



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 4th January 2024

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.

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| [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](#)  
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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports that the ACT Human Rights Commission is advocating for teenagers to have the right to access voluntary assisted dying, currently VAD is capped at 18 years of age in the ACT.
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports that a federal government taskforce had advised Aged Care Minister Anika Wells to reform means testing for aged care services and to raise consumer co-contributions for those who can afford to pay more towards their aged care services. *Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald](#)*
- **[Australian Financial Review](#)** (page 3) reports that research from workplace mental health researcher SuperFriend has found leaders are increasingly expected to support employees mental health in the workplace, with 56 per cent of employees now more comfortable talking about their mental health at work.

- **The Australian** (page 3) reports that WA Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson has announced plans to lift the ban on posthumous fertilisation in the state, with the proposed legislation potentially requiring counselling for the surviving partner.
- **Northern Territory News** (page 5) reports that Darwin retailers expect the nationwide vaping ban to affect Territorians for the worse, while an Northern Territory Health spokesperson stated that the Territory was "working with other jurisdictions" in pursuit of national reform. *Also reported by: Northern Territory News*

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Vape crackdown 'positive'

Daily Liberal, General News, 04/01/2024, Allison Hore, Page 1

as vapes find their way into the hands of children as young as primary school, a local principal has welcomed a federal government crackdown. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the disposable vape ban is "just the first chapter of the government's vaping reform".

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

### Fears of black market after vape imports banned

Australian Financial Review, Other, 01/01/2024, Gus McCubbing

Vape stores in Melbourne and Sydney say there is widespread confusion over how and when they will be affected by the federal government's ban on importing disposable single-use vapes.

[Read More](#)

### Near-tripling number of illegal vapes seized over the past year underscores mammoth task facing Border Force

Countryman, Other, 03/01/2024, Kimberley Caines

The near-tripling in the number of illegal vapes seized over the past year underscores the mammoth task facing Australian Border Force to enforce a new ban on imports. [...] "It is now illegal to import disposable vapes into this country and we hope that will start to wind down the supply of vapes that are particularly marketed to Australian kids," Health Minister Mark Butler said on Tuesday.

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### Research project focusing on improving genetics services for Indigenous patients receives additional support

National Indigenous Times, Other, 03/01/2024, Callan Morse

Central Queensland University will receive almost \$2 million through the federal government's Medical Research Future Fund to support research into genetic services for Indigenous patients. [...] Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler, said the program supports research that promises to that promises to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians.

[Read More](#)

### New 'life-changing' listings on the PBS

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 03/01/2024

Australians who have advanced ovarian cancer, chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL), small lymphocytic lymphoma (SLL), cystic fibrosis and atypical haemolytic uraemic syndrome (aHUS), now have access to cheaper medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). [...] According to a statement from the office of the Minister for Health Mark Butler (pictured), patients were previously paying anywhere between \$96,700 & \$384,800 per year for these treatments.

*Also reported by: Pharmacy Daily (None).*

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[Back to Top](#)

## Call for wealthy to pay more for aged care

Age, Wrap, 04/01/2024, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 1

Baby Boomers who can afford to pay would be asked to contribute more to their aged care costs under an anticipated shake-up of how both residential and home care are funded for older Australians. A federal government taskforce has advised Aged Care Minister Anika Wells to reform the way aged care services are meanstested to improve equity and inject new funds into a system already costing taxpayers more than \$30 billion a year.

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

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## Home care promise 'on the never-never'

The Senior - SA, General News, 01/01/2024, Eileen Wood, Page 3

Hundreds of thousands of older Australians who need help to remain safely in their own homes will be excluded from the federal government's much vaunted Support at Home Program until at least mid-2027. Aged Care Minister Anika Wells said the new program will now be delivered in two stages, with home care package and Short-Term Restorative Care Program recipients moving to the new upgraded program on July 1, 2025.

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## New Middle Swan facility

The Senior - WA, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 24

Masonic Care Western Australia has opened an innovative aged care home, Middle Swan Residential Care. The on-site celebration and opening ceremony, attended by Hasluck federal Labor MP Tania Lawrence who represented Aged Care Minister Anika Wells, highlighted the importance of quality aged care services for the area.

