



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Monday, 22nd January 2024

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports just 155 international workers have been issued visas under the government's Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement, while peak aged care organisations say the sector has "moved on" and prefers sourcing workers elsewhere.
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports doctors have welcomed the release of deprescription guidelines by the global peak psychiatric prescription manual Maudsley amidst concerns antidepressants are heavily overprescribed.
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports doctors are concerned the AHPRA complaints process is being weaponised following revelations the body is investigating 39 doctors for complaints about social media posts relating to the Israel-Hamas War. *Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald](#)*
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 2) reports doctors recruited to work at government Urgent Care Clinics are being paid twice the usual wage for GPs amidst claims care at the centres costs up to four times as much as a regular GP visit.
- The **[Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 2) reports the family of a cancer patient left waiting hours for an ambulance have called for better updates to wait times for people calling triple zero. *Also reported by: [ABC Online](#)*

- The [Hobart Mercury](#) (page 3) reports repairs to Royal Hobart Hospital's ICU are still "in the planning stage" with beds closed three months after heavy rain created a water leak.
- The [West Australian](#) (page 4) reports the St John of God Midland hospital in Perth's east has been at capacity for almost a month, while health workers say they are being forced to take extreme measures to accommodate patients.

MINISTER BUTLER

PM's urgent reset to ease cost of living

Australian Financial Review, General News, 22/01/2024, John Kehoe, Page 1

Anthony Albanese is preparing to release a new cost-of-living package that will go beyond energy bill subsidies, as the prime minister attempts to reset the government's political fortunes in the new year.

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

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PM's poll-style blitz to win back voters

The Australian, General News, 22/01/2024, Geoff Chambers, Page 1

Anthony Albanese's cost-of-living, jobs and natural disaster blitz of five states and battleground seats reveals a Prime Minister desperate to reclaim political ground ahead of the Dunkley by-election. [...] Health and cancer research press conference with Health Minister Mark Butler at Allianz Stadium in Sydney PM makes guest appearances in cricket commentary boxes at the SCG.

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Urgent care clinics raise cost concerns

The Australian, General News, 22/01/2024, Natasha Robinson and Joanna Panagopoulos, Page 2

Labor is under pressure to account for the significant taxpayer expense on their flagship network of urgent care clinics after doctors raised questions over the cost and efficiency of the services, amid concerns that large corporate healthcare companies were raking in big profits from treating conditions that could be seen by ordinary GPs. [...] But federal Health Minister Mark Butler said evidence was beginning to emerge that UCCs were taking pressure off emergency departments.

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

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Labor flags gas deals to ease cost of living

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 22/01/2024, David Crowe and Rachel Clun, Page 1

Labor will promise more help on energy costs under deals with Woodside and Esso to increase gas supply, ahead of a meeting of federal MPs in Canberra on Wednesday to consider bigger changes including new subsidies for household energy bills. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler yesterday said more help would be delivered this year but he sidestepped questions about specific proposals for the meeting on Wednesday.

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

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Cabinet recalled early over living cost crisis

Canberra Times, General News, 22/01/2024, Steven Deare and Kat Wong, Page 5

The Prime Minister is calling cabinet colleagues to Canberra weeks before Parliament resumes to tackle mounting economic and cost-of-living issues. Everyday pressures facing Australians are expected to be discussed at a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, which some MPs say is routine. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler says the government is determined to hit the ground running two weeks before the first Parliament sitting period resumes in February.

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

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High cost of Albo's talks

Adelaide Advertiser, Edition Changes, 22/01/2024, Clare Armstrong, Page 1

Bringing every Labor politician to Canberra this week to discuss cost-of-living relief for struggling Australians will cost taxpayers almost half a million dollars for a single day of talks. [...] Asked about the upcoming meeting, Health Minister Mark Butler said: "We did a lot of work last year, including \$23 billion in targeted cost of living relief for households.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Just what the doctor ordered

West Australian, Edition Changes, 22/01/2024, Steven Deare and Kat Wong, Page 15

Australians with recurrent melanoma have been given fresh hope with the addition of a powerful new treatment subsidised by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said without the subsidy, these same patients could pay about \$315,000 per course of treatment.

Also reported by: [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [HealthTimes \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#).

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States save in medicine changes

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 22/01/2024, Eleanor Campbell, Page 5

People living in NSW saved \$75m on 6.7 million scripts under major prescription changes that kicked in last year, according to new figures from the government. Health Minister Mark Butler said Australians saved up to \$250m after the cost of hundreds of medicines was halved as part of a shake-up of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

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

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New treatment for melanoma to be listed on PBS

The Australian, Other, 21/01/2024

A new treatment for advanced melanoma is set to be made available on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. Opdualag is a combination of immunotherapies which help a person's own immune system fight cancer. [...] "This will give new hope to almost a thousand Australians each and every year and add a new tool to the growing toolbox of treatments for Australia's national cancer," Health Minister Mark Butler said during a press conference.

