



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Wednesday, 24th January 2024

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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[Hobart Mercury](#)** (page 1) reports that the Director of the Royal Hobart Hospital Emergency Department, Paul Scott, has told an inquiry into ramping that staff were leaving the emergency department over fears of being sued due to poor working conditions.
- **[Courier Mail](#)** (page 3) reports that Andrew Liveris, head of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, has called on the Queensland government to make a decision over whether or not the Gabba will be rebuilt for the Games.
- **[Northern Territory News](#)** (page 3) reports that 82 graduate nurses will embark on a 12-month program in the Northern Territory, filling critical gaps in the Northern Territory health sector.
- **[Hobart Mercury](#)** (page 3) reports that Tasmania's Labor opposition will support a scheme put forward by General Practice Training Tasmania in which GP's can work in regional and rural areas of Tasmania for five years in exchange for the government paying off their HECS debt.
- **[Herald Sun](#)** (page 9) reports that up to 15,000 junior doctors have joined a class action against St Vincent's Hospital, Alfred Health and the Royal Women's Hospital, claiming millions in unpaid overtime.

### McBain seeks urgent advice

News Weekly (Merimbula), General News, 24/01/2024, Denise Dion, Page 3

Member for Eden-Monaro Kristy McBain said she was seeking urgent advice in relation to any possible closure of Curalo Medical Clinic and has been in contact with Health Minister Mark Butler and the primary health care network Coordinare. "I hope to receive an update soon and will continue to advocate for quality health care for the Eden community," Ms McBain told ACM.

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### New payment incentives offering doctors up to \$21,000 to move rural

The Australian, Other, 23/01/2024, Grace Baldwin

Healthcare workers are being offered generous incentives to take their much-needed skills to Australia's rural towns. [...] Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler said the incentive would be a "win-win" for doctors and patients, and more people would be able to access better healthcare in their own community.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Perth Now \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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### New Workforce Incentives Program payment offers skilled workers \$21,000 to fill gaps in rural and regional Australia

7news.com.au, Other, 23/01/2024, Hayley Taylor

A new offer is on the table for healthcare workers, encouraging them to bring their sought after skills to the sticks. [...] Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler called it "a win-win for doctors and for patients who will be able to access more health care services in their own community," in a statement on Monday.

[Read More](#)

### Researchers unite for major national cancer projects

Australian Cancer Research Foundation, Other, 23/01/2024, Steph Chandler

Scientists from the Garvan Institute of Medical Research are playing pivotal roles in two major new cancer research collaborations funded by NHMRC Synergy Grants, announced by Mark Butler, the Minister for Health and Aged Care. These ambitious five-year programs bring together leading scientists across multiple Australian institutes to tackle two of the most pressing problems in cancer extending the benefits of immunotherapy to solid tumours and preventing lethal metastases.

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### Personalised medicine research projects backed by major grants

Australian Cancer Research Foundation, Other, 23/01/2024, Steph Chandler

A significant funding boost will help Garvan's cancer and immunology researchers pursue new directions and form collaborations. Groundbreaking personalised medicine research projects have been launched at Garvan with \$10 million in highly competitive federal grants. The four grants will enable researchers to investigate tailoring treatments based on individual molecular profiles in diseases like cancer and autoimmunity, thanks to National Health and Medical Research Council funding announced today by Mark Butler, Minister for Health and Aged Care.

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### Psychologists renew demand for doubling of Medicare-subsidised sessions

The Guardian, Other, 24/01/2024, Sarah Basford Canales

Psychologists are renewing calls for the federal government to double the number of subsidised psychology sessions a patient can access, along with reducing the growing gap fee, as the cost-of-

living crisis puts households under financial strain. [...] The health minister, Mark Butler, said the Coalition's doubling of sessions had resulted in more people missing out.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### Opinion: Does the Aged Care Rating System pass the pub test?

Inside Ageing, Other, 23/01/2024, Rodney Jilek

In this guest post, Dr Rodney Jilek discusses the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's response on how compliance (inc non-compliance) impacts an aged care provider's star rating [...] Anika Wells, the Minister for Aged Care has staked her reputation on it.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

No relevant coverage

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

### ABC News, Drive, 23/01/2024, Sarah Dingle

Interview with Monash University head of general practice department Danielle Mazza. Dingle says a survey of Victorian women has found women are more likely to suffer from chronic pain but less likely to receive treatment. Mazza says an inquiry will occur to determine what response and treatment women receive. She notes the Federal Government under Ged Kearney has funded endometriosis clinics nationally in primary care for women to attend.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCCARTHY

No relevant coverage

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## DEPARTMENT

### Wilcannia's Health and Wellbeing Centre now open

Barrier Truth, Other, 23/01/2024, Melanie Gates

Health services are now being provided from Wilcannia's Health and Wellbeing Centre in Bonney St following a move to the fresh new facility over the past three days. [...] "I would like to thank our funding bodies -The Department of Regional NSW, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation, Maari Ma and the NSW Ministry of Health for their assistance and also the support received from Central Darling Shire Council.

