



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 1st February 2024

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister Wells](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#)
| [Assistant Minister Kearney](#) | [Assistant Minister McCarthy](#) | [Department](#)
| [Coronavirus](#) | [Ageing and Aged Care](#) | [Population Health](#)
| [Cancer, Hearing and Chronic Conditions](#) | [Primary Care](#)
| [Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](#) | [Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office](#)
| [Health Workforce](#) | [Technology Assessment and Access](#)
| [Medicare Benefits and Digital Health](#) | [Benefits Integrity](#)
| [Health Systems Strategies](#) | [Sport](#) | [Health Economics and Research](#) |
[First Nations Health](#) | [Office of Health Protection and Emergency Management](#)
| [Therapeutic Goods Administration](#) | [Office for Drug Control](#) | [Food Standards](#)
| [AICIS](#)

LINKS

[Click here to view full print articles in this report](#)

[Click here to view front pages of today's newspapers](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports primary health care services have been labelled "in crisis" following the release of the Productivity Commission's latest report on Government Services, which revealed nationwide ambulance and emergency department delays and widening gap fees for bulk-billing GPs.
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports community sports participants will be sidelined for at least 21 days after suffering sport-related concussions under new Youth and Community Sport guidelines released by the Australian Institute of Sport. *Also reported by:* [Sydney Morning Herald](#), [Daily Telegraph](#), [Herald Sun](#), [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Courier Mail](#), [Hobart Mercury](#).
- The **[Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 1) reports South Australia's ambulance response time has improved more than any other jurisdiction in the past year, but the state is still experiencing high wait times for GPs and aged care assessments, the latest Productivity Commission report into Government Services has found.
- The **[Courier Mail](#)** (page 1) reports Queensland ambulance services remain on par with, or better than, other Australian states, but wait times have risen to more than 25 minutes for more

than 90 per cent of cases thanks to a rising number of callouts, the latest Productivity Commission report into Government Services has found.

- The **Courier Mail** (page 1) reports Queensland saw a decline in deaths by suicide across 2023 following a federal and state boost in funding for mental health care services, new data has shown. *Also reported by:* [Townsville Bulletin](#), [Courier Mail](#)
- The **West Australian** (page 3) reports nearly 90 per cent of West Australia's vape stores are within one kilometre of a school, while the number of stores has more than doubled since 2019, new research by the University of Notre Dame Australia has found. *Also reported by:* [Hobart Mercury](#)
- **The Age** (page 4) reports researchers are urging GPs to better follow up on the health of new mothers after new data showed half of women diagnosed with diabetes in pregnancy are not being tested for heart disease or diabetes type 2 after giving birth, despite being more at risk from both. *Also reported by:* [Sydney Morning Herald](#)
- The **West Australian** (page 5) reports WA has reported the lowest number of nurses and midwives per capita in Australia for the seventh consecutive year, new data from the Productivity Commission has shown, as the state struggles to grow its healthcare workforce.
- The **Sydney Morning Herald** (page 9) reports national GP bulk-billing rates have risen 2.1 per cent - the first rise since 2020 - new government data has shown, representing an additional 360,000 Medicare-funded GP visits, with the bulk occurring in regional areas. *Also reported by:* [The Age](#), [Canberra Times](#), [Herald Sun](#), [Courier Mail](#), [ABC Online](#)

MINISTER BUTLER

Call a doctor . for the health system

The Australian, General News, 01/02/2024, Natasha Robinson, Page 1

Ambulances are taking as long as 55 minutes to reach the most urgent cases in one state and the number of people who cannot afford to see a doctor has doubled nationally in the past year, as new figures reveal a rapidly escalating crisis in the health system. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler is set to emphasise Labor's credentials on Medicare at a Deakin University Forum speech on Thursday, blaming previous Liberal governments for the years-long bulk billing freeze.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

GP bulk-billing rates increase after incentives

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 01/02/2024, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 9

Thousands more Australians have been able to see their GP without paying hefty fees since the Albanese government tripled the financial incentives for doctors to bulkbill their patients last November. [...] That information will indicate whether Health Minister Mark Butler's changes have succeeded in bringing down GP costs for nonconcession patients, whom he suggested were being charged higher gap fees to subsidise the bulkbilled GP visits of more vulnerable people.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Bulk-bill visits up slightly

Herald Sun, General News, 01/02/2024, Jade Gailberger, Page 5

GP bulk-billing rates in Victoria have had the lowest increase in the country despite the federal government tripling the incentive last year. New figures show the proportion of all GP consultations that are bulk-billed increased 1.5 per cent to 78.3 per cent. [...] But Health Minister Mark Butler said bulk-billing rates had increased 4.7 per cent, or by an extra 60,000 visits, in regional Victoria.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

'Game changer' to bulk billing

The federal government's changes to the bulk billing incentive have been spruiked as a "game-changer" by the Health Minister, as the Labor government celebrates 40 years since the introduction of Medicare. It has been estimated Australians have saved about \$15m in GP gap fees in November and December since the incentive was tripled, with rural and regional Australians predicted to have benefited the most. Queensland saw a slight bump in the bulk Mark Butler billing rate since the changes were made, rising from 73.6 per cent in October to 75.8 per cent in December a 2.2 per cent uplift.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Closing clinic set to reopen

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/02/2024, Simon Mcguire, Page 17

The East Devonport Medical Centre is set to be reopened in two months. The medical centre is closing on Friday after its owner, Better Medical, decided to merge with SmartClinics Devonport. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler previously said the decision to close the East Devonport Medical Centre was one made by the provider.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

40 years of looking after us

West Australian, General News, 01/02/2024, Bill Shorten, Page 38

In 1974, then-social security minister in the Whitlam government, the late Bill Hayden, gave a speech at the Fitzroy Town Hall. Mr Hayden made the bold and true statement, that if a society is to have economic justice, equal opportunity and continued prosperity, then it must have social security. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said this week: "It was a Labor government that built Medicare and it is only a Labor Government who will continue to protect and strengthen Medicare."

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Bulk-billing rates on mend after medicine

Newcastle Herald, General News, 01/02/2024, Damon Cronshaw, Page 1

The Albanese government has estimated 10,800 additional trips to the GP were bulk-billed in the Hunter in November and December, since it tripled the bulk-billing incentive. [...] A spokesman for Health Minister Mark Butler said the figures referred to the proportion of "all GP visits and consults" that were bulkbilled.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Aussies saved an estimated \$15m in GP gap fees after tripling of the bulk bill incentive

The Australian, Other, 31/01/2024, Ellen Ransley and Courtney Gould

Aussies have saved an estimated \$15m in out-of-pocket fees on their visits to the doctor, according to fresh data. Picture: NCA NewsWire / Martin Ollman Aussies have saved an estimated \$15m in out-of-pocket fees on their visits to the doctor, according to fresh data. [...] The data, released by Health Minister Mark Butler on Thursday, coincides with the 40th anniversary of Medicare and comes as the government seeks to wedge the Coalition on the cost-of-living.

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

[Read More](#)

Patients put off GP visits despite bulk billing changes

Canberra Times, Other, 01/02/2024, Andrew Brown

Patients are increasingly holding off seeing a GP due to the cost of appointments, despite more clinics offering bulk billing. As government data from November showed a 2.1 percentage point rise in the national GP bulk billing rate, a Productivity Commission report revealed the number of people delaying

an appointment or not attending at all due to price had doubled. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the extra financial incentives were making a difference for clinics and patients.