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## Council receives feedback during aged care review

Colac Herald, Other, 03/01/2024, Naomi Newcombe

Colac Otway Shire Council has received a progress report on its aged and disability services review, which considers options to continue or stop providing services to the community. [...] Last month Federal Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells announced the new support at home program would be delivered in two stages, with the home-care packages program and short-term restorative care program to join the program from July 1, 2025, and the Commonwealth Home Support Programme to transition into the program no earlier than July 1, 2027.

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## Latest Star Ratings report shows aged care homes are getting better

Forbes Advocate, Other, 03/01/2024, Staff reporter

Australia's aged care homes continue to lift their standards according to the latest Star Ratings report. [...] Residents are reporting the quality of care they are receiving is getting better, with 95 per cent of aged care homes now delivering acceptable, good or excellent care," said Aged Care minister Anika Wells.

Also reported by: [Canowindra News \(Online\)](#), [St George & Sutherland Shire Leader \(Online\)](#), [Southern Highland News \(Online\)](#), [Katherine Times \(Online\)](#), [Bunbury Mail \(Online\)](#), [Southern Cross \(Online\)](#).

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## Who cares ... Arcare? Aged care providers still charging for services never provided, regulator hiding

Michael West Media, Other, 03/01/2024, Sarah Russell

Aged care operators are charging elderly residents fees for services which are not provided. Dr Sarah Russell exposes Arcare and calls for Minister Anika Wells and regulators to step up.

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## Hot conditions prompt water safety warning

Star Community, Other, 03/01/2024

With predictions of a long, hot summer, research from the Royal Life Saving Society Australia in partnership with Surf Life Saving Australia has prompted urgent calls to keep water safety top of mind when planning a day in, on or near the water, including in Melton and Moorabool. The National Drowning Report 2023 released by Sport Minister Anika Wells found there were 281 drowning deaths over the past 12 months, which is 17 per cent lower than last year, and returns the annual drowning toll closer to pre-pandemic levels.

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[Back to Top](#)

## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

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No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## DEPARTMENT

### Facts put flu vaccine mercury claim to bed

Australian Associated Press, Other, 03/01/2024

Nik Dirga January 3, 2024 A permanently banned naturopath's past claim that mercury in flu vaccines causes or exacerbates Alzheimer's disease is continuing to spread on social media. This is false. [...] Australia's Department of Health and Aged Care states thiomersal was removed from all vaccines on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) more than two decades ago.

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[Back to Top](#)

## CORONAVIRUS

### 4BC, Breakfast , 03/01/2024, Peter Fagan

Experts are warning Australia must plug gaps in the health care system before the next pandemic. Data from the Grattan Institute, which has been submitted to a COVID inquiry, shows poorer groups were more likely to die from the virus. They were also less likely to be vaccinated and receive antiviral treatments.

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[Back to Top](#)

## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### No equality of care for some

The Senior - NSW, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 3

Council on the Ageing chief executive Patricia Sparrow describes the delay in including Commonwealth Home Support recipients in the Support at Home Program when it launches in 2025 as a "real setback". She said the fundamental design feature of Support at Home was the merger of the home care and home support programs "to ensure equity and consistency for the one million older people receiving some form of care to remain in their own home, regardless of where they live".

Also reported by: [The Senior - SA \(Adelaide\)](#), [The Senior - TAS \(Hobart\)](#), [The Senior - WA \(Perth\)](#), [The Senior - QLD \(Brisbane\)](#), [The Senior - VIC \(Melbourne\)](#)

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### Get on with the jobs

The Senior - QLD, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 10

And so to a new year - but not-so new problems. Aged care. It has been the bugbear of governments since well before the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Also reported by: [The Senior - VIC \(Melbourne\)](#), [The Senior - SA \(Adelaide\)](#), [The Senior - NSW \(National\)](#), [The Senior - TAS \(Hobart\)](#)

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### Sector remains so strong

The Senior - WA, General News, 01/01/2024, Therese Murray, Page 23

Retirement living could play an important role in housing Australia's rapidly ageing population, particularly as the nation battles an ongoing housing crisis. The latest Property Council Survey reveals Australia's retirement living industry continues to forecast strong confidence around capital value growth and construction activity over the coming year.

