now union bosses have argued it is going to make retaining health staff an even bigger problem.

Similar coverage reported by: [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [2CC \(Canberra\)](#).

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Spike in hospital assaults

Northern Territory News, General News, 26/12/2023, Zizi Averill, Page 1

Six Territorians are assaulted every day within the healthcare system as a 'staggering' wave of violence continues to impact doctors, nurses and patients. The NT Health Minister has revealed disturbing assault statistics within the Territory's hospitals and health clinics, with a 63 per cent increase in violence in just 12 months.

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Bendigo Health's junior doctors among best in nation

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 26/12/2023, Ben Loughran, Page 3

It's confirmed. Patients attending Bendigo hospital will be in the hands of some of the best junior doctors in the country. Bendigo Health staff have passed a series of high performance exams with flying colours, boasting some of the best pass rates in Australia. The health provider's emergency department run an education pathway - the fellowship exams - that supports junior doctors in their training to become consultants.

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The paramedics who took on govt

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 26/12/2023, Kate Mcilwain, Page 12

Watching Tess Oxley shout into a megaphone in front of hundreds of other paramedics at a rally outside parliament, you wouldn't know she's terrified of public speaking. "I absolutely hate it, I get so nervous," the Bellambi resident said. "But someone has to say yes." That approach - saying yes - is how the paramedic of 13 years, who works in Campbelltown, got to be a senior delegate for the Ambulance Division of the Health Service Union (HSU) which just won its members a historic pay rise from the NSW Government.

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[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Ozempic maker supersedes

West Australian, Business News, 26/12/2023, Page 53

Novo Nordisk, the Danish manufacturer of blockbuster obesity drugs Ozempic and Wegovy, is planning a "mega manufacturing facility" outside of Dublin in a bid to keep up with soaring demand. The pharmaceutical giant has applied to build a campus covering 147,192sqm that would create up to 1100 jobs in the region.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

'Really, really important': the donor registry in desperate need

Canberra Times, Other, 24/12/2023, Lucy Bladen

Courtney Hughes normally has a "typical Aussie Christmas" at her family's farm on the far South Coast. "Big family, lots of food, outdoor cricket, we throw floaties in the dam," she said. But this Christmas will be different. It will be in the cancer ward at Canberra Hospital. "I'd do anything to be home but I can't be silly. I've got to put my trust in the doctors," Ms Hughes said.

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[Back to Top](#)

SPORT

Near collision and a broken sprit: wild start as yachts head strait into the storm

The Australian, Edition Changes - All-round Metro, 27/12/2023, Noah Yim and Amanda Lulham, Page 1

It began with a near collision in Sydney Harbour and ended hours later at sea with a broken sprit. Scallywag, one of the Sydney Hobart race's leading contenders was forced to withdraw on Tuesday night as the rest of the fleet headed for some of the most unpredictable weather the nation's most famous boat race has seen in years.

Similar coverage reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Sydney\)](#).

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Gambling giant signing club deals

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 27/12/2023, Paul Sakkal, Page 1

Betting giant Tabcorp has been signing sponsorship deals with NRL and AFL clubs despite the firm's boss saying this year that gambling advertising had "gone too far". As a growing number of MPs spoke in favour of an all-out advertising ban, the bookmaker this month inked deals with the Brisbane Broncos and Parramatta Eels.

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Athletes ready for fast lane

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 27/12/2023, Dasha Havrilenko, Page 1

One of Australia's most prestigious foot races, The Bay Sheffield, is on again over the next two days. The event in its 137th year will include about 390 athletes, ranging in age from eight to 75. The main events the 120m men's and women's races are on Thursday, with the winners each receiving \$10,000. SA Athletic League president Kym Steer said Glenelg's Colley Reserve made the event unique.

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Captain Cummins goes in to bat for Khawaja's stance

The Australian, General News, 26/12/2023, Page 1

Pat Cummins has thrown his and his side's support behind Usman Khawaja, saying the player's planned human rights protest was harmless and no different from others permitted by the ICC. The Australian revealed on Sunday the game's head body had blocked Khawaja's bid to have a dove of peace on his bat.

Similar coverage reported by: [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#).

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MCG security boss stood down

The Australian, General News, 26/12/2023, Rachel Baxendale, Page 4

The man in charge of security at the Melbourne Cricket Ground has been forced to resign just days before the Boxing Day Test, after being accused of behaving inappropriately at a staff Christmas party. Former special operations group policeman, detective and police trainer Mark Oxnam had been executive manager of "security and precinct" at the MCG since January 2022, having begun at the stadium as security operations manager in late 2017.

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Coast 'in the ring' to become combat capital

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 26/12/2023, Andrew Potts, Page 1

Leading promoters are in talks with city leaders to bring the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) and Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) blockbusters to the Gold Coast. The dream of becoming the Las Vegas boxing-style capital of the Pacific is one step closer, with Mayor Tom Tate revealing he has held talks with key boxing figures about bringing some of the world's biggest fight events to the city.