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

[Read More](#)

University of Notre Dame Australia study reveals nine in 10 vape shops found less than 1km from schools

West Australian, Other, 31/01/2024, Bethany Hiatt

Almost 90 per cent of the vape stores that have proliferated across Perth are less than 1km from a school — exposing children to rampant e-cigarette marketing and normalising their usage — an alarming WA study has revealed. [...] "We strongly support the proposed vaping reform measures announced by Health Minister Mark Butler.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Urgent Reforms to Vaping Laws: A Call to Safeguard Youth Against Nicotine Addiction

The Northern Rivers Times, Other, 31/01/2024

In a ground-breaking commentary published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, leading tobacco control experts applaud the Federal Government's decisive move to address vaping law loopholes. [...] The reforms, announced by Health Minister the Hon Mark Butler in November 2023, aim to tighten vaping regulations comprehensively.

[Read More](#)

Bulk billed GP appointments rise, but access remains a challenge

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024, Nicole Hegarty and Evelyn Manfield

Disadvantaged and regional areas have recorded among the highest increase in bulk-billed GP appointments since the government tripled the Medicare incentive in November, but for those who don't qualify, the cost remains a significant barrier. The Albanese government used its 2023-24 Budget to announce \$3. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said regional areas had seen some of the highest number of additional bulk billed sessions.

[Read More](#)

Medicare turns 40: is Australia's 'little green card' keeping up with changing health needs?

The Guardian, Other, 01/02/2024, Natasha May

When Dr Brian Morton became a trainee general practitioner in 1977, healthcare bills were the number one cause of personal bankruptcies in Australia. [...] Current health minister, Mark Butler, reflects that the program was "fought tooth and nail" by the Liberal and National parties led by John Howard, as well as doctors groups who were at first concerned it would lead to similar struggles as the United Kingdom's National Health Service.

[Read More](#)

Undercover cameras reveal nicotine vape sales remain, despite import ban

A Current Affair, Other, 31/01/2024

An a Current Affair investigation has found the government's attempt to crack down on nicotine vapes could be going up in smoke, as a booming black market emerges. New national regulations took effect on January 1 to make it illegal to import disposable vapes, regardless of whether they contain nicotine. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said he will look to bring in legislation this year to make it illegal to supply and manufacture vapes in Australia.

[Read More](#)

Forty years on, Medicare is at a crossroads

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 31/01/2024, Robert Fedele

Medicare, the nation's universal healthcare insurance scheme, chalks up its 40 th birthday this week. While it has undeniably served Australians well, providing equitable and affordable access to healthcare, it is now struggling and in need of urgent reform. [...] "Medicare succeeded, because it was the right reform for the health needs of the time," Health Minister Mark Butler said, in his May National Press Club address last year, outlining reforms for a Medicare "that's fit for the 21 st century".

[Read More](#)

Almost 9 in 10 vape stores are within walking distance of schools

Education Today, Other, 31/01/2024

School commute takes kids past vape shops, especially in disadvantaged areas. Some 194 stores in Western Australia (WA) that sell e-cigarettes as a main source of business, mostly concentrated in the metropolitan area of Perth, are densely located around schools. [...] "We strongly support the vaping reforms announced by Health Minister Mark Butler."

[Read More](#)

Almost 9 in 10 vape stores located around schools: study

Hospital and Healthcare, Other, 31/01/2024

Vape stores are densely located around schools and in disadvantaged areas, according to new research published in the Wednesday, 31 January, 2024 Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health The study identified 194 stores in Western Australia (WA) that sell e-cigarettes as a main source of business, mostly concentrated in the metropolitan area of Perth. [...] "We strongly support the vaping reforms announced by Health Minister Mark Butler."

[Read More](#)

Podcast week: You Don't Know Me, crime podcasts, understanding vaping

Mediaweek, Other, 01/02/2024

Compiled by Tess Connery LiSTNR's Grippd: You Don't Know Me scores an AWGIE Award nomination The 56th annual AWGIE Awards are set to be presented in Sydney on February 15, and the awards recognising the outstanding achievements of Australian performance writers. [...] The series features candid discussions with experts and stakeholders across various domains including; Health Minister Mark Butler, Senator Matt Canavan, policy expert Associate Professor Becky Freeman, health expert Professor Emily Banks and toxicologist Dr. Jody Moller.

[Read More](#)

Tonnes of vapes seized

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 31/01/2024

The Australian Border Force (ABF) has stopped more than 13 tonnes of disposable vapes from entering the community after seizing a number of air cargo consignments in Adelaide. This is the first large-scale seizure in Australia under the new vaping regulation that came into force on 01 Jan this year (PD 10 Jan). [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said, "the only groups who want to regulate and sell vaping products are those who profit once kids get hooked on nicotine big tobacco and tobacco retailers".

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, A Current Affair, 31/01/2024, Allison Langdon

Report on undercover cameras revealing nicotine vape sales remain, despite import ban. While it's always been illegal to sell nicotine vapes, it's rarely been policed. Federal health Minister Mark Butler says the trouble is they sell them with labels on them that are misleading or they have no labels on them whatsoever. But with a burgeoning market in Australia and kids as young as 14 taking up the practice, Butler says a health disaster is looming.

Report continues on: [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#).

[Play Now](#)

Sky News Live, AM Agenda, 31/01/2024, Laura Jayes

Interview with Theo Foukkare, CEO, Australian Association of Convenience Stores, regarding a significant surge in the number of Australian adults who have taken up vaping. Foukkare says the only way to fix the surge in vaping and accessibility by children is for the government not to ban it outright and only make it available via prescription. He adds they agree with Health Minister Mark Butler that those products are bad but they need to recognise the fact that there are more than 1.7 million adult vapers who ultimately have either chosen to vape because they're using it to get off smoking or they're experimenting and they're doing it socially.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 7, Sunrise, 31/01/2024, Natalie Barr and Matt Shirvington

Around 150,000 single-use vapes have been seized in Adelaide, arriving in air cargo from China via Melbourne. It's the largest bus since new laws were enacted this year, with an estimated street value of \$4.5m. Health Minister Mark Butler says the first phase of their anti-vaping measures is to choke off that supply.

[Play Now](#)

Triple M Townsville, 13:00 News, 31/01/2024

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the skyrocketing cost of medical procedures in the private health system is a concern. Data shows fees for common operations have increased by as much as 300% in five years. Butler says the lack of transparency is a problem around some of the additional costs that are being imposed by private businesses for these procedures.

[Play Now](#)

2SM, 09:00 News, 31/01/2024

There are fears GPs will be swamped when the Federal Government's strict vape laws come into effect. News Corp reports 90,000 Australians have picked up the habit in the past three months while a Roy Morgan poll found 1.72 million people over the age of 18 are now vaping. Health Minister Mark Butler will introduce legislation to parliament banning any retailers, except for pharmacies, from selling the vapes.

[Play Now](#)

Vape stores in poor areas near schools

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/02/2024, Page 12

Almost 90 per cent of Western Australia's vape stores are located less than 1km from a school, a study by The University of Notre Dame Australia has found. Commissioned by Cancer Council Western Australia, the study found vape stores in Perth were seven times more likely to be in low socio-economic areas than in affluent suburbs.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER WELLS

Calls answered: Vital dementia training available and free for first responders, frontline workers

HelloCare, Other, 31/01/2024, Bianca Iovino

The Australian Government has introduced a free training initiative to arm first responders and frontline workers with education and tools to properly assist people with dementia during emergencies. Through this one-hour course facilitated by Dementia Training Australia, participants will gain a better understanding of dementia, including common symptoms and how dementia affects the brain and behaviour. [...] Aged Care Minister Anika Wells called the initiative a "game changer" for first responders and frontline workers.