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

[Read More](#)

Financial relief on the cards as MPs rush to Canberra

Canberra Times, Other, 22/01/2024, Kat Wong

Australians are holding out hope for hip pocket relief as politicians rush to Canberra to discuss cost-of-living proposals and inflation appears to cool. Since the end of the COVID-19 lockdowns, prices have surged for everything from rents to the weekly grocery shop as a confluence of domestic and international events fuel inflation. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler says the expedited start to the political year was nod to the state of the economic environment.

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

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Health of the Nation: New report reveals snapshot of Aussies' health, lifestyle

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/01/2024, Sue Dunlevy and Adella Beaini

Australians are at risk of dying young or living a life hamstrung by preventable chronic diseases but admit they are too lazy to do anything about it, a snapshot of the nation's health shows. The study of more than 3000 people found six in 10 of us are overweight or obese, we barely exercise, we sit in

front of screens for more than eight hours a day and many of our calories come from junk food [...]
Health Minister Mark Butler also chimed in with his easy tips to get healthy.

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

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Health of the Nation: Illicit drugs and vaping on the rise in Australia

Herald Sun, Other, 21/01/2024, Sue Dunlevy

There have been huge changes in the use of drugs, alcohol and smoking in recent decades. Smoking and alcohol consumption are in decline while the use of illicit drugs and is on the rise. More and more people are turning to non-alcoholic beer, wine and spirit substitutes. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler introduced to curtail the use of the products.

[Read More](#)

PBS changes see Aussies save money

The Lismore App, Other, 21/01/2024

The Albanese Federal Government has said Australians have saved \$250 million on cheaper medicines in 2023 thanks to changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and the introduction of 60-day prescriptions. On 1 January 2023, for the first time in the 75-year history of the PBS, the Albanese Government lowered the maximum cost of prescription medications listed on the PBS from \$42. [...] Minister Mark Butler said, "Cheaper medicines have helped Australians save over \$250 million on medicines in 2023, with more savings to come in 2024.

[Read More](#)

Cabinet minister indicates government considering cost-of-living relief

9News, Other, 21/01/2024, Sarah Swain

Families being crushed by the sky-high cost of living can expect some modest relief, with a cabinet minister indicating the federal government is considering measures that may come into effect before the May budget. In May 2022 Albanese waved a \$1 coin in Adelaide, declaring, "It's not bad luck, but bad policy that wages aren't keeping up with the cost of living. [...] After Albanese summoned Labor MPs to Canberra for a mid-week meeting, there was an expectation the government would do more, Health Minister Mark Butler indicated.

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Advanced melanoma treatment to be added to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

9News, Other, 21/01/2024, Miriah Davis

Treatment for advanced melanoma is set to become cheaper ?under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) in the coming weeks. Health Minister Mark Butler announced today that patients aged over 12 and living with recurrent or metastatic melanoma will be reimbursed for Opdualag (nivolumab, relatlimab).

[Read More](#)

New skin cancer treatment added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

SBS, Other, 21/01/2024, Sam Dover

The federal government has announced the listing of a new treatment in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme [[P-B-S]] for patients suffering from advanced melanoma. The drug called Opdualag is set to be listed under the PBS from February 1 as part of the government's expansion of the national scheme. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler says this new listing will expand options to patients with advanced melanoma that is not responsive to current treatments.

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Australians set to save thousands on melanoma treatment costs after PBS inclusion

SBS, Other, 21/01/2024

A cutting-edge treatment for advanced melanoma will soon be added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, with 940 patients expected to benefit. Australians paying hundreds of thousands of dollars for advanced melanoma treatment could soon see their costs slashed. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler says this new listing will expand options to those with skin cancer.

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Victorian woman arrested and pepper sprayed after pro-Palestinian protesters picket Israeli ship

Sky News Australia, Other, 22/01/2024, Eleanor Campbell

A woman has been arrested and pepper sprayed after pro-Palestinian protesters clashed with police during a picket against an Israeli shipping company in Port Melbourne. Up to 85 protesters gathered outside Webb Dock Drive on Friday afternoon in a bid to block workers from an Israeli container ship from unloading cargo. [...] When asked about the Port Melbourne blockade on Sunday, Health Minister Mark Butler said that Australians reserved the right to protest peacefully.

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Now we know why we don't know what is going on in the health sector.

Australian Health Information Technology, Other, 21/01/2024, Olivia Ireland

This popped up last week More than 900 parliamentary questions on health and aged care unanswered By Olivia Ireland January 14, 2024 — 5.06pm More than 900 questions from the Senate about the health and aged care portfolio have been left unanswered since October, as crossbench and opposition members accuse the government of having "contempt for transparency". [...] Health Minister Mark Butler declined to comment, while the Department of Health and Aged care stated it was working to finalise outstanding responses as soon as possible.

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The Australian Government's new vaping policy should be part of a larger plan towards a tobacco endgame

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 22/01/2024, Samantha Howe, Driss Ait Ouakrim, Tony Blakely and Coral Gartner

The Australian Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler, made a strong push to address the growing problem of youth vaping in his speech at the National Press Club in May 2023. 1 While new approaches to controlling youth vaping are urgently needed, it is critical that policy reforms to end the tobacco cigarette epidemic are also pursued with equal vigour — otherwise we risk shifting people currently using vapes to tobacco smoking.