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Significant need for court development

Shepparton News, General News, 26/12/2023, Jay Bryce, Page 4

Basketball Victoria believes Shepparton deserves a better stadium. The organisation is the state's peak basketball body and assists in servicing leagues, teams and players across Melbourne and regional Victoria. It also assists in running the Country Basketball League and the Big V league, where the Shepparton Gators are the reigning premiers of division one.

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Anger at Fifa for its Women's World Cup tax exemption when players had to pay

The Guardian, Other, 26/12/2023, Osasu Obayiuwana

Fifa has been heavily criticised for negotiating an eight-and-a-half-year tax exemption for the 2023 Women's World Cup when the players in Australia ended up paying 32.5% of their match fee income to the country's tax office (ATO). Football's world governing body is exempt from paying tax on any income in or from Australia from 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2028 but, as the Guardian revealed last month, players from several countries were forced to pay almost a third of their match fee income to the ATO.

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[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Athletes at risk of heart genetics

The Australian, General News, 26/12/2023, Elise Kaine, Page 3

The genes that make someone a superstar could also be their Achilles heel according to the lead author of a landmark study that shows for the first time the role genetics play in the differences in elite athlete hearts and the general population. "We have long known that elite athletes have very different hearts to the general population," Andre La Gerche said.

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University program takes walk on wild side

Newcastle Herald, General News, 26/12/2023, Josh Leeson, Page 12

Could the secret to creating a new style of beer, or even uncovering a life-saving medication or a way to produce food more sustainably, be growing unknown to us in the Hunter? A trans-disciplinary team at the University of Newcastle is investigating how native wild yeast could be used to turbocharge new bio-technology industries.

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Channel 9, National Nine News, 25/12/2023, Jayne Azzopardi

Staying mobile and independent is a crucial goal for people with Parkinson's disease, especially when their symptoms take hold. Now there is promise in a new device and researchers have just received Federal Government funding to develop it.

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[Back to Top](#)

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Painting a better picture for Indigenous kids

The Australian, General News, 27/12/2023, Paige Taylor, Page 5

It is more than a playgroup but not yet school. Indigenous women in the Gulf of Carpentaria are improving the health and prospects of the community's youngest children in a program of daily learning and play. Young children in Borroloola, considered the fifth-most disadvantaged community in Australia, are defying a worrying downward trend in Closing the Gap data.

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

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Aboriginal inmate dies in Casuarina cell

West Australian, General News, 27/12/2023, Rebecca Le May, Page 10

An Aboriginal inmate has died in his cell in the infirmary at the maximum-security Casuarina Prison. The Department of Justice said the 46-year-old man was found unresponsive about mid-afternoon on Christmas Day. He was declared dead at the site after staff, then paramedics, gave him first aid.

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Cash to help rough sleepers

Northern Territory News, General News, 26/12/2023, Bethany Griffiths, Page 33

A new partnership between a Central Australian Indigenous organisation and the government is hoping to increase services for people sleeping rough in Alice Springs. The Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation will receive \$720,000 over two years to deliver outreach services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

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A gift for Mparntwe children

Northern Territory News, General News, 26/12/2023, Zizi Averill, Page 33

The cycles of poverty and inequality that have weighed down Central Australian kids could be addressed as the government releases the second ever Mparntwe-Alice Springs Youth Action Plan. New Youth Minister Ngaree Ah Kit released the latest seven-point priority list to improve the lives of Mparntwe kids on Christmas Eve, two years after the region's last plan expired in 2021.

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[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Disease control 'chaos'

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 27/12/2023, Andrew Hough, Page 11

South Australia's ability to fight infectious diseases is being undermined by sweeping proposed SA Health cuts and internal "chaos", whistleblowers claim. The Public Health Division is fighting an influx of diseases across the state including a tuberculosis outbreak, surging sexually transmitted infections especially escalating syphilis cases and vaping spikes.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#).

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Call to close legal loophole for engineered stone victims

Canberra Times, General News, 27/12/2023, Damon Cronshaw, Page 6

A gap in the law must be closed for victims of silica-induced health conditions caused by engineered stone, a Newcastle lawyer says. Liam Kelly, of Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, said many victims of the

stone scandal suffer from autoimmune conditions. Silicosis, an incurable lung disease, is the most common condition linked to the silica dust produced when engineered stone is cut and drilled.

Similar coverage reported by: [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Sydney\)](#), [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#).

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In Covid's wake, older enemies return to battle

Daily Telegraph, General News, 26/12/2023, Gary Grohmann and Robert Booy, Page 57

During a pandemic, lockdown restrictions and public health measures are often implemented as a first step, as we did for Covid. This halts respiratory pandemic agents but it also impedes other common infections. This may then cause a drop in general immunity to these agents, especially in children.

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Warning for those hitting the water these summer holidays

Ballarat Courier, General News, 26/12/2023, Melanie Whelan, Page 8

If you are planning to hit the pool these holidays, the call is to make sure you shower first. Victoria's chief health officer Clare Looker is warning anyone who has felt ill or had diarrhoea in the past fortnight to stay away from swimming due to an infectious spread of gastroenteritis strain cryptosporidiosis across the state.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 26/12/2023, Mike Amor

An entire town in Vic's north is facing days without clean drinking water after a major contamination scare. Emergency supplies are being shipped in to help Elmore locals as health authorities scramble to work out what went wrong. The contamination risk is caused by a loss of pressure in the pipes and it is preventing people from drinking tap water, brushing their teeth and washing food.