[Read More](#)

Anika Wells launches free one-hour dementia training for first responders

The Weekly Source, Other, 31/01/2024, Caroline Egan

Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells has announced a free one-hour dementia training course is available to all frontline workers to try and ensure they can help people living with dementia in emergency situations. The free one-hour online course will be delivered by Dementia Training Australia , and has already been taken up by seven first responder organisations across four States and the Northern Territory.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

ABC North Queensland, Breakfast, 31/01/2024, Michael Clarke

The Federal Government says Townsville's newly opened urgent care clinic has reduced demand on the emergency department. Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health Emma McBride says it allows staff at the Townsville University Hospital to focus on delivering critical care.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

ABC News, Afternoon Briefing, 31/01/2024, Greg Jennett and Matthew Doran

Panel discussion with Gen Kearney, Assistant Health Minister and Jenny Ware, Liberal MP, regarding the benchmark increases in bulk billing rates. Kearney says there's going to be some data released in the next few days that will give us a good idea of what is happening out there. She adds they are hearing that bulk billing rates have improved, albeit patchily, across the country, in some areas it has improved a lot more than others. Kearney adds it's important not to leap to conclusions, but to wait and see what the data will reveal.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCCARTHY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

DEPARTMENT

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

CORONAVIRUS

Fresh Rapid Antigen Test shipments on their way to help Tasmanian pharmacy shortage

The Mercury, Other, 31/01/2024, Duncan Abey

Help is on its way for Tasmanian pharmacies struggling with recent shortages of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs), after a reported scarcity of the Covid-detecting product earlier this month left customers high and dry. As Covid cases continue to rise in Tasmania, and on the four-year anniversary of the World Health Organisation declaring the virus an international public health emergency, at least two RAT suppliers have put up their hands to help bolster stocks for Tasmanian consumers.

[Read More](#)

Tribunal orders compensation for SA government employee who developed pericarditis after COVID jab

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024, Josephine Lim

A South Australian government employee who fell ill after getting a mandatory COVID vaccine has won compensation against his employer. Daniel Shepherd worked as a child and youth support worker with the Department for Child Protection when he had a third dose of the COVID vaccine in February 2022.

Also reported by: [9News \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Vaccination funding should be consistent: Sim

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 31/01/2024

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) welcomes news that payments for pharmacist administration of COVID-19 vaccinations will be increased from tomorrow (1 February 2024) but urges similar increases across the National Immunisation Program Vaccinations in Pharmacy program.

Also reported by: [Australian Journal of Pharmacy \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

Shelter for older people opens

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/02/2024, Simon McGuire, Page 20

A new shelter has been opened specifically for a demographic experiencing a rise in homelessness. In collaboration with Family Based Care Tasmania, the Supported Affordable Accommodation Trust (SAA Trust) has unveiled an independent living facility at Shorewell Park in Burnie for six older people at risk of homelessness.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Self-managed hospital-to-home interventions key to reducing frailty

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 47

A program examining the effect of an individualised hospital-to-home, self-managed exercise and nutrition intervention, for pre-frail and frail older adults who are hospitalised, has found encouraging results in helping to reduce frailty. The Flinders University-led pilot program INDividualized therapy for Elderly Patients using Exercise and Nutrition to reduce depenDENCE post discharge (INDEPENDENCE) involved dieticians (Professor Michelle Miller, Dr Alison Yaxley and Dr Chad Han, as part of his PhD with College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Flinders University), physiotherapist Dr Claire Baldwin and physician Associate Professor Yogesh Sharma.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Unlocking the riches of elder advocacy and the fulfilling journey of championing older people's rights

Shepparton News Online, Other, 31/01/2024, Chloe Newnham

Since its establishment in 1989, Elder Rights Advocacy has been a powerful force for positive change, significantly altering the trajectory of vulnerable individuals' lives across Victoria. Dedicated to promoting the human rights of older people, advocates across Victoria have been instrumental in community education, empowerment and support initiatives for older people, ensuring they receive the assistance they deserve.

When I grow up I want to be ... why we all need to reimagine aging.

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024, Natasha Mitchell

From the moment we're born, we all age. So why limit the possibilities? The latest Intergenerational Report describes Australia's ageing population as an economical and fiscal challenge ... a burden. Ageism is rife, but to age is to live . So what about thriving too? Find out how there's magic to found when relationships across the generations are fostered and why we all benefit — whether we're young, middling, or older.

[Read More](#)

Sector struggling to innovate

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 30/01/2024, Natasha Egan

A new report from the ACIITC details the sector's digital maturity and includes a toolkit to help providers make improvements. A representative survey benchmarking the aged and community care sector's digital maturity for the first time has found shortcomings in innovation, use of data analytics, client-centred care and cybersecurity insurance and data.

[Read More](#)

Aged care nursing clinical placements program inspires next generation of nurses to join sector

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 31/01/2024, Robert Fedele

During his clinical placement in aged care, nursing student Brett received support from a specialist clinical nurse facilitator. [...] Launched in June 2023, the Aged Care Nursing Clinical Placements Program was driven by recommendations made by the Aged Care Royal Commission to improve staffing levels across the sector and subsequent aged care reforms legislated by the government such as RN 24/7 and mandated care minutes.

[Read More](#)

Silverchain to provide at-home pathology testing

Community Care Review, Other, 31/01/2024

In-home aged care provider Silverchain is offering pathology tests for its clients in Western Australia.

[Read More](#)

Vasey RSL Care secures Veterans Home Care contract with Federal Government

HelloCare, Other, 31/01/2024, Bianca Iovino

Vasey RSL Care has been awarded a Veterans Home Care (VHC) contract with the Federal Government to continue to "Serve Those Who Served" at home across Melbourne's metropolitan region. The VHC program provides essential home care services for the health, well-being and independence of eligible veterans and their families, encompassing a range of support, including domestic help, personal care, respite care, home and garden maintenance and lawn mowing.

[Read More](#)

Milking it: The food group a dietitian says is a must in the diets of older adults

HelloCare, Other, 31/01/2024, Sneha Krishnan

While this research was conducted in aged care residents, many who were in their 80's and 90's, Louise says it's never too late to start thinking about our bones and muscles. "Research shows us that getting 3.5 serves of dairy each day can build stronger muscles, which supports the physical wellbeing of older adults. Even at 65, we should be thinking about this," explained Louise.

[Read More](#)

How do I handle it if my parent is refusing aged care? 4 things to

consider

HelloCare, Other, 31/01/2024, Bianca Iovino

You're worried and you want them to be safe and healthy. You've tried to talk to them about aged care but been met with swift refusal and an indignant declaration "I don't need help – everything is fine!" Now what?

[Read More](#)

NSW residential aged care homes feel brunt of COVID-19

The Weekly Source, Other, 31/01/2024, Caroline Egan

In the week to 25 January 2024, NSW had more than double the number of aged care residents with COVID-19 than the next most-affected State and Territory. 23 deaths were recorded for the week, bringing the total number of deaths in residential aged care from the pandemic to 6,241. Nearly 70% of residents have received a booster dose since the beginning of 2023, however, only 30% have received a jab in the past six months.