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Channel 7, Seven News (Weekend), 21/01/2024, Rebecca Maddern and Mike Amor

Australians with advanced and recurring melanoma will now have better access to a cutting edge treatment. Until now, a full course of the drug costs more than \$300,000, but from next month that price will be slashed.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, National Nine News (Sunday), 21/01/2024, Peter Overton

New help and new hope tonight for sufferers of what's known as Australia's national cancer. The Federal Government today adding a treatment for advanced melanoma to its Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme meaning it's no longer out of reach.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 7, Seven News (Weekend), 21/01/2024, Mark Ferguson

About another 100 medicines will be available for 60 day scripts tonight. The promise of some cost of living relief, the price of medicines used to treat chronic conditions such as diabetes falling.

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Channel 10, 10 News First (Weekend), 21/01/2024, Chris Bath

At 34 weeks pregnant, Felicity found a lump on her breast. It is very stressful and about ten days after giving birth, she was told her cancer had returned. As the third most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia Felicity isn't alone. A case is detected every 30 minutes and one person dies from advanced melanoma every six hours. Access to one medicine in particular is about to be boosted. The drug option currently costs about \$315,000 over the course of treatment, but from February 1st, the maximum price per script will be slashed to a little over \$31.

[Play Now](#)

Triple M Brisbane, 15:00 News (Weekend), 21/01/2024

The Federal Government is adding a dual act to the PBS next month to better assist Australians with Advanced Melanoma. Health Minister Mark Butler says the new cutting edge immunotherapy is groundbreaking.

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MINISTER WELLS

It's almost impossible to hold a moral yoga pose

Age, General News, 22/01/2024, Parnell Palme McGuinness, Page 22

One of the great pleasures of observing humanity is indulging in contradiction spotting. Pay attention long enough and almost everyone will reveal the moral yoga they are willing to perform. [...] The International Cricket Council forbade the footwear, but Sports Minister Anika Wells stood up for Khawaja, saying, "I have always advocated for athletes having the right to a voice and to speak up on matters important to them."

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

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Search for 'perfect photo' blamed for rise in adult drowning

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 21/01/2024, Mary Ward

Adults, not children, must be the focus of Australia's water safety messaging, experts have warned, as new data reveals they are most at risk of drowning during the school holidays. [...] Asked about the possibility of a new national safety campaign, a spokesperson for federal Sports Minister Anika Wells said the federal government was providing \$43.9 million over four years from 2021-22 through its Water and Snow Safety Program (WSSP) to support safety organisations.

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

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DEPARTMENT

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CORONAVIRUS

How to avoid Long Covid . a little jab will do the job

Hobart Mercury, General News, 22/01/2024, Gary Grohmann and Robert Booy, Page 19

Long COVID is still much of a mystery. Millions of people are affected globally and thousands have died from Lit, according to US data. Australian research suggests about one in 10 Covid cases are affected, some for years, but most cases do resolve within a year. The US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 14 per cent of American adults have had Long Covid at some time. Long Covid can be debilitating.

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

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

PM's aged care worker scheme slow to launch

The Australian, General News, 22/01/2024, Jess Malcolm, Page 1

Fewer than 2 per cent of visas have been granted under Labor's union-backed policy designed to fast-track foreign workers into the aged care sector almost a year after it was established, despite the government's claim the scheme would alleviate critical workforce shortages. Department of Home Affairs figures provided to The Australian reveal just 155 workers have been issued permits under the scheme as of January 5 this year.

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

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They've helped to make Australian life better, now we show our gratitude

Canberra Times, General News, 22/01/2024, Page 10

When geriatrician John Ward teamed up with some like-minded, forward-thinking people in his community with the goal of making their city and surrounding local government areas more age-friendly, his focus was on the isolated people he describes as more vulnerable because they "are not known to services".

Also reported by: [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Warrnambool\)](#), [Central Western Daily \(Orange\)](#), [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Ballarat\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Tamworth\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#).

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Money lost on home's sale

Warrnambool Standard, General News, 22/01/2024, Ben Silvester, Page 1

Financial disclosures suggest Lyndoch Living made a substantial loss on the sale of the failed May Noonan aged care home as top executives offer explanations for the ill-fated venture. Lyndoch acquired May Noonan in December, 2018, as part of then-CEO Doreen Power's growth mindset for the organisation. "This will be a win-win for everyone," Ms Power said at the time.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Probe into bub death

Herald Sun, Edition Changes - 3rd Edition, 22/01/2024, Erin Constable, Page 1

A post-mortem will shed light on how a two-month-old boy died in Ballarat at the weekend. In a "terrifying" ordeal, a neighbour tried to revive the baby after being handed the unresponsive child about 9pm on Saturday. Paramedics also tried to -revive him but he died at the property in Swamp Gum Place, Alfredton.