Also reported by: [The Senior - NSW \(National\)](#), [The Senior - SA \(Adelaide\)](#), [The Senior - VIC \(Melbourne\)](#)

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### Aged care assault numbers on the rise in New South Wales

HelloCare, Other, 03/01/2024, Alex Jacobs

Recent data provided to the ABC reveals police are visiting an average of 12 aged care homes each day in New South Wales as the number of assaults in NSW residential care reached a decade-high mark. Key points There were 901 assault incidents reported in NSW-based homes in 2022-23, compared to 318 in 2013-14

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### 2CC, Breakfast, 03/01/2024, Stephen Cenatiempo

Interview Chris Grice, CEO, National Seniors Australia, regarding the government changing how much people can earn as a retiree if they are off doing some work. Seniors and veterans who still want to work part-time can earn more income before their pension payments are affected. As of the first of January, the Federal Government is permanently increasing the work bonus limit by \$4,000 from \$7,800 to \$11,800, cementing what had been a temporary measure until the end of 2023. Grice says they are pleased to see that the government's been listening and made it a permanent policy.

Interview continues on: [2CC \(Canberra\)](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

## POPULATION HEALTH

## Just \$300 to play it safe

West Australian, General News, 04/01/2024, Josh Zimmerman, Page 1

A latched gate that costs less than \$300 to install could have helped save the lives of two young children who drowned near Burswood Park playground on New Year's Eve. Many Perth playgrounds near water or busy roads are protected by similar child-safe gates, including one just one kilometre from the scene of the tragedy.

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

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## Traffic is choking our cities and our citizens Traffic is choking our cities

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Odwyn Jones, Page 34

Air quality in our cities is becoming a real health hazard and needs greater attention from the regulators, writes Emeritus Professor Odwyn Jones. A recent article in the Guardian Weekly ('Choke point', 29 September, 2023) prompted me to write about this very important community health issue.

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## 3D food printing to nourish Australians with dysphagia

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Dr Liezhou Zhong & Amanda Orchard, Page 46

Poor nutrition contributes to more global deaths than any other factor, including smoking and inadequate physical activity. It is estimated to be responsible for 7% of Australia's disease burden.

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## Most common weight loss food

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 03/01/2024, Mia Erickson

When it comes to transforming your health and habits, there's no one-size-fits-all solution. However, as new data reveals, some nutritional choices reign supreme in the quest for weight loss.

Also reported by: [9News \(Online\)](#), [Medical Forum \(Perth\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Australian Retailer \(National\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#).

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## I'm a paediatrician and I see mums make this life-changing mistake every January

The Mercury, Other, 03/01/2024, Dr Golly

'Tis the season to be... tempted? The busiest Australian birth months are September/October , which, when you think about it, makes sense.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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## Channel 7, Seven News, 03/01/2024, Mike Smithson

Two-thirds of Australian adults are considered overweight or obese, and that figure is only going up. The CSIRO claims to have found a sustainable weight loss program backed by size, with a full refund available for those who don't get the results they want. A staggering 14 million Australians are overweight or obese, and health officials warn that figure is only set to increase if drastic action isn't taken.

Report continues on: [Channel 7 \(Adelaide\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

## Moving to improve

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 8

Children with long-term health conditions ranging from cystic fibrosis to cerebral palsy have been hitting the surf in Scarborough this year, all in the name of research. Part of Move to Improve, an Australian-first project led by researchers and health professionals at Perth Children's Hospital, the surf sessions offer an innovative approach to improving mental health through fun and fitness.

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## Post-pandemic asthma rise warning

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Cathy O'Leary, Page 33

Asthma deaths are once again on the rise in WA especially for men and could be linked to fewer people seeing their GP and taking their prescribed preventer medication. [...] National Asthma Council Australia director and respiratory physician Professor Peter Wark said the deaths of hundreds of Australians each year from asthma attacks would continue until good asthma control was the norm.

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## Cancer treatment now closer to home

The Senior - NSW, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 20

Cancer treatments are set to begin at Kempsey District Hospital thanks to lobbying from local charity Lilli Pilli Ladies. The ladies, along with support partner Friends of Lilli Pilli Ladies, advocated for cancer treatments closer to home for Macleay residents at a meeting with representatives from Mid North Coast Local Health District late last year.

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## Eye care a sun safety blind spot

The Senior - QLD, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 35

We all know to protect our skin before going out in the sun these days, but neglecting to protect the eyes is still all too common. Specsavers optometrist Karen Walsh said research indicates 40 per cent of people are still not wearing sunglasses when they go out on bright days.