[Read More](#)

Victoria's Moyne Shire bucks trend and retains home care provision

The Weekly Source, Other, 31/01/2024, Caroline Egan

At a Moyne Shire Council meeting in December 2023, Councillors voted to retain their Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), which has about 400 clients across south-western Victoria, about 250km west of Melbourne. The decision comes as the Federal Government rolls out sweeping changes to home care services, and in a surprise move last November announced changes to the CHSP would be pushed back from 1 July 2025 to 1 July 2027 to avoid disruption and give providers more time to adjust.

[Read More](#)

\$1.2M upgrades to Victorian public sector aged care homes unveiled

The Weekly Source, Other, 31/01/2024, Caroline Egan

Victoria's Member for Ripon Martha Haylett MP has unveiled \$1.2 million worth of refurbishments to Maryborough Public Sector Residential Aged Care Services. The upgrades include expanding dining rooms, new visitor parking, and converting 10 shared bathrooms to 20 private ensuites. The renovation has been made possible by a \$20 million package to improve Public Sector Residential Aged Care Service (PSRACS) across Victoria.

[Read More](#)

Opal HealthCare buys Jeta Gardens aged care home in Brisbane for \$40M – purchaser sought for retirement village

The Weekly Source, Other, 31/01/2024, Ian Horswill

Australia's largest aged care provider has exchanged contracts with Jeta Gardens' Malaysian owners to purchase the site, which is situated on 26ha in Bethania, 30km southeast of the Brisbane CBD, with a co-located retirement village on site. Opened in 2007, Jeta Gardens was branded as "Australia's leading multicultural senior living provider", aimed at Chinese Australians.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

POPULATION HEALTH

Inside teen's vape addiction

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 01/02/2024, Page 20

When Kate Walker first reached for a vape at the age of 16, she was unaware she was inhaling the addictive chemical nicotine. The NSW resident said she became addicted "really quickly" and was soon vaping "all the time" before the habit landed her in hospital with pneumonia in 2022. "I didn't realise the impact it was having on my health," she said.

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

Australia should 'look at' New Zealand's regulated vaping model amid current surge

The Australian, Other, 31/01/2024

Australian Association of Convenience Stores CEO Theo Foukkare says we only need to look at countries like New Zealand to see a regulated vaping model that works. "New Zealanders have had a 35 per cent decline in smoking rates in the last three years since they introduced the regulated vaping model," he told Sky News Australia.

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

[Read More](#)

Unpacking the secrets of a winning lunchbox that won't break the bank

Canberra Times, Other, 31/01/2024, Stella Boyd-Ford

Heading back to school is a time of great anticipation for many families, but it is not without challenges. One of the big challenges is preparing healthy, easy, affordable and appealing lunchboxes. Lunchboxes are vital for supporting children's energy levels throughout the school day, which in turn helps maintain their concentration.

[Read More](#)

'I swapped water for sugar-free cordial for a month - this is what happened'

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 31/01/2024, Emily Holgate

After years of drinking well under the recommended amount of water, writer Emily Holgate tried employing a controversial tactic to up her intake and the results were surprising. Health professionals and wellness gurus alike have long debated the age-old question – how much water do we need to be drinking for optimal health?

[Read More](#)

Rural and regional mothers experience a lack of support to breastfeed babies

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024, Caitlyn Gribbin

It's 2am and Greta Wemyss is desperately trying to feed her newborn baby Howie, but breastfeeding is causing her unbearable pain. The closest town is nearly an hour's drive from her family's sheep and cattle property in western Queensland, and Brisbane is 1,000 kilometres away. With help not readily available, she anxiously scrolls through her phone, searching for any advice that might help her produce enough milk for her days-old baby.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Today, 31/01/2024, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

Efforts to curb e-cigarettes have gone up in a cloud of nicotine vapour as usage increases. According to News Corp, 90,000 Australians took up vaping over the past three months, with over 1.7 million over the age of 18 using them. Border Force is making some headway, with 250,000 disposable vapes seized since the January import ban.

[Play Now](#)

Sky News Live, AM Agenda, 31/01/2024, Laura Jayes

Australian researchers have revealed a concerning trend when it comes to the presence of vape stores across the country. Almost 9 in 10 stores in Western Australia are selling vape products within walking distance from schools. The majority of vape stores are heavily concentrated in lower socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. A new study commissioned by the Australian Association of Convenience Stores also shows a 30% increase in vaping among adults.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Mothers' health tests ignored post birth

Age, General News, 01/02/2024, Angus Thomson, Page 4

Half of women diagnosed with diabetes in pregnancy are not being tested for heart disease and type 2 diabetes after giving birth despite being at greater risk of both, as researchers urge GPs to do more to follow up on the health of new mothers. Women who have had diabetes during pregnancy are six to 10 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes after giving birth, and at a twofold risk of suffering a cardiovascular event compared with those without diabetes during pregnancy.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Fit to fight cancer risk

Northern Territory News, General News, 01/02/2024, Page 16

Men who improve their fitness could reduce their risk of getting prostate cancer in the process. A Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences team looked at the incidence of prostate cancer in a group of 57,652 men whose cardiorespiratory fitness had been tested using a stationary cycle at least twice over an average follow-up of nearly seven years.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Skin Care Check to Reduce Cancer

Barrier Truth, General News, 31/01/2024, Paige Fargher, Page 9

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Australia. It is estimated that one in five Australians will develop skin cancer at some point in their lives, with two in three Australians being diagnosed before the age of seventy. There are three main types of skin cancer: Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC), Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) and Melanoma. BCC and SCC are the most common forms of skin cancer.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

How cancers are named 'needs to change', say doctors who warn that labelling tumours after breast, lung and other organs is denting survival rates

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 01/02/2024, Xantha Leatham

Naming cancers after body parts is hampering treatment and 'needs to change', experts have argued. A group of scientists have called for different forms of the disease to be classed by molecular make-up, rather than the area of the body it originated from. Over the past century the main approaches to treating people with cancer have focused on where in the body the tumour first arose.

[Read More](#)

Rare Cancers Australia CEO Christine Cockburn speaks to SBS about new senate inquiry

SBS, Other, 31/01/2024, Sam Dover

A new senate inquiry has been launched to ensure equitable access to diagnosis and treatment for rare cancer patients. Listen to Australian and world news, and follow trending topics with Every 10 minutes an Australian is diagnosed with a rare or less common cancer.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

Call for palliative care funding ahead of VAD

The ACT has been urged to strengthen palliative care funding before Canberrans can access voluntary assisted dying. Calvary Health Care told an inquiry into an assisted dying bill the government needed to ensure health funding for palliative care was not sidelined when the scheme came into effect.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Premier defends ambo spending

Herald Sun, General News, 01/02/2024, Shannon Deery, Page 2

Jacinta Allan has sidestepped claims Victoria's ambulance service is in crisis. The Herald Sun revealed on Wednesday Ambulance Victoria was considering a new "operating model" for MICA that could see services cut in regional areas. But the Premier deflected blame from the government saying investment in the ambulance service had never been higher.