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Channel 7, Sunrise, 26/12/2023, Edwina Bartholomew, Sally Bowrey, Katie Brown and Mark Beretta

Interview with Professor Paul Griffin, Director of Infectious Diseases, on experts saying that winter months in the northern hemisphere and the return of international travel have accelerated the transmission of new viruses, creating a contagious holiday season down under. RSV, human parainfluenza, new strains of COVID-19 and the common cold have all been recorded, as well as a rise in whooping cough. Griffin says it's good to try and protect yourself against all viruses and try and use the measures we have to reduce that risk as much as possible but right now, COVID is still the virus they are most concerned about.

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[Back to Top](#)

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Pain body's 'flawed' report under fire

Age, General News, 27/12/2023, Liam Mannix, Page 13

A leading pain physician has resigned from the board of Australia's peak pain body after it published a report on the benefits of spinal cord stimulators paid for by a group with links to manufacturers of the devices. The group also supplied nearly all the patients for the study. [...] But an investigation by The Age last year revealed 520 serious complications had been reported to the Therapeutic Goods Administration, leaving some people incontinent or unable to walk.

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A look at 2023's health stories

Shepparton News Online, Other, 26/12/2023, Nicola Ceccato

From new health hubs and clinics to some of the Goulburn Valley's biggest fundraising health events — it's been a big year for health in the region. [...] In early September, Cannatrek received Good Manufacturing Practice accreditation from the Therapeutic Goods Administration for its \$5 million processing facility in Shepparton.

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Suspended pharmacist linked to Bombers scandal found dead amid watchdog probe

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 24/12/2023, David Estcourt and Cameron Houston

A compounding pharmacist who played a key role in the Essendon peptides scandal has been found dead, months after being suspended by the medical industry watchdog and following a claim he made about being the victim of a \$50,000 extortion attempt. [...] Under an exemption in the Therapeutic Goods Act, compounding pharmacists can legally compound substances that are not Therapeutic Goods Administration-approved – such as thymosin variants and other peptides – for patients with a doctor's script.

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[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

Listed marijuana company calls in administrators

The Australian, Business News, 26/12/2023, Duncan Evans, Page 19

Board warfare and allegations of financial impropriety have erupted at marijuana business Epsilon Healthcare, putting at risk 25 jobs and the largest medicinal cannabis manufacturing facility in the southern hemisphere. Epsilon announced on December 17 that it had appointed administrators Ian Purchas and Hugh Armenis from SV Partners to take control of the company and conduct an "urgent assessment of the company's business operations and financial affairs".

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Kids in care over drugs

Herald Sun, General News, 27/12/2023, Page 9

There are high rates of involvement of child protection services and child removal to out-of-homecare among parents who inject drugs, a study shows. Research by the Burnet Institute, Monash University, Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney, National Drug Research Institute and Curtin University found women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, parents who have experienced assault, parents of multiple children and parents who were removed as children were also at higher risk of having a child removed.

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Cocaine-mad Sydney celebrates the washing up of bricks of coke on the city's beaches on Christmas like it's a Powerball win

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 25/12/2023, Freddy Pawle and Eliza Mcphee

NSW residents have cheekily welcomed the arrival of bricks of cocaine that have washed up on beaches along the east coast. The first tightly sealed brick appeared at Magenta Beach, on the state's Central Coast, at about 8pm on Friday. Police arrived at the scene and sent the package for testing where initial results indicated cocaine. Further searches along the coast on Saturday uncovered six more packages on beaches stretching from Newcastle to Sydney including at Manly Beach, Avoca Beach and Blacksmiths Beach.

Similar coverage reported by: [The Guardian \(Online\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

FOOD STANDARDS

Be safe, not sorry this festive period

Newcastle Herald, General News, 27/12/2023, Page 20

NSW Health has shared some timely advice regarding storing and eating food over the festive period. In a nutshell, eating cooked food beyond its use-by date can lead to food poisoning. You should keep refrigerated leftovers for no more than three days. To keep your leftovers safe, remember to put any food that needs to be kept cold in the fridge straight away; keep your fridge temperature below 5 degrees; reheat foods to at least 60 degrees Celsius, until they're steaming hot; and avoid eating food that's meant to be in the fridge if it's been left out for more than four hours.

Similar coverage reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

AICIS

Victorian health authorities say Elmore water no longer safe after treatment plant breakdown

Gold Coast Bulletin, Other, 26/12/2023, Duncan Evans

A concerning new study may have you second-guessing what's in your tap water. The U.S. Geological Survey says drinking water from roughly half of all faucets nationwide likely contains P-FAS, also known as forever chemicals. The synthetic compounds are near impossible to break down. They've been widely used in many non-stick cooking products, various food packaging, clothing, and more.

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[Back to Top](#)

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