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### Funding deal brings NDIS services to unsupported Aussies

Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA) welcomes the recommendation from the Independent NDIS Review for foundational community-based mental health and psychosocial support for people outside the NDIS. [...] "Clearly alternative pathways are needed to channel future demand and to help meet the massive gap that is being revealed in the current national assessment of unmet needs being commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care," Gye added.

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## **The latest COVID-19 news and case numbers from around the states and territories More for You More for You**

MSN Australia, Other, 23/01/2024

As school holidays come to an end and people return to work, Australians are reminded to take precautions against another "substantial" wave of COVID-19.[..] Due to changes in testing and reporting requirements, Chief Medical Officer Professor Paul Kelly says these figures are likely underestimates.

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## **Free nursing TAFE pipeline has record number of nurses**

Nursing Review, Other, 23/01/2024, Arshmah Jamal

A record-breaking 1,400 students have been enrolled for a TAFE nursing diploma, fully funded by the Queensland Government. Students will save almost \$25,000 with the initiative supporting 3,500 training places. [...] The health industry in QLD has a projected 16.4 per cent change by 2026, with nurses and midwives projecting a 13.7 per cent change – meaning 11,079 jobs will be created. However, the Department of Health and Aged Care found that since 2016, there has been a 60 per cent increase in nurses and midwives who have taken an extended leave of absence.

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## **A welcome site: Governmental 'digital social equity' improving, says global analysis**

PS News, Other, 23/01/2024, Chris Johnson

Australia is emerging as a world leader when it comes to improving the accessibility of government websites, particularly for non-English speakers, according to research just released. Site performance of government websites has also improved nationally. [...] was undertaken between June and September 2023 and is an analysis of websites across the Federal Government's myGov, Services Australia, NDIS, Australian Taxation Office, Department of Health and Aged Care, Department of Veterans' Affairs, as well as government sites of all states and territories.

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## **Interim Centre for Disease Control begins operations amid calls for its complete establishment**

PS News, Other, 23/01/2024, James Day

This month the long-awaited first iteration of Australia's Centre for Disease Control (ACDC) begins operations, with legislation for its establishment expected to be passed through parliament this year. [...] The Department of Health and Aged Care in charge of the ACDC noted the COVID-19 pandemic, Japanese encephalitis virus outbreak, emergence of monkeypox, and 2019-2020 bushfires.

[Read More](#)

## **An important message from RANZCOG, RACGP, ACRRM and RDAA**

RANZCOG, Other, 23/01/2024

We are writing to you about the recent communications about changes to the RANZCOG Diploma and Advanced Diploma programs. [...] We have engaged in ongoing discussions with the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHA) and TEQSA over a two-year period, but unfortunately medical Colleges were not permitted to prospectively to use the diploma nomenclature.

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# CORONAVIRUS

## Paris 2024 Olympic gold medal favourite Matt Wearn's battle ahead of ILCA 7 world titles

Adelaide Now, Other, 23/01/2024, Amanda Lulham

Matt Wearn didn't get Covid badly but long Covid saw him struggle to eat, walk or do even the most basic tasks. It also stopped the Olympic champion sailing.

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## Rising star of Australian ballet's horror nine-month battle with long COVID

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 23/01/2024, Kate McIlwain

Early last year, Wollongong -born dancer Riley Lapham was one of the rising stars of Australian ballet. One of five young dancers vying for a \$25,000 prize in the Telstra Ballet Dancer of the Year Award, the 23-year-old did interviews and photoshoots showing a glamorous day-in-the-life of a full time dancer.

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## Life boosts remote health

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 23/01/2024

Life Pharmacy Group (LPG) pharmacists administered 479 COVID-19 vaccinations to aged care residents at 10 regional and remote sites across New South Wales during the Christmas/New Year period. It comes as figures show that just 38% of aged care residents have received a COVID-19 booster shot.

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## 2CC, Canberra Live, 23/01/2024, Leon Delaney

Interview with ACT Health Directorate senior director of public health epidemiology and reporting Rebecca Hundy. Delaney says the ACT Government is giving away rapid antigen tests as they need to get rid of them all before they expire and it comes as the Government no longer requires to report COVID cases. Hundy says they will be giving away free rapid tests until the 31st of January and these will expire at the end of February. She notes they are transitioning COVID as similar to other respiratory illnesses.