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

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Sam Wood is going to get you fit in 2024

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 22/01/2024

Sam Wood wants to set something straight. If you're looking to transform your health – and make 2024 the year that you stick to your goals – whether that's to feel fitter , stronger, less stressed, or simply to kick-start your energy levels – you don't need to spend every spare minute struggling at the gym and subsisting on grilled chicken and steamed broccoli for the rest of your flavour-less days.

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

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'I used to eat McDonald's every day': Aussie mum and MAFS star Selin Makoni's confession

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/01/2024, Sue Dunlevy

The News Corp study into the health of the nation found South Australia is the fattest state (38 per cent identify as being obese), followed by Tasmania and the NT (36 per cent), then Queensland (33 per cent). Overweight Australians want an easy fix , with more than 60 per cent considering weight-loss drugs, such as Ozempic, and one in three reaching for vitamin pills.

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No fluoride in drinking water putting a million Queenslanders at risk

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 22/01/2024

A decision to hand over water fluoridation decisions to local councils in Queensland a decade ago has resulted in more than a million Queenslanders having less access to fluoridated water, putting them at a greater risk of dental disease. New research, published in the Medical Journal of Australia, has found a 2012 decision to devolve responsibility for water fluoridation decisions and funding from the Queensland Government to local councils has put people at even greater risk of dental decay.

Also reported by: [Medical Journal of Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Choose healthy options for lunchboxes

Moorabool News, Other, 21/01/2024, Helen Tatchell

Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care Healthy lunches and snacks help children concentrate and play throughout the day Limit discretionary foods like processed snacks and sugary foods, and swap these for healthy alternatives.

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Murray discusses smoking cigarettes numbers wherein he notes that 19% of the population had admitted to taking this, which he believes than the overall smoking rates which are kept by the Government. He notes that 11% of people use vape, which he thinks is quite extraordinary since this new way of using nicotine still exists, despite the old one still existing.

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Healthy diet will deliver goods

Daily Telegraph, General News, 22/01/2024, Sue Dunlevy and Emma Cam, Page 14

Couples who get match-fit and watch what they eat at least six months before trying to have a baby are more likely to raise a healthy child. If they can give up smoking and alcohol, eat healthy foods especially vegetables and nuts and pack more exercise into their day, it will make them more fertile and improve the health of their infant.

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

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Driver's hearing hurt by bus noise

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 22/01/2024, Jordanna Schriever, Page 9

A school bus driver has been unsuccessful in seeking reimbursement from the Education Department over noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus he claims to have suffered while ferrying "very noisy" students along a corrugated dirt road. In his claim to the South Australian Employment Tribunal, Duncan Anderson, who continues to drive buses for the department, said he spent five years taking Orroroo Area School students along a route that included 50km of dirt roads in a "constantly vibrating" older-model bus.

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Aussie state of health in dire straits

Cairns Post, General News, 22/01/2024, Page 12

Australians are at risk of dying young or living a life hamstrung by preventable chronic diseases but admit they are too lazy to do anything about it, a snapshot of the nation's health shows. The study of more than 3000 people found 60 per cent of us are overweight or obese, we barely exercise, we sit in front of screens for more than eight hours a day and many of our calories come from junk food.

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Newcomb mum loses cancer fight

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 22/01/2024, Chelsea Bunting, Page 1

A Newcomb mum, who watched her daughter get married during her final days, has died after a short battle with stage 4 cancer. Linda Burridge, 58, had back pain in early November last year, which progressively became worse. "She would go to (Geelong hospital) emergency department on and off with back pain," her daughter Kim Burridge said.

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How Aussies' lifestyle choices are impacting their health

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/01/2024, Sue Dunlevy

Two thirds of us are overweight, up to 40 per cent of the food we eat is junk , and we spend too much time sitting and too little exercising. It taking a ravaging toll on our wellbeing. A News Corp survey revealed two thirds of Aussies are overweight and up to 40 per cent of the food we eat is junk. By the age of 34 eight in ten of us will have at least one long term health condition that grows to almost 100 per cent of people by the age of 65 the latest ABS National Health Survey reveals.

Health of the Nation: New report reveals snapshot of Aussies' health, lifestyle

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/01/2024, Andrew Koubaridis

Unfit and lazy Australians who are addicted to their screens and shunning exercise are at risk of chronic illness and a painful end of life. A new survey of 3000 Australians paints a bleak picture of our state of health, which if not addressed, could lead to lives plagued by cancer, dementia and diabetes — and even early death.

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Mysterious bruises on four-year-old Slater's legs alarmed his mother. Soon after his life was saved when he was diagnosed with a rare condition affecting four people in one million

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 21/01/2024, David Southwell

A young Aussie mum was shocked to discover the bruises on her four-year-old boy - which she thought were from energetic play - were instead warning signs of a rare, life-threatening blood disorder. Doone Breckon noticed bruises on her son Slater's legs in May last year and assumed they were caused by riding his bicycle. It was only later she realised the bruises were an abnormal dark purple and had started spreading up his legs.

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Young Queensland girl suffering painful skin condition as eczema cases rise in Australia

7news.com.au, Other, 21/01/2024, Sarah Keszler

The mother of a young Queensland girl with an agonising and poorly understood skin condition says she first thought her daughter had a bad sunburn. Summah Williams, 11, was recently hospitalised in Brisbane with a painful rash. "Her skin was so inflamed, there were dry cracks everywhere," her mother Karyn Zimny, 47, said.