Also reported by: [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [3AW \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Longest wait for ambos in a decade

Courier Mail, General News, 01/02/2024, Stephanie Bennett Isabella Holland, Page 1

Queenslanders are waiting longer for ambulances than at any other time in the past decade. With the state's service under the highest demand in the country, the wait for 90 per cent of ambulance call-outs has blown out to 25.2 minutes, almost nine minutes longer than a decade ago and seven minutes longer than times before the Covid pandemic.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Premier in health backflip

Courier Mail, General News, 01/02/2024, Hayden Johnson, Page 11

Increased health funding demanded of the state government from Canberra for several years has been abandoned so Premier Steven Miles can "cosy up" to Anthony Albanese, the LNP claims. Calls for a 50/50 health funding split between the state and Commonwealth were ripe during Annastacia Palaszczuk's leadership amid consistent criticism of then prime minister Scott Morrison.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Longer wait for pricier health care

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/02/2024, David Killick, Page 6

Tasmanians are waiting longer and paying more to see a dwindling number of general practitioners, as wait times for ambulances, public dental care and elective surgery also increase. The Productivity Commission has released another tranche of data on health as part of its annual Report on Government Services. The number of GPs is slowly rising in Tasmania, up from 993 in 2021 to 1004 in 2022 but the number of full-time equivalents fell from 608 to 574.

Also reported by: [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

More complex surgeries part of 'evolution'

Ballarat Courier, General News, 01/02/2024, Michelle Smith, Page 3

New anaesthetic machines will allow more complex patients to undergo surgery at Ballarat Base Hospital and improve outcomes for emergency and planned surgery patients. The hospital will receive seven new anaesthesia machines and patient-monitoring devices which will improve reliability in operating theatres and allow a smoother transition of critically ill patients between hospital departments.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Virtual KIDS now available statewide

Barrier Truth, General News, 31/01/2024, Jason Irvine, Page 2

The state government's free virtualKIDS Urgent Care Service is now available to all children and families across NSW, using video conferencing technology to connect families with a clinical nurse to

determine the best care pathway based on each child's needs. Hoping the statewide rollout will mean parents and kids can avoid unnecessary trips to the hospital and potentially long, after-hours waits, the use of the service will also put downward pressure on emergency departments, helping patients be seen sooner.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Emergency intervention saves EDMC

Burnie Advocate, General News, 01/02/2024, Libby Bingham, Page 1

A last-minute lifeline by the state government has saved the East Devonport Medical Centre days out from its scheduled closure. The embattled clinic will now reopen within two months under the guidance of Dr Mirza Baig, who dedicated it "to the people of East Devonport". LIBBY BINGHAM reports, Page 5 THE embattled East Devonport Medical Centre (EDMC) will reopen within two months with two senior GPs initially and a plan to employ six doctors in total by next year.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

'Wonderful benefits': Dubbo Private Hospital is turning 30

Daily Liberal, General News, 01/02/2024, Sarah Falson, Page 1

Every time Kim Troth walks down the main street of Dubbo, she recognises people - but they don't necessarily recognise her. When most people see Ms Troth at her workplace, she's wearing a gown, a hat and a mask, so she's sometimes hard to place. Ms Troth is the nurse theatre unit manager at Dubbo Private Hospital, and has worked at the facility for 25 years.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

LifeFlight's calls spike

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 01/02/2024, Page 6

Racq LifeFlight crews in the Darling Downs and South West Queensland have recorded a 46 per cent increase in the number of missions flown from 2022 to 2023. The Toowoomba-based RACQ LifeLight Rescue and the Roma-based LifeFlight Surat Gas Aeromedical Service crews flew a combined 959 missions in 2023. The two chopper crews clocked up 1397 flying hours on missions covering much of southern Queensland and northern NSW.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Health and hospital funding agreement made with 'every state and territory'

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 31/01/2024

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese says an agreement has been made between "every state and territory" for health and hospital funding, but says the key is improving primary healthcare. It comes off the back of the Albanese government's pledge in October last year to spend \$358.

[Read More](#)

St Vincent's Health Australia: no personal data stolen in hack

The Weekly Source, Other, 31/01/2024, Caroline Egan

Australia's largest Not For Profit health and aged care provider says the cyber attack that occurred in December did not involve the theft of personal information. An investigation of the incident, which St Vincent's Health Australia first responded to on 19 December 2023, has not detected any further activity by cyber criminals since 20 December but on 21 December, the organisation discovered some data had been stolen.

[Read More](#)

Channel 7, Seven News, 31/01/2024, Rosanna Mangiarelli and Will Goodings

Out-of-pocket expenses for common medical procedures under the private health system have surged by 300% in the last five years. It has prompted calls for tougher laws to protect patients from unexpected bills.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, National Nine News, 31/01/2024, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Victorian paramedics are preparing to strike, with their EBA set to expire in less than six hours, and there are fears regional communities could lose critical MICA units in a looming overhaul. Victoria Ambulance Union's Danny Hill says dispatch at 000 is part of the problem of why the MICA units are being routinely wasted. Ambulance Victoria is working on a new model but denies reports that it could include MICA units, with single responders being consolidated or replaced in regional areas.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Afternoons, 31/01/2024, Tony Moclair

The Ambulance Union says there is no doubt the MICA paramedic service is facing a crisis. Ambulance Victoria insists there is no risk of regional areas losing coverage as the service comes under review. AU Secretary Danny Hill says the issue is MICA paramedics are not being used on the patients who need them most.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Mornings, 31/01/2024, Tom Elliott

Interview with Dr Anita Munoz, Victorian Chair, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Munoz says she can't speak on behalf of dedicated nicotine services in the hospital environment but in the community, there hasn't been an overwhelming demand from vape addicts looking for prescriptions as yet since the Federal Government's new rules about vapes came into effect.

[Play Now](#)

5AA, Mornings, 31/01/2024, Matthew Pantelis

Interview with Dr Rachel David, CEO, Private Healthcare Australia, on health funds' call for a surprise billing law as new data reveals soaring out-of-pocket costs for medical procedures. David says they have seen quite a marked increase in out-of-pocket costs for people attending hospitals to have common procedures over the last few years. She adds the amount of money that was in the system in terms of government benefits through JobKeeper and so forth, savings during the pandemic and the fact that doctors started to work fewer hours and charge higher out of pocket at that time to make up the difference. She adds that medical practises have also been hit by inflation.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Melbourne, Breakfast, 31/01/2024, Sammy J

Interview with Danny Hill, Secretary, Victorian Ambulance Union, regarding a new operating model being considered by Ambulance Victoria due to the difficulty of getting a MICA. Hill says MICA has massive issues and they are such an important part of their frontline response's capability in a medical emergency but often they're just not available at all.

Interview continues on: [ABC Radio Melbourne \(Melbourne\)](#).

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Giving a hand on the land

Daily Telegraph, General News, 01/02/2024, Vanessa Croll, Page 18

The number of farmers seeking mental health help doubled last year, with men accounting for nearly 70 per cent of those reaching out. The concerning trend sparked the launch of a farmerfocused mental health campaign, Don't Keep it Under Your Hat, by specialist mental health support charity TIACS (This is a Conversation Starter).