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## 2CC, Breakfast, 23/01/2024, Stephen Cenatiempo

Interview with Monash University's Prof Kate Fitz-Gibbon. Cenatiempo says Monash University has been involved in an Australian-first study that examines the impacts of long COVID on intimate partner violence victim-survivors. Fitz-Gibbon says they found long COVID changed the dynamic of a relationship and has led to individuals needing to either withdraw partly or fully from the paid workforce. She notes they will be having conversations with policymakers across Australia to inform ongoing delivery of the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children.

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## 2GB, Drive, 23/01/2024, Chris O'Keefe

Interview with former Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt. Hunt says there would have been probably another 30,000 lives lost from COVID if they did not take action early. He notes Brendan Murphy, then-Deputy Chief Health Officer Paul Kelly, and Scott Morrison would debate the risks, the actions and the responses and always looking to be proportionate. Hunt states they did a ten-year national mental health and suicide prevention plan as well as doubled the services for psychological support and created a national network of psychological service centres for kids and young adults.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### Labor faces hard call on deeming rates for retirees

Sydney Morning Herald, Money, 24/01/2024, Noel Whittaker, Page 1

Deeming rates are shaping up as a big issue as we approach the May budget. Life expectancies are rising, the number of retirees is growing, and deeming rates affect almost every one of them.

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

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### Minda choke death avoidable

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 24/01/2024, Kathryn Bermingham, Page 9

A Minda nursing home client who died after choking on a peanut butter sandwich could not be properly supervised because of staffing issues at the facility where he lived. Christopher Lens, 63, choked in his bedroom at Minda's Pat Kaufmann Centre nursing home on January 29, 2019.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#).

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### Aged care residents receive top care for continence but not for mental health, end-of-life or infection, world-first study finds

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 23/01/2024, Anmj Staff

Aged care residents receive best practice care for continence issues but substandard attention when it comes to other common conditions including mental health, end-of-life care and urinary tract infections, according to world-first Australian research. [...] "The data for this study was collected around the time that the Royal Commission into Aged Care reported its findings in 2021.

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### Medically unfit to drive? Poor transport options leave seniors stranded

The Senior, Other, 24/01/2024, Eileen Wood

You've driven for possibly 60 years plus, have a clean driver licence and absolutely rely on your car to go shopping, for recreation, to go to medical appointments and to visit family and friends. Then you hear those soul destroying words from your GP or specialist.

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### Cost of living help urgently needed for older Australians, say advocates

The Senior, Other, 23/01/2024

The cost of groceries, fuel and insurances are some of the major financial concerns facing older Australians during current soaring inflation. On the eve of Labor's cost-of-living caucus meeting, National Seniors Australia has announced it supports moves to reduce the pressures on all Australians.

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### Surge in summer drownings

Hobart Mercury, General News, 24/01/2024, Simon Mcguire, Page 3

More people have drowned in Australia this summer than this time last year. Since December 1, 62 people have drowned nationwide, which is a 17 per cent increase from last summer.

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## How, where and when to talk to your child about drugs

West Australian, General News, 24/01/2024, Nicole Lee, Page 49

With several drug overdoses already this festival season, and recent news of three new recreational drugs identified by the drug-checking service in Canberra, many parents of teenagers will be wondering how they can keep their kids safe from harmful drugs. Because illicit drugs are unregulated, there's no quality control or restrictions on sales, like there is for alcohol or medicines.

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## Health of the Nation: Experts' 10 top tips to shed kilos by Easter

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/01/2024, Sue Dunlevy

Two in five Australians will have stacked on an average 3 kilos over the Christmas break a Cancer Council study found. Our expert diet tips can help you shift that spare tyre by Easter.

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

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### Skin cancer alert

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 24/01/2024, Page 8

With uv levels consistently at extreme levels across north west Victoria this week, SunSmart Victoria is ramping up its skin cancer prevention campaign "Don't Let Cancer In", as new data shows melanoma diagnoses could increase by 24 per cent over the next decade. The latest data from the Victorian Cancer Registry at Cancer Council Victoria shows melanoma continues to be the fifth most common cancer in the state, despite it being one of the most preventable cancers.

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### Australian woman who find breast lumps tell of lengthy wait times for diagnostic mammograms

ABC Online, Other, 23/01/2024, Ashleigh Barraclough

With one-in-seven Australian women likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer, concern is growing about the wait times for mammograms around the country. People who discover lumps or other concerning changes to their breasts require a diagnostic mammogram, as opposed to a standard screening, but many are forced to either wait for weeks or travel for the diagnostic service.