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Why Australia needs a second National Action Plan for endometriosis

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 22/01/2024

A second National Action Plan for Endometriosis is vital to help improve care and the quality of life for women with this condition. Endometriosis is a common, chronic gynaecological condition affecting 11.4% (830 000) of Australian women, girls and transgender and gender-diverse people or an estimated 176 million worldwide.

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Diabetes-related foot disease and its educational challenges

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 22/01/2024

People with diabetes-related foot disease are often not sufficiently educated on preventing and managing foot ulcers and other related conditions, and more research is needed to find the best approach so people with this condition can best manage themselves. Diabetes prevalence has steadily increased over the past 20 years, with approximately one in 20 Australians having this disease (here).

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PRIMARY CARE

ICU rain leak repair delay

Hobart Mercury, General News, 22/01/2024, Sue Bailey, Page 3

Three months after heavy rain caused a leak in the Royal Hobart Hospital's new intensive care unit,

beds remain closed and repairs are still "in the planning stage". The health union has described the failure to repair the damage as "unacceptable and bizarre". A Health Department spokesman said the Liverpool pod of the hospital's ICU was affected by a water leak caused by heavy rain over the weekend of October 21-22.

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More action needed for medical centre

Burnie Advocate, General News, 22/01/2024, Alex Fair, Page 11

Not surprisingly, the impending closure of the East Devonport Medical Centre has become somewhat of a political battleground. Of course this was always expected as in situations like this, where it can often feel like the blame game aspect can overtake the task of finding some sort of a solution. Last week saw Labor health spokesperson Anita Dow fire shots at the government for failing to provide an alternative provider for the centre, while also painting a picture of the extra pressure its closure would have on the state's health system.

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New push to split health district

Daily Advertiser, General News, 22/01/2024, Allan Wilson, Page 2

Murray MP Helen Dalton has renewed calls for Griffith to be in a separate health district, following the loss of two doctors from the area over the new year. A spokesperson for the Murrumbidgee Local Health District said a loss of staff can occur for various reasons. "Changes occur due to staff promotions, staff taking up other positions, place of residence relocations and family reasons," a spokesperson said.

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More than 50 St John of God Midland clinicians slam State Government for overrun hospital

West Australian, Other, 21/01/2024, Claire Sadler

Medical staff at one of Perth's biggest public hospitals say they are being forced to consider extreme measures like bunking hospital beds to meet out-of-control demand as they levelled blame at the State Government for an overrun emergency department. [...] It's a situation Australian Medical Association WA president Michael Page said was "really quite horrifying".

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Guidelines warn of antidepressants crisis

The Australian, General News, 22/01/2024, Natasha Robinson, Page 1

Growing disquiet about the overprescription of antidepressants has been acknowledged in the first guidelines on deprescribing. Doctors are being told the benefits of the drugs will be outweighed in some patients by adverse effects including physical dependence, impaired capacity for feeling, memory or concentration difficulties, and sexual side-effects.

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High price of coming out laid bare

Age, General News, 22/01/2024, Bianca Hall, Page 6

A landmark new study has offered the most comprehensive snapshot ever provided of gay, lesbian and queer sexualities in Australia, showing 9.5 per cent of Australians do not identify as heterosexual, with that figure rising to 18.9 per cent among 16- to 24-year-olds. But the research, which also documented the prevalence of diverse genders, also revealed LGBTQ Australians report high rates of maltreatment, with more than threequarters of queer young people having experienced abuse and maltreatment at the hands of their parents or other authority figures.

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Bully bots strike fear

Courier Mail, General News, 22/01/2024, Matty Holdsworth, Page 1

Anti-bullying campaigner and bereaved mum Kate Everett says every parent in the country should be "terrified" that bullies are now armed with arguably the most powerful weapon yet to harm other children artificial intelligence. Six years and two weeks since Dolly's tragic death, Mrs Everett said it was heartbreaking that children were still being victimised by the same cruel treatment her daughter was subjected to.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Mental health dead zone

Launceston Examiner, General News, 22/01/2024, Stephanie Dalton, Page 1

For one Launceston mother, the fight to get psychiatric help for her adult son has been long, difficult, and "gut-wrenching". And the determining factor she says has been preventing her son from receiving emergency psychiatric care? His location. Sadly, Anna's* story isn't unique. She and her son are just one of multiple patients, families, and healthcare professionals who have been let down by Northern Tasmania's Mental Health Service.

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Young Walcha local takes a starring role in new feature film

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 22/01/2024, Rachel Clark, Page 5

When Leila McDougall set out to write the script for her first feature film, Just a Farmer, she wanted to capture the authenticity of the regions. The film aims to shine a light on mental health struggles within regional farming communities. And the Walcha-born writer thought one of the best ways to do that, was to cast local 'country' actors. So, when it came to finding the perfect person to play the lead character's son, she knew that fellow Walcha local Oliver Overton was a perfect fit.