Also reported by: [The Senior - TAS \(Hobart\)](#), [The Senior - SA \(Adelaide\)](#), [The Senior - WA \(Perth\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#).

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## ABC Radio Canberra, Breakfast, 03/01/2024, Georgia Stynes

Interview with Michele Goldman, CEO, Asthma Australia, regarding thunderstorm asthma. Goldman says thunderstorms in and of themselves aren't a problem for asthma but it's when there are high levels of pollen in the air. She adds that, unfortunately, due to climate change and extreme weather, they are seeing that we're having pollen in much higher concentrations than normal over longer periods than we normally have experienced in the past.

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[Back to Top](#)

## PRIMARY CARE

### 'Let teens access assisted dying'

The Australian, General News, 04/01/2024, Rhiannon Down, Page 1

The ACT Human Rights Commission has called for teenagers to be allowed to access voluntary assisted dying, arguing that capping the scheme at the age of 18 infringes on young people's right to receive health care "without discrimination". The territory's Human Rights Commissioner, Penelope Mathew, Children and Young People Commissioner Jodie Griffiths-Cook and Discrimination, Disability, Health and Community Services Commissioner Karen Toohey have argued that terminally ill minors should have the right to "voluntarily end their life with dignity in the same circumstances as adults".

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

## 'Sorry' hospital tells woman after long wait

Newcastle Herald, General News, 04/01/2024, Gabriel Fowler, Page 4

A broken ankle has landed a 63-year-old woman in Maitland Hospital where she has waited two weeks for urgent surgery, along with dozens of other inpatients. Elfi Oehlzelt was brought to the hospital by ambulance about 6pm on December 20, with an expectation of being discharged before Christmas.

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## Bridging the equity gap

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Chris Kane, Page 29

Health equity is non-negotiable, argues Chris Kane from the WA Primary Health Alliance. Health equity is not the same as health equality.

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## Hospitals taskforce

The Senior - NSW, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 8

The state government will establish a taskforce to tackle emergency department wait times. Workers and officials from local health districts and specialty networks will consider ways to reduce unnecessary presentations, address bed block, improve patient flow, safely discharge patients more quickly and move patients to parts of the system with more capacity.

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## 'A system in decay'

The Senior - SA, General News, 01/01/2024, Eileen Wood, Page 4

A Senate inquiry has thrown down the gauntlet to the federal government to provide Australians with access to universal dental and oral care. With one in three adults having untreated tooth decay, one in five regularly experiencing toothache and one in 10 with severe tooth loss (less than 21 teeth), the bipartisan select committee's report describes the nation's dental care as "a system in decay".

Also reported by: [The Senior - NSW \(National\)](#), [The Senior - WA \(Perth\)](#), [The Senior - VIC \(Melbourne\)](#), [The Senior - TAS \(Hobart\)](#).

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## New urgent care clinic

The Senior - TAS, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 9

Devonport's new Urgent Care Clinic opened in December. Health Minister Guy Barnett said the Medicare UCC will open for extended hours seven days a week and offer walk-in care that is fully bulk billed.

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## Demand spike at Geelong hospital emergency department, 15 ambulances in an hour

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 04/01/2024, Tamara McDonald & Alexander Blain

Geelong hospital saw a surge in demand with 15 ambulances - around four times the hourly average - transferring patients at one stage on Tuesday. It comes as the region's health system battles a summer population surge, which can swell by more than 100,000 during the busy holiday period.

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

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## Paramedic working in rural Victoria welcomes technological change over four decades of service

ABC Online, Other, 03/01/2024, Tamara Clark & Emile Pavlich

Dale Richards remembers a time as a paramedic when lifting a patient onto an ambulance bed could



further injure them. Now he can control someone's bleeding and even air to their lungs.

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## 5AA, Breakfast, 03/01/2024, Will Goodings and David Penberthy

Interview with David Pope, President, SA Salaried Medical Officers Association, and David Speirs, SA Opposition Leader, regarding the SA Government's clinical review into allegations that Adelaide emergency department staff were being forced to prioritise patients in ambulances over those in waiting rooms because of ramping. It was suggested it was to take the heat off the ramping numbers. Pope says the clinicians just need to be allowed to do their job. Pope says it is a scandal of the highest order.