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Cairns Post](#)

Early autism support

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 01/02/2024, Page 4

Up to 1300 SA families with babies showing early signs of autism will be among the first to participate in a new support program. The Inklings program will help parents and carers understand the needs of their babies and how they can assist and support. The program uses short videos of the parent and their baby to help the parent better understand the way the baby communicates and the importance of interaction.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Suicide deaths dropping

Courier Mail, General News, 01/02/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 1

Publishing monthly suicide data to better assist support groups to respond to distressed communities is working, the state government says, with a statewide decline in deaths. Reacting to a campaign by The Courier-Mail's Bush Summit pushing for real-time notifications, as recommended by Suicide Prevention Australia, Health Minister Shannon Fentiman introduced the improved register in September.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

WA bottom of the ladder on nurses and midwives for seventh year in a row

West Australian, General News, 01/02/2024, Hannah Cross, Page 5

New data reveals the State has the lowest number of nurses and midwives per capita across the country - for the seventh consecutive year. In WA there were 6.6 full-time equivalent nurses and midwives per 1000 people for the year 2021-22, well below the national average of 7.0. The Productivity Commission released the data in its annual report into the state of public health across Australia, which monitors the performance of Federal, State and Territory governments in delivering public health care, particularly acute care in hospitals.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

100 nurses from the UK and Ireland to boost hospital staff

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 01/02/2024, Rachel Gray, Page 3

More than 100 nurses from the UK and Ireland are expected to bolster the regional NSW health workforce when they arrive in the months ahead. An official start date has not yet been set, but Minister for Regional Health, Ryan Park, said the registered nurses (RNs) will be employed in public hospitals stretched across the Hunter New England Health District (HNELHD).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Expectant mothers continue to struggle as Carnarvon maternity services remain shut two years on

West Australian, Other, 31/01/2024, Jessica Moroney

Carnarvon families continue to be placed under stressful situations as expectant mothers are forced to travel hundreds of kilometres to deliver their babies almost two years since maternity services were shut in the Gascoyne town. Tina Harvey is required to travel to Perth on Friday to deliver her baby, due on March 1, and has forked out thousands of dollars for accommodation bookings and flights.

[Read More](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

GP workforce woes another health worry

Burnie Advocate, General News, 01/02/2024, John Tucker and Lara Alexander, Page 19

The response by Tasmania's Health Minister to the solution proposed by doctors to the critical shortage of GPs is a reminder of the chasm between the priorities of the Rockliff Government and the problems of people in the real world. Guy Barnett refused to entertain the plan put forward by General Practice Training Tasmania (GPTT) due to primary care being a Commonwealth responsibility.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Is there a doctor in the house?

Western Advocate, General News, 01/02/2024, Bradley Jurd, Page 1

Having grown up and studied in the region, Blake Jones is ready to serve the community he calls home. Mr Jones commenced clinical placement at the Central Tablelands Clinical School in Bathurst on Monday, one of four third-year Charles Sturt University (CSU) medicine students to do so. The Bathurst native said he's excited to get started "I'm mostly just keen to get into it, get started and start learning some good clinical skills," he said.

Also reported by: [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Command in healthy hands

Navy News, General News, 01/02/2024, Brian Arnell, Page 3

Having seen her predecessor lead the ADF health community through bushfires and a pandemic over the past four years, the new head of Joint Health Command (JHC) is aware of what challenges could lie ahead and is confident her people are capable of meeting them. RADM Sonya Bennett, who was previously Deputy Chief Medical Officer in the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care and Director General Navy Health Reserves, took over as Surgeon General ADF (SGADF) and Commander Joint Health (CJHLTH) in December, and said she was looking forward to a productive and rewarding role.

Also reported by: [Army News \(Sydney\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Enhancing Rural Healthcare: Government Initiative Boosts Support for Rural Generalists

The Northern Rivers Times, Other, 31/01/2024

The National Rural Health Alliance welcomes the Commonwealth Government's recent introduction of the Rural Advanced Skills funding streams as part of the Workforce Incentives Program. This initiative addresses a critical need for support among rural generalist doctors, aiming to equip them with advanced skills essential for effective service in rural and remote communities.

[Read More](#)

Muslim doctors worried about reports to regulator

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024, David Sparkes

Muslim doctors say they're being unfairly reported to the health regulator for criticising Israel's military operations in Gaza. The issue revolves around posts made in Facebook groups and other social media. Some doctors have been reported to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency for allegedly making comments that incite anti-Semitism or justify the Hamas attacks on 7 October.

[Read More](#)

Wendy Hoey: Pioneering change in mental health and justice

The Mandarin, Other, 31/01/2024, Moemina Shukur

Wendy Hoey has been awarded the Public Service Medal (PSM) for her outstanding public service and

dedication to the delivery of health care to vulnerable populations in correctional and secure settings. Her remarkable career spans four decades, from her roots in mental health nursing in Scotland to her current role as Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network chief executive.

[Read More](#)

GP says it's almost impossible for IMGs to pass medical board's clinical exam

Australian Doctor, Other, 31/01/2024, Carmel Sparke

Remote GP Dr Michael Mbaogu says it's almost impossible for IMGs to pass the assessment. Dr Michael Mbaogu is finding it almost impossible to recruit doctors to his outback practice, but it is not for a lack of applicants. Five doctors have recently left his practice at Mt Isa in western Queensland, leaving just three GPs at the clinic amid the town's worsening doctor shortage.

[Read More](#)

Silos, restrictions and inconsistency named as scope barriers

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 31/01/2024, Megan Haggan

The first issue paper from the Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce Scope of Practice Review has highlighted existing barriers preventing pharmacists practising to their full and top of scope. The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has welcomed the release of the issue paper for the review – also known as the Cormack Review –

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

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

Patients' bulk pain at GP

Canberra Times, General News, 01/02/2024, Miriam Webber, Page 1

Bulk-billing rates for ACT general practitioners have improved slightly since the federal government introduced incentives in November, but the figures show Canberra continues to lag behind every other state and territory on affordable GP visits. The territory's bulk-billing rate increased by 1.9 percentage points from October - to 53.4 per cent - but overall, it is being outperformed by every other state and territory by at least 17 percentage points.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Will medical gap fees keep going up?

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024

Have you put off a medical procedure because of steep increases to gap fees? Consumers Health Forum of Australia CEO Dr Elizabeth Deveny says her organisation hears concerns from the public daily about the growing cost of staying healthy.

[Read More](#)

Medicare has hit the proverbial iceberg: Rearranging deckchairs won't help

Australian Doctor, Other, 31/01/2024, Joe Kosterich

The Federal Government's boasts were high-volume. They were made in reference to its new policy

brainwave to create specially tailored, co-ordinated care packages that would "revolutionise the way we care for Australians with chronic diseases and complex conditions by keeping them out of hospital and living happier and healthier lives at home".

[Read More](#)

As international student numbers rise, calls for urgent reform on pregnancy health cover

The Citizen Australia, Other, 31/01/2024

International students don't have access to Medicare, and must buy health cover before they arrive. Many policies include a 12-month waiting period on pregnancy, but health and human rights activists have been campaigning for years to get rid of it, concerned for the welfare of often vulnerable young women.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Hospital visits end in deaths

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 01/02/2024, Brad Crouch, Page 1

South Australian public hospitals had five catastrophic "sentinel" events resulting in serious injury or death in 2021-22, the latest Productivity Commission figures show. There were two suicides of people in acute psychiatric wards or units, and three medication errors. The figures compare with four the previous year all disastrous medication errors and five the year before that, which included two cases of foreign objects being left in patients. The five cases were among the national total of 64.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Canberra doctor who was found to have been sexually inappropriate with two patients has registration torn up by tribunal

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024, Elizabeth Byrne

A Canberra doctor accused of telling a female patient "your boyfriend is very lucky" during a breast examination, and of kissing another patient, has been de-registered for two years by the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT). Dr Nathem Al-Naser was taken to ACAT by the Medical Board of Australia.