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Flood-hit urged to seek support

Shepparton News, General News, 22/01/2024, Georgia Tacey, Page 2

The Victorian Government is encouraging regional Victorians to prioritise their mental health and seek help if needed after the second flooding event in just over a year. Victorian Mental Health Minister Ingrid Stitt said a range of free resources were available to offer support for those who needed it. Mental health and wellbeing services, or 'locals', are available in-person and via telehealth.

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Break barriers in Major way

Shepparton News, General News, 22/01/2024, Kady Hadjab, Page 4

We can never talk enough, or care enough, about our mental health. Like an invisible thread, the concept of wellbeing intricately weaves through the fabric of our shared human experience. Mental illnesses, with their indiscriminate nature, can affect any one of us at any given time. When confronted by the enormity of these challenges, it's not uncommon to perceive our struggles as unique, almost unprecedented in their complexity.

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More pay, not free yoga: Workplace wellness programs have little benefit

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 21/01/2024, Ellen Barry

Employee mental health services have become a billion-dollar industry. New hires, once they have found the restrooms and enrolled in pension plans, are presented with a panoply of digital wellness solutions, mindfulness seminars, massage classes, resilience workshops, coaching sessions and sleep apps.

[Read More](#)

Help for struggling new parents in regional Queensland

The Courier Mail, Other, 21/01/2024, Jackie Sinnerton

Telehealth psychiatry has been given a \$2m boost to help support pregnant women or new parents in the regions who are struggling with their mental health. Telehealth psychiatry has been given a \$2m boost to help support pregnant women or new parents in the regions who are struggling with their mental health.

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Anorexia and other eating disorders are strongly linked to perfectionism. These experts say that's not well known

ABC Online, Other, 21/01/2024, Anna-Kelsey, Rose Kerr and Sana Qadar

Jamie* remembers the year she developed a dangerous association with food. At the age of 12, the now 31-year-old consumer researcher and peer support worker felt mounting anxiety about entering high school. "Then I noticed that I had this weird feeling of power when I didn't eat," she tells ABC RN's All in the Mind It quickly developed into the idea "that if I ate anything, I was a failure". All in the Mind is an exploration of the mental: the mind, brain and behaviour — everything from addiction to artificial intelligence.

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'I couldn't hide from it any more': Lockdowns drove Chantelle to the brink, and she wasn't alone

The Guardian, Other, 21/01/2024, Natasha May

In 2020, Chantelle Fogg was 23 and the primary carer for her teenage brother. She had been stood down without pay from her job in hospitality and was in a marriage that was breaking down. "I had put up with [a lot] for [many] years and it wasn't until I was at home all the time, and it was in my face and I couldn't hide from it any more, that I decided that I'd had enough," she said.

[Read More](#)

Signs of past-partum depression: Aussie mum hospitalised after trying to take her own life after giving birth

7news.com.au, Other, 21/01/2024, Jacqueline Mey

Just six weeks after giving birth to her son, first-time mum Dominique Daye fought back tears as she handed the baby over to a nurse. "I can't do this anymore," she said, as she desperately sought some relief from the overwhelming, crippling flood of post-partum emotions.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Sydney doctor fought apartheid and supported immigrants

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 22/01/2024, Page 30

Dr George Cohen, a pioneer in medical philanthropy, an antiapartheid politician and a notable immigrant in Australia, died in Sydney on December 9, aged 96. Born in South Africa, he qualified as a radiologist in Johannesburg and in 1959, worked alongside the world-renowned missionary Albert Schweitzer, providing free medical care to a leper colony in Lambarene, a remote and dangerous part of French Equatorial Africa, now the modern-day country of Gabon.

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Doctors probed for Gaza views

Age, General News, 22/01/2024, Henrietta Cook, Page 1

Dozens of doctors are under scrutiny from the medical watchdog for sharing their views about the Gaza war on social media, including for using the term genocide. The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency confirmed it was "making inquiries" into 39 practitioners after receiving 59 complaints.

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

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Feeney, the very, very quiet American

Age, General News, 22/01/2024, Jim McCluskey, Page 30

In the late 1990s, the Australian research community was abuzz with rumours an anonymous philanthropic donor was giving millions of dollars to Australian medical research, particularly in Queensland. Only in 1997 did it become openly known the American philanthropist Chuck Feeney was the source of this remarkable generosity, working through the foundation he created for this purpose, The Atlantic Philanthropies.

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Healthy respect

Newcastle Herald, General News, 22/01/2024, Damon Cronshaw, Page 1

He was a calm Hunter voice during the lockdown, and now Professor Nathan Bartlett is poised to become Newcastle's citizen of the year today. Lord mayor Nuatali Nelmes said the virologist's work over 20 years would save lives, and the honour was fitting recognition.

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Exam success for NQ anaesthetics trainees

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 22/01/2024, Daneka Hill, Page 4

Townsville University Hospital is celebrating a triple exam success after three of the hospital's anaesthetics trainees passed the notoriously difficult ANZCA primary exam with flying colours. Designed to test a doctor's knowledge, the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists' (ANZCA) primary exam is the second last test a doctor must pass before they're named a specialist anaesthetist.