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### Rebecca was just 15 when a doctor told her to get pregnant, or have a hysterectomy

SBS, Other, 23/01/2024, Amy Hall

Many endometriosis patients are being told to have a baby to treat or manage the condition, despite there being no scientific evidence to support such a move. Rebecca Buckley has never had a 'normal' period.

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### Kmart's \$25 pool float has been roasted over sun safety concerns

Adelaide Now, Other, 23/01/2024, Claudia Poposki

Kmart released a 2-in-1 Inflatable Pool Lounger, but social media users had a strong reaction to the Anko product and its sun safety implications. [...] The Cancer Council recommends that, while in the sun, Aussies should be using sunscreen that is at least SPF30+ in protection.

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## First-of-its-kind inquiry launched into women's pain

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/01/2024

The investigation aims to overhaul Australia's 'old-fashioned attitudes towards women', in a bid to improve healthcare and reduce stigma. Just one third of women said their clinicians listened to them and focused on their needs

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## Melanoma prevention the best thing under the sun

Sunraysia Daily, Other, 23/01/2024

With UV levels consistently at extreme levels across north west Victoria this week, SunSmart Victoria is ramping up its skin cancer prevention campaign, Don't Let Cancer In, as new data shows melanoma diagnoses could increase by 24 per cent over the next decade. The latest data from the Victorian Cancer Registry at Cancer Council Victoria shows melanoma continues to be the fifth most common cancer in the state, despite it being one of the most preventable cancers.

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## ABC News, News Breakfast, 23/01/2024, Michael Rowland and Lisa Millar

Interview with Lung Foundation chief executive Mark Brooke. Rowland says doctors say a long-lasting chronic cough could be a sign of underlying health issues. Brooke says Australians should talk to their general practitioner if it does not go away after eight months as it could be a sign of a respiratory illness or lung cancer. He notes a lot of people were found to have lung cancer as a consequence of just putting off their general practitioner and not picking up the signs early.

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## ABC Radio Melbourne, Breakfast, 23/01/2024, Sammy J

Interview with Jean Hailes for Women's Health CEO Sarah White. Sammy J says chronic pain disproportionately affects women and girls, but they're less likely to receive treatment and an inquiry will be held about it. White says women are feeling like their pain or their concerns are being dismissed. She notes they hope to have more dedicated research funding specifically to look into these sex differences which will help both men and women have very specific clinical care.

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## 2GB, Breakfast, 23/01/2024, Ben Fordham

Interview with Australian of the Year nominee Prof Georgina Long. Fordham says Long and Prof Richard Scolyer made it possible for melanoma patients to now have a greater chance of survival. Long says Scolyer has glioblastoma and had all the worst features based on his molecular genetic tests. She notes they have been working together with the team at Melanoma Institute Australia for years and the immune therapies has resulted into better melanoma survival.

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## 3AW, Afternoons, 23/01/2024, Tony Moclair

Interview with skin cancer survivor Deborah Hutton. Moclair says two out of three Australians will be diagnosed with some kind of skin cancer when they turn 70. Hutton says people should get skin checks as skin cancer is known internationally as Australia's disease. She notes there is a gene-type saliva test where people can be tested by spitting.

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## PRIMARY CARE

## Digital clues lead to a hacker-for-hire based in Russia

The Australian, General News, 24/01/2024, Ben Packham, Page 2



Within weeks of the Medibank data breach, messages appeared on multiple dark web forums boasting of the massive cyber theft, and seeking a ransom of nearly \$10m. Posted under online monikers, including GustaveDore, JimJones, and blade\_runner, they included data dumps identifying those who had sought abortions, and treatment for HIV, drug addiction and mental health issues.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Australia\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Australian Financial Review \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

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## Triple-zero calls remain unanswered for minutes

Age, General News, 24/01/2024, Aisha Dow, Page 1

More than 1400 Victorians who rang triple zero for police in a single month were forced to wait at least one minute for their calls to be answered, official data shows, with insiders warning that people in life-threatening situations are being left exposed. "We've had people run off the road and attacked with axes and things like that .

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## ER staff checking out

Hobart Mercury, General News, 24/01/2024, David Killick, Page 1

Conditions at the Royal Hobart Hospital's emergency department are so bad that staff leave because they are afraid of being sued, a parliamentary committee has heard. The Director of the Royal Hobart Hospital Emergency Department Paul Scott has told an inquiry into ramping that many doctors were electing to work part-time to protect their mental health.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#).