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[Back to Top](#)

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Rise of the 'accidental counsellors'

Australian Financial Review, General News, 04/01/2024, Euan Black, Page 3

Leaders are increasingly becoming "accidental counsellors" as Australia's mental health burden worsens and employees become more comfortable discussing their problems at work.

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

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### More mental health support in Armadale

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 6

A Head to Health adult mental health centre has opened in Armadale offering free advice, assessment and treatment for people with stress, anxiety and other mental health issues. Funded by the Australian Government, the Armadale centre was commissioned by the WA Primary Health Alliance and is operated by St John of God Social Outreach, part of St John of God Health Care.

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### PAT needs urgent overhaul

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Dr Anthony Bloch, Page 27

The rules around the use of psychedelic medicines are not fit-for-purpose and need an urgent review, writes Dr Anthony Bloch. On July 1 last year, the TGA enacted changes to the classification of psilocybin and MDMA to enable prescribing by authorised psychiatrists for treatment-resistant depression and PTSD.

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[Back to Top](#)

## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

### Uphill fight to have dead partner's baby

The Australian, General News, 04/01/2024, Paul Garvey, Page 3

Western Australia's plan to lift its ban on posthumous fertilisation may not be enough to help the 62-year-old Perth woman at the centre of a controversial plan to conceive a child using sperm from her recently deceased husband. One of the nation's leading obstetricians warned that the woman's age meant it was all but impossible for her to find an IVF clinic in Australia that would be prepared to work with her.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH WORKFORCE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

### Weighing up the harm from antibiotics

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Cathy O'Leary, Page 16

While Australia's antibiotics use has fallen overall in the past four years, experts are warning doctors to remain vigilant about the threat from antimicrobial resistance. [...] Private scripts missed The AURA report also found there was an increasing proportion of private prescriptions for antimicrobials not subsidised under the PBS or RPBS which meant there was limited reporting and monitoring.

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[Back to Top](#)

## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### Body builder paramedic's strict work conditions after drug charges

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 03/01/2024, Eli Green

A paramedic and body builder facing multiple charges of possessing steroids and cocaine is facing strict new rules imposed by the health regulator. Marlette Le-Feuvre has had her registration as a paramedic in Queensland's Ambulance Service (QAS) restricted by the Office of Health Ombudsman (OHO) pending the resolution of a raft of drug charges.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

### 'It's similar to prohibition'

Northern Territory News, General News, 04/01/2024, Harry Brill, Page 5

Retailers across Darwin believe the nationwide crackdown on vaping will affect Territorians for the worse. In May last year, the Albanese government announced it would outlaw the importation of non-prescription vaping products from January 1, 2024.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#).

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## SPORT

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Hope through the wonders of science

Canberra Times, Editorials, 04/01/2024, Page 34

After the pandemic, we need no reminding of how much we owe our scientists. The coronavirus was defeated years before anybody at the start of the pandemic could have expected. It does obstinately remain and it morphs cunningly but vaccines mean it is no longer anywhere near as destructive as it once threatened to be - and that is thanks to the ingenuity of scientists.

Also reported by: [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#).

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### Old drugs, new MS hope

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 8

The first-ever adaptive clinical trial for Australians living with MS will seek to reverse neurological damage caused by progressive multiple sclerosis. With an initial \$4 million in funding, the trial - which starts this month will enable researchers to investigate the potential benefits of several medications simultaneously, giving hope to people living with one of the most debilitating forms of MS who currently have extremely limited treatment options.

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### Giving drugs a spray

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 8

Giving drugs a spray Biotech company Argenica Therapeutics, which is developing novel treatments to reduce brain tissue death following types of brain injury such as stroke, has been awarded a grant to develop a non-invasive way to administer the drug ARG-007. The \$419,000 in funding under the WA Government's Innovation Seed Fund Program will support research aiming to develop a new formulation of the drug that is suitable for use in an alternative therapeutic delivery route, making it more acceptable in chronic neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's disease.

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### A champion for trial access

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Ara Jansen, Page 22

Haematologist Professor Chan Cheah is driven to give Perth the best access to world-class trials and research around lymphoma and leukemia. Studying medicine seemed like a solid and sensible place to start for a young Professor Chan Cheah.

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### Numbers stack up for medical research

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 31

Every dollar invested in WA medical research returns more than double that amount to the Australian population, a landmark review has found. The WA Chapter of the Association of Medical Research Institutes said the report, The Economic Impact of the Health and Medical Research Sector in WA, was the first detailed analysis of the benefits of WA's health and medical research to the State economy and beyond.