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

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We will not panic: Guild

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 21/01/2024

Time is of the essence if the government and Pharmacy Guild of Australia are to sign an Eighth Community Pharmacy Agreement (8CPA) by 1 March, the Guild's chief negotiator, Anthony Tassone says.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

PBS adds melanoma treatment

Launceston Examiner, General News, 22/01/2024, Page 5

Australians living with recurrent melanoma will have a new treatment option subsidised by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Patients with advanced melanoma will be reimbursed for a treatment called Opdualag - a combination of immunotherapies that help the body fight cancer.

Also reported by: [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [9News \(Online\)](#), [9News \(Online\)](#).

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

She was left in agony

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 22/01/2024, Tara Miko, Page 2

The family of a woman who suffered excruciating pain while waiting for an ambulance that didn't arrive is calling for greater transparency in the dispatching system. Betty Dobson was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in November 2022 and underwent an aggressive chemotherapy and radiation treatment plan. She lost more than 30kg in four months and, in February 2023 was at home with her husband Steve Dobson when she developed what he said was "excruciating pain".

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

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Midland doctors wanted sick child admitted, but they had no beds

West Australian, General News, 22/01/2024, Claire Sadler, Page 4

A Perth Hills mother has spoken out about not being able to stay at St John of God Midland hospital overnight due to unavailability of beds after complaints from medical staff the emergency department was overrun. An explosive letter, sent to The West Australian on behalf of more than 50 desperate SJOG Midland clinicians, said the hospital was coming up to a month on code yellow - meaning the 307-bed hospital is at capacity with patients left in corridors and ramped in ambulances because no beds were available.

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

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

The way we talk about women's health needs to change

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 22/01/2024, Aajuli Shukla

As a female GP in an area of high socio-economic disadvantage with burgeoning and impossible to get into gynaecological clinics, my scope of practice includes a lot of women's health. This comprises gynaecological issues, screening, sexual health, contraception, menopause, and the management of common issues such as vaginal discharge and abnormal menstrual cycles. The breadth of women's health can be intimidating. In one of the textbooks on general practice, the women's health section covers ten chapters, whereas men's health takes up about three.

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SPORT

Mum's the word for Australia Day in Gabba Test match

The Australian, General News, 22/01/2024, Robert Craddock and Daniel Cherny, Page 3

Australia Day will not be explicitly mentioned at the Gabba Test on Friday and a ground announcer will tell the crowds the January 26 national holiday means different things to different people. Men's

international cricket returns to the public holiday, which coincides with day two of the second Test between Australia and the West Indies in Brisbane.

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

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Lofty climb to the finish

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 22/01/2024, Eva Blandis and Simeon Thomas-Wilson, Page 1

Cycling fanatic Graeme Gilbertson was among thousands of spectators who flocked to Mount Lofty on Sunday to watch the sixth and final stage of the 2024 Tour Down Under. The 79-year-old Adelaide man who, in 2016, became the oldest South Australian to cycle up all three sides of Mont Ventoux in France said the Tour Down Under was an annual tradition since he took up riding almost 20 years ago.

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It's young talent time at the AO

Age, General News, 22/01/2024, Greg Baum and Billie Eider, Page 1

The teen titans are taking over the Australian Open, with two teenagers notching up wins and a third winning her first set in the fourth round. Wunderkind Mirra Andrejeva's Australian Open is over, but her career is just starting. The 16-year-old Russian won the first set against 2021 French Open champion Barbora Krejčíková last night before succumbing in three.

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

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Jake Gades great again

Herald Sun, Sport, 22/01/2024, Daniel Cherny and Tim Michell, Page 40

The Big Bash League season is at the pointy end and for five clubs already, it's time to look ahead. The Herald Sun looks at the player movement market, particularly through an Australian prism. Cricket writer Daniel Cherny brings you the latest signing news, while BBL and SuperCoach expert Tim Michell offers list analysis. Under Cricket Australia rules, once the first ball of the BBL final is bowled on Wednesday night, the league enters its embargo period in which clubs cannot officially sign players until a date yet to be confirmed.

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Tickets for storm helpers

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 22/01/2024, Page 3

Free tickets to Monday night's Big Bash League clash at Heritage Bank Stadium are on offer for the Gold Coast's storm recovery crews. The Brisbane Heat will face off against the Adelaide Strikers in the must-win challenger final at Carrara. The victors will take on the Sydney Sixers in the fight for this season's title. Cricket Australia is offering free tickets to the game for emergency service personnel, Energex workers, council staff, and volunteers with several organisations, including the SES and Surf Life Saving Queensland.

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Expand Ticket to Play program: Labor

Launceston Examiner, General News, 22/01/2024, Charmaine Manuel, Page 3

Labor has proposed expanding the Ticket to Play sport program as part of a suite of initiatives' that could ease education costs on parents. Labor education spokesperson Josh Willie said the party would invest \$1 million into the Ticket to Play program to help more parents cover the cost of kids playing sport.