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

[Read More](#)

John Lawrence Britten sentenced for selling Buprenorphine strips to undercover police officer

Adelaide Now, Other, 31/01/2024, Charlie Dadds

A convicted murderer has been sentenced again after selling prescription drugs to an undercover police officer - while the pharmacist was jailed for two years. A man with a violent past has been sentenced for selling a controlled drug he obtained from a Hindley St chemist to an undercover police officer.

[Read More](#)

Oakden scandal nurse has registration cancelled

The Weekly Source, Other, 31/01/2024, Caroline Egan

Kerim Skelton, who between between 2010 and 2016 was a nurse manager at Oakden Aged Mental Health Care Service which was the subject of a scandal that eventually contributed to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, has had his nursing registration cancelled. [...] An Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) investigation into Skelton's conduct during his time at Oakden resulted in the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) referring him to the tribunal.

ABC Radio Hobart, Breakfast, 31/01/2024, Mel Bush

A hotline to dob in dodgy practitioners who perform cosmetic procedures has received over 600 calls since it started 18 months ago. The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency says 14 practitioners have been barred from performing cosmetic procedures such as anti-wrinkle treatment or fat removal, thanks to public tip-offs.

[Play Now](#)[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

SPORT

21-day sport concussion protocol

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 01/02/2024, Page 1

Adults in community sport and children aged 19 and under will be sidelined for a minimum of 21 days if they suffer a sport-related concussion, under new guidelines released by the Australian Institute of Sport. The Youth and Community Sport guidelines, which effectively cover everyone in sport outside elite levels, have been created to provide "simplicity and clarity" about the widely varied protocols used in sport.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Members threaten Kooyong club

Age, General News, 01/02/2024, Carla Jaeger, Page 1

A group of aggrieved Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club members is threatening to take legal action after accusing the board of violating its rules. The threat is the latest escalation to a growing feud within the exclusive gated club, which was forced to call in independent auditors to investigate millions of dollars in losses from its dining operations.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

On yer bike

Courier Mail, Business News, 01/02/2024, Glen Norris, Page 31

Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA) has announced the city will host the inaugural Asia Pacific Cycling Conference for the next three years. AusCycling will launch the inaugural two-day conference as a feature event during the 2024 Brisbane Cycling Festival (BCF) bringing together 300 delegates from the cycling community, industry, academia and government from 11 to 13 April.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

All bets are off

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/02/2024, David Killick, Page 1

The state's racing integrity body will be abolished and replaced after a damning report upheld claims of race fixing and animal cruelty in the harness racing industry. Describing the public release of the Murrihy report as "a dark day for racing", Racing Minister Felix Ellis expressed shock and dismay at its findings of weak regulation, lax oversight and an unsustainable future under the current model. He S

said as a result, the Office of Racing Integrity would be replaced by a Tasmanian Racing Integrity Commissioner.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Council tick for field's overhaul

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 01/02/2024, Luke Griffiths, Page 7

An overhaul of Landy Field is one step closer after Geelong council said the project could no longer be "kicked down the road" because the South Geelong site's international accreditation was at risk. Councillors voted unanimously on Tuesday to nominate the project for \$5m of state government funding via a council support package (CSP), assisting areas that were to act as hubs during the now-cancelled 2026 Commonwealth Games in regional Victoria.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

'Paralympians are not an afterthought': Channel Nine criticised over Paris 2024 TV ad

SBS, Other, 31/01/2024, Amy Hall

An Australian Paralympian has criticised Channel Nine over its TV advertisement for the Paris 2024 Games, saying it fails to "truly represent the Australian people". The ad features Olympic athletes competing in a variety of sports and ends on a shot of the Paris skyline with the Channel Nine logo and "Your home of the Olympics" over the top. In an Instagram post on Tuesday, Janine Watson called out the broadcaster for neglecting to make any mention of the Paralympics in the ad.

[Read More](#)

Ash Gardner takes out top honour at Cricket Australia's night of nights

National Indigenous Times, Other, 31/01/2024, Jarred Cross

Ash Gardner has won her second Belinda Clark Medal, which recognises Australia's best female performer across all three formats of international cricket. Her award comes after a stellar 12 months in both red and white ball cricket. The star allrounder narrowly took home the top award ahead of T20 and ODI player of the year Ellyse Perry by 147 votes to 134.

[Read More](#)

Beach 'blackspot' where six people drowned in two weeks serves as 'tragic reminder'

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 31/01/2024, Joe Attanasio

The Bass Coast is known for its picturesque beaches, but it's also becoming known for a much darker reason. Activists are calling for an immediate government inquiry into the skyrocketing rate of deaths along beaches in an established "national blackspot" known for its "dangerous currents and rips", after a staggering six people drowned in the region in under two weeks.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Beacon of hope for Parkinson's

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/02/2024, Stephanie Dalton, Page 19

Tasmanian researchers are developing a test to help predict and detect Parkinson's disease through an uncommon sleep disorder. Parkinson's disease is the fastest-growing degenerative brain disorder in the world, and a low-cost screening test could detect the disease decades earlier, improving health outcomes for thousands of Tasmanians.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Burgers, meat pies: Study finds link between our diet and Alzheimer's

disease

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 31/01/2024, Sue Dunlevy

Eating burgers, meat pies and sausages has been linked to Alzheimer's disease in a new Aussie study that is believed to be the first to link processed foods to the condition. Researchers at Bond University examined the diets of 438 Australians 108 with Alzheimer's and 330 in a healthy control group. The Alzheimer's patients were more likely to regularly eat foods such as meat pies, sausages, ham, pizza and hamburgers, the study found.

[Read More](#)

Deakin study aims to reduce kids' fear of vaccinations

Geelong Advertiser, Other, 31/01/2024, Tamara McDonald

A study aiming to prevent fear of vaccination among kids is recruiting Geelong and Surf Coast children. The Deakin University research uses special eye-tracking technology and is seeking to determine how play therapy can help kids cope. Study participant Bonnie Schram undertook play therapy sessions before and after her four-year-old vaccination last year as part of the study.

[Read More](#)

Immunotherapy could be the last hope in children's brain cancer research

ABC Online, Other, 31/01/2024, Sarah Macdonald

Can the research into children's brain cancer follow the lead of Australian of the Year Richard Scobey's story into immunotherapy? Prof Brandon Wainwright from University of Queensland spoke to Sarah Macdonald this morning about his challenges ahead.

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

[Read More](#)

Channel 7, Sunrise, 31/01/2024, Natalie Barr and Matt Shirvington

Australian scientists are developing a new vaccine to treat brain cancer in children. World-class experts will mentor a team working out of the University of Qld, showing them how to apply mRNA vaccines to recognise and target tumours. It's the first time in history that immunology science is being used to treat brain cancer which claims the lives of around 1 in 120 children each year.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, Today, 31/01/2024, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

Interview with Professor Di Yu, University of Qld, regarding a group of scientists in Australia that is developing a world-first vaccine for deadly brain cancers in children, hoping to harness the power of the immune system. Yu says they are still at the beginning of the cancer vaccine program and the cancer vaccine has a lot of advantages.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Young Aboriginal offending 'obscene'

The Australian, General News, 01/02/2024, Ellie Dudley, Page 7

The Uluru Statement from the Heart accurately calls out the "obscene number" of young Aboriginal Australians in detention, the Chief Justice of Australia's largest jurisdiction says, rallying governments to do more for Indigenous people following the voice referendum defeat. Marking the first time a sitting judge has spoken to Australia's rejection of the voice, NSW Chief Justice Andrew Bell said the loss should not "obscure the stark and confronting reality" of the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians when it comes to the justice system.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Renewed calls for reform after death of Veronica Nelson

Canberra Times, Other, 31/01/2024, Rachael Ward

The Victorian government has been accused of dragging its feet on reforms to prison healthcare standards, which have left people to suffer. That's according to the managing lawyer of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, as the organisation steps up calls for a review into deaths in custody and better healthcare in prisons.