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## Clinical trials can make a difference

The Senior - VIC, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 19

Clinical trials are an important part of the research process no matter what the disease or condition. And that includes Alzheimer's disease.

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## Thousands of kids were involved in a landmark childhood study. They're now adults themselves

ABC Online, Other, 03/01/2024, Sacha Payne & Tim Callanan

Teenager Shine rates her musical talent and sense of humour as two of her greatest attributes. "That's me," her mother Michelle adds, claiming a bit of genetic credit for her daughter's strengths.

[Read More](#)

## Incredible life-changing medical breakthroughs Qld scientists made in 2023

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 03/01/2024, Jackie Sinnerton

Queensland scientists lead the way in scientific and medical breakthroughs with 2024 likely to be another standout year for the researchers at QIMR Berghofer. Last year they made extraordinary advances in the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of serious diseases such as leukaemia, heart disease, bowel cancer, obsessive-compulsive disorder, COVID-19, multiple sclerosis, and ovarian cancer.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### Place of safety to open for intoxicated Aboriginal people in Geelong

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 04/01/2024, Tamara Mcdonald

A dedicated "place of safety" for intoxicated Indigenous people will open in the Geelong region in coming months following public drunkenness being decriminalised. The reforms were introduced in Victoria in November, and Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative has been providing outreach services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Geelong region.

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

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### Monash Rural Health launches Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander framework

National Indigenous Times, Other, 03/01/2024, Callan Morse

Monash Rural Health's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander framework was launched last month. The launch event saw Monash Rural Health staff, representatives from local health services including Mallee District Aboriginal Services, schools and community organisations come together in Mildura to jointly support the 2021-2030 framework.

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[Back to Top](#)

## OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## Doctors warn on heatwave pain

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2024, Cathy O'Leary, Page 14

A group of WA doctors has called on the State Government to protect the community and health system by stopping the expansion of gas projects and taking action to reduce emissions. It coincides with the recent introduction of the Climate Change Bill 2023 to State Parliament, which aims to contribute to goals for decarbonisation and the transitioning to net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

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## Lives at risk from vaccine burnout

The Senior - VIC, General News, 01/01/2024, Eileen Wood, Page 6

Millions of older Australians at high risk of serious illness are not getting their recommended vaccinations - and for some that may mean serious illness or death. A new report from the Grattan Institute - A fair shot: How to close the vaccination gap - says the pandemic has left many of us suffering vaccine burn-out - sick of vaccination, confused about which jabs we need, misled by misinformation, or complacent about the risks of not being vaccinated.

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## Sick ex-stonemason Vilisunia Fakalata wins record silicosis payout from five former employers

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 04/01/2024, Miles Proust

Vilisunia Fakalata used to run 10km after work but is now short of breath walking up stairs. For more than 20 years he worked as a stonemason, mostly cutting, grinding and polishing engineered stone, a popular product often found in kitchen bench tops in Australian homes.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

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[Back to Top](#)

## OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

### New rules to target vaping

West Australian, General News, 04/01/2024, Becky Freeman, Page 46

This year the Australian Government is introducing a series of measures to restrict the availability of vapes, starting this week. The new reforms address loopholes in the current laws that allow easy access to highly addictive, flavoured, cheap and harmful vaping products that are marketed to kids.

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[Back to Top](#)

## FOOD STANDARDS

### Calls for mandatory health star rating in Australia increase

The Australian Retailer, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 19

Research released by The George Institute for Global Health has shown Australia's food industry is failing to meet the targets for displaying the Health Star Rating (HSR). An uptake target of 50 per cent by 2023 was set by the Federal Government back in 2019, however according to the 2023 State of the

Food Supply Report only 36 per cent of products currently on shelves are displaying the front-of-pack labelling system that rates the overall nutritional profile of packaged foods.

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## Huge gap in major supermarkets online food labelling discovered

The Australian Retailer, General News, 01/01/2024, Page 20

Food label information has long been mandatory for physical products purchased in store at supermarkets, however, a new study has found it's often missing from online platforms. [...] Nutrition information panels (NIPs), ingredients lists and allergen declarations are requirements under Food Standards Australia New Zealand, while the ACCC also require country of origin labelling.

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

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