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Lifesavers on high alert as drownings, rescues surge

Newcastle Herald, General News, 22/01/2024, Anna Falkenmire, Page 8

The school holidays are drawing to a close but lifesavers are warning swimmers not to let their guards

down as the drowning risk remains heightened. It comes amid a spate of drownings and mass rescues at Hunter and Central Coast beaches throughout the summer.

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

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Trial to fight incurable cancer

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 22/01/2024, Sarah Booth, Page 6

A world-first clinical trial to fight an incurable cancer is being led by a Melbourne hospital, as a top researcher warns Australia's treatments are falling behind those overseas. St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne hopes their "personalised" medicine approach will move the country past a "one size fits all approach" to multiple myeloma and help those who with little options after standard treatment fails The blood cancer kills 1100 Australians a year, but trial lead SVHM haematology director Professor Hang Quach said that would probably increase "triple-fold in a decade" as our population aged.

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Australia being 'left behind' as federal research and development funding sinks to 30-year low

The Guardian, Other, 22/01/2024, Josh Butler

Australian science has been "left behind" as federal funding for research and development sinks to a 30-year low, a leading technology organisation has warned, with concerns that the shortfall is leaving the nation open to economic shocks and shortages of critical items like vaccines. Department of Industry, Science and Resources officials confirmed that direct government spending on R&D in 2022-23 was only 0.49% of GDP, "the lowest in the last 30 years".

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

State police dig in as fight with taser victim's family drags on

The Australian, General News, 22/01/2024, Michael McKenna, Page 5

Queensland's police service is continuing to fight legal action launched by the family of a disabled Aboriginal schoolgirl who was tasered by officers investigating allegations she was a victim of abuse. Tiejwana McLennan, who has cerebral palsy and an intellectual disability, in 2020 was repeatedly tasered until she was unconscious by police who appeared unannounced at the then 16-year-old's special needs school in Townsville to formally interview her over the abuse allegations.

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

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Urbanisation 'contributing to health inequities'for First Nations peoples

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 22/01/2024

A new research agenda from the University of Queensland will focus on health and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations people living in urban areas of Australia. As Australia becomes more urbanised, there is an urgent need to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for urban First Nations peoples, according to a Perspective published in the Medical Journal of Australia.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Darwin , Sundays, 21/01/2024, Sajarn Stow

Interview with Matt Holland, co-founder, 3x3 Champion League Basketball. Stow says the 3x3 Champion League Basketball has hosted two pro stop between Alice Spring Centres and the Sentinels

in Melbourne. Holland points out that he has spent part of two or three months in the Territory every year and have been working with a programme called Red Dust Role Models which has done modelling programmes on community for 30 years.

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OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

No relevant coverage

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

The company using MDMA to treat post-traumatic stress

Australian Financial Review, General News, 22/01/2024, Tom Rabe, Page 12

Drug development company Emyria is eyeing a major expansion of its MDMA-assisted post-traumatic stress disorder therapy after getting the green light from regulators to prescribe the world-leading treatment to patients.

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

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Fillers? You can't say that

Daily Telegraph, General News, 22/01/2024, Shannon Molloy, Page 17

Australia's cosmetic injectables industry has reacted with fury to new restrictions on how they describe services, including a ban on terms such as "fillers" and "anti-wrinkle". The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) wrote to cosmetic and beauty industry bodies on January 15, advising of an immediate overhaul of the rules around advertising.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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Too much side effect information 'reduces medication uptake'

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 22/01/2024

Evidence suggests that long lists of side effects on patient information lists do not improve informed consent but instead decrease consumer willingness to take medication. Informed consent is central to Western medicine, and sharing medication side-effect information with patients is viewed as core to patient autonomy and shared decision making (here). [...] PILs are available at pharmacies and in some medication packaging (here), online through the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA; here), and are compulsory to share with patients in clinical trials (here).

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OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

Fentanyl lies in wait as wolf at Australia's door: health experts

Canberra Times, General News, 22/01/2024, Page 8

Australia is underprepared for the possibility of a fentanyl epidemic as the drug lies in wait as the "wolf at the country's door". That's the warning from health experts who say while illicit fentanyl is yet to garner underworld popularity, more needs to be done to get ahead of its threat.

Also reported by: [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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FOOD STANDARDS

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AICIS

Fire station 'substandard'

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 22/01/2024, Chris Burns, Page 3

Burdekin's MP has taken aim at the state government, saying the region's current fire station isn't up to standard and is in dire need of replacement. MP Dale Last has urged for progress to be made, saying the current location has been contaminated with Per and PolyFluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) for five years. Mr Last said a new fire station was needed not just because it was contaminated but because it was also "substandard".

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Mel Wells: UTAS PhD candidate's 'alarming' research finds PFAS chemicals in Tasmanian little penguin populations

The Mercury, Other, 21/01/2024, Rob Inglis

Originally from Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs, Mel Wells moved to Tasmania four years ago to begin her PhD studies. But her passion for nature and the marine environment was developed long before then. [...] It identified an association between the urbanisation of breeding sites and higher levels of PFAS contamination in birds, including along the banks of the Derwent River and in Burnie.

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