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

[Read More](#)

SNAICC backs consumer watchdog's calls for major childcare reforms

National Indigenous Times, Other, 31/01/2024, Dechlan Brennan

The nation's peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children has welcomed recommendations by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to reform the current childcare system, arguing the current system enacts barriers for Indigenous children. SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, said they were particularly pleased with recommendations by the ACCC in their Childcare inquiry's final report to remove the Activity Test, an assessment of the combined hours of work, training, study, recognised voluntary work or other recognised activity undertaken by a family; and change the "market-driven approach to early education and care (ECEC).

[Read More](#)

Government urged to act to bring two Aboriginal children without passports back home

National Indigenous Times, Other, 31/01/2024, Dechlan Brennan

Two Aboriginal children stuck in the UK child protection system without passports or visas "beggars' belief," with the nation's peak body for Indigenous children urging them to be brought home immediately. SNAICC admonished the Federal and NSW Governments, begging them to act immediately and bring the two children home.

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

[Read More](#)

Broad support for South Australian Elders village

National Indigenous Times, Other, 31/01/2024, Callan Morse

Housing and Aboriginal organisations have thrown their support behind an Aboriginal Elders village in South Australia, which is set to be built in Adelaide's south. Known as Purrrkanaitya, Kurna for "for all Elders", the facility, comprised of 40 modern and culturally appropriate homes at 'Warriparinga', or Bedford Park near the Sturt River, is set to be built and managed by Aboriginal people.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

How scientists solved 80-year-old mystery of a flesh-eating ulcer

Age, General News, 01/02/2024, Angus Dalton, Page 18

The sore on David McLachlan's ankle swelled to the size of a saucer. For Alice Mika, another Melbourne resident, a small bump grew into a dollar-sized ulcer and eluded diagnosis for months. And for retiree Fiona Wordie, as the wound on her foot expanded, so did her pet cockatoo's vocabulary; the ulcer caused such regular pain the bird learned to squawk the f-word.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Victoria Health issues alert for mpox case detected in the community

The Australian, Other, 31/01/2024, Aisling Brennan

Health authorities have issued an alert for mpox after the first locally acquired case was detected in nearly six months in Victoria. The latest case of mpox, formally known as monkeypox, has not been linked to international travel. Authorities believe the mpox case suggests local transmission may be occurring within the community.

Also reported by: [The New Daily \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#), [9News \(Online\)](#), [9News \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Parents urged to sign kids up for school vaccinations

West Australian, Other, 01/02/2024, Oliver Lane

The Department of Health is encouraging parents to register their children for vaccinations at school. Students in Year 7 will be immunised against HPV as well as diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis while Year 10 students will be vaccinated against meningococcal ACWY.

[Read More](#)

NSW, Victoria, ACT on high alert for measles -are you at risk?

SBS, Other, 31/01/2024, Ruth McHugh-Dillon

Measles cases are soaring in Europe, Asia and Africa, prompting concerns about potential outbreaks in Australia. With New South Wales, Victoria and the A-C-T now on alert after several cases were recorded.

[Read More](#)

CSL vax on NIP

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 31/01/2024

CSL Seqirus has today confirmed that its cell-based influenza vaccine, Flucelvax Quad, will be available on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for the 2024 Australian influenza season. Flucelvax Quad [quadrivalent influenza vaccine (surface antigen, inactivated, prepared in cell cultures)] is the first and only cell-based influenza vaccine available in Australia and will be reimbursed for people at higher risk of complications from flu.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Virtual clinical hub

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 46

The iAgeHealth remote workforce solution provides real-time clinical services to resource-challenged aged care facilities in regional, rural and remote aged care. [...] The solution has been designed by experienced industry leaders for the industry, working in support of existing teams with TGA-approved plugins to deliver seamless continuity of care and optimal health outcomes for clients.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Psychedelics like MDMA in Australian psychiatrist's tool kit

ABC Online, Other, 30/01/2024, Phillip Adams

For the first time in 50 years, two Australian psychiatrists have been given permission to treat two of their patients with psychedelic drugs. This follows the TGA approving the use in a clinical setting of MDMA and psilocybin.

[Read More](#)

Daniel was forced to have a Covid jab to keep his job. Then he fell gravely ill. Now he has secured a huge legal victory - but the damage is already done

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 01/02/2024, Padraig Collins

A man who was once an active youth worker said he is now stuck with the heart of a 90-year-old after being forced to get a Covid booster to keep his job. Daniel Shepherd, 44, won a landmark legal case over being left gravely ill by the jab, but the damage had already been done and is still affecting him two years later. [...] In Australia, vaccines must pass strict safety testing before the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) will register them for use.

[Read More](#)

TGA issues safety alerts after online herbal supplements found to contain Viagra

The Guardian, Other, 31/01/2024, Alyx Gorman

Australians seeking to enhance their sexual performance using online herbal supplements could be getting more than they bargained for and risking their health in the process. On 29 January, Australia's pharmaceutical watchdog, the TGA, issued safety alerts for seven supplements, including Tantra Jelly, Bullblood tablets and Throb herbal supplements after testing found they contained sildenafil, tadalafil and in some instances both.

[Read More](#)

First cell-based flu vaccine listed on NIP ahead of 2024 season

Australian Doctor, Other, 31/01/2024, Rachel Fieldhouse

The new quadrivalent vaccine will be available for patients at high risk of complications. [...] Last October, the TGA accepted the Australian Influenza Vaccine Committee's recommendations for the composition of 2024 flu vaccines, with quadrivalent cell-based and recombinant vaccines to include: A(H1N1)pdm09 Wisconsin 2022-like virus A(H3N2) Massachusetts 2022-like virus B/Austria-like virus B/Phuket-like virus Further changes to the NIP included the addition of the adjuvanted Flud Quad for over-65s and the removal of inactivated Afluria Quad vaccine.

[Read More](#)

TGA issues inhaler alert

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 31/01/2024

Patients are being urged to continue using Boehringer Ingelheim's Spiriva Respimat Solution for Inhalation 2.5µg, despite an alert from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) regarding the product's inhaler device.

[Read More](#)

Soon you'll only be able to buy vapes with a prescription

In Daily, Other, 31/01/2024

This year the Australian and South Australian governments are cracking down on the availability of non-prescription e-cigarettes – plus where you're allowed to vape or smoke. So, if quitting vaping isn't already on your list of 2024 resolutions, it's time to make it a priority. [...] To introduce and enforce the crackdown on importing and selling vapes, the Australian Government is providing an extra \$25 million to the Australian Border Force and \$56.9 million to the Therapeutic Goods Administration over two years.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

FOOD STANDARDS

Filthy Macca's alert

A viral TikTok video has shown a McDonald's restaurant littered with empty packaging and food. The 38-second clip, uploaded by TikTok user Driftwood, reveals the dire state of the 24hour eatery in Newcastle. One of the tables is covered in spilt Coke and loose French fries, with debris also on the floor. Two customers also appear to have fallen asleep on the seats.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

AICIS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

Prepared by Isentia

Subject to copyright. For internal use only.

See [Copyright Terms of Use](#)