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## Services up and running at new Wilcannia health centre

Daily Liberal, General News, 24/01/2024, Page 3

Staff reporters health services are now being provided from the new Wilcannia's Health and Wellbeing Centre in Bonney Street, off Ross Street, following a move to the facility over the past three days.

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## More options for your care

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 24/01/2024, Dr Belinda Hibble, Page 17

Emergency departments across our region are a critical resource for our community and, over the summer, for the many visitors to our region. At University Hospital Geelong, we usually see about 200 people present each day over a 24-hour period for care, but of course, this varies with up to 240 people attending on some days.

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## Cardiac care expansion at LGH

Launceston Examiner, General News, 24/01/2024, Page 2

The Launceston General Hospital's coronary care unit has been expanded to provide eight beds for patients. Health Minister Guy Barnett on Tuesday said two additional beds became operational earlier in January and would assist with management and flow of cardiology patients across Northern Tasmania.

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## South-west community health service gets \$1.1m boost

Warrnambool Standard, General News, 24/01/2024, Monique Patterson, Page 2

A south-west community health service has received a \$1.1 million boost. Victorian Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas visited the Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly and Community Health Service in Portland on Tuesday to make the announcement.

## Distribution centre to open next month

Warrnambool Standard, General News, 24/01/2024, Monique Patterson, Page 2

Warrnambool's Regional Logistics Distribution Centre (RLDC) will begin operating in February, the state's Health Minister revealed on Tuesday. Mary-Anne Thomas was in the city on Tuesday to have a tour of the \$50 million facility, which is part of the \$384 million redevelopment of the Warrnambool Base Hospital.

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## Bring back 'critical' air service: Lyndoch CEO

Warrnambool Standard, General News, 24/01/2024, Ben Silverster, Page 3

The acting chief executive officer of Lyndoch Living says the lack of an air service between Warrnambool and Melbourne is a "critical" problem for the city's health workforce. Jill Davidson said Warrnambool could be in real trouble meeting the general practice healthcare needs of its population over the coming year.

Also reported by: [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#)

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## Frankston methadone clinic to close, sparking fears crime will rise and hospitals flood

9News, Other, 23/01/2024, Rhiannon Tuffield

A Melbourne medical clinic which provides more than 10 per cent of the state's methadone services will close next week, sparking concern crime will increase and local hospitals will be flooded. The Frankston Medical Centre services hundreds of recovering heroin addicts and psychiatric patients every month.

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## Emerald mother Shontell Falconer sues Mackay Hospital and Health Service for \$1.33m

Adelaide Now, Other, 23/01/2024, Janessa Ekert

When her daughter was just one day old, a Queensland mother had to make the gut-wrenching decision to switch off her life support. Now she is suing a regional hospital over the death.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#)

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## The Aussie health system is buckling – this is how doctors would fix it...

Australian Doctor, Other, 23/01/2024, Carmel Sparke

Doctors had plenty of answers when asked what single action would make healthcare better. [...] "Have the RACGP recognise other specialty training as part of GP training at least to some significant degree to make it much easier for doctors who were unable to complete their specialty program to become GPs.

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## Australia is bathing in comparative adequacy on healthcare. Let's do better

Canberra Times, Other, 23/01/2024, Zoë Wundenberg

As Australians, we hear horror stories about the healthcare sector in places like the US and we read about the barrage of issues with the UK's NHS. We are made to feel grateful for our current Medicare system, NDIS scheme and the comparative accessibility to healthcare that we, as a nation, appear to enjoy.

Also reported by: [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#)

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## Public Health Association of Australia urges government to rethink tax cuts

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 23/01/2024

The country's peak body for public health is urging the Albanese Government to not proceed with the stage three tax cuts in their current form. The greatest health disparities and the worst health outcomes are experienced by people with the least resources.

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## Murray Primary Health Network's 2023 report released

Shepparton News Online, Other, 23/01/2024

Murray Primary Health Network released its annual Report to the Community this week. The report is a review of the year, which gives the organisation an opportunity to highlight some of the primary healthcare activities commissioned and co-ordinated in 2023.

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## Planning underway for upgrades at Milton Ulladulla Hospital as NSW government forks out \$7.5m

Northern Territory News, Other, 23/01/2024, Tom McGann

A regional hospital on the NSW South Coast has been given a handy sum to spend on much-needed upgrades – now the team behind the emergency department must decide on priorities. A NSW south coast hospital needs to decide how \$7.5 million will be spent and upgrades being eyed off include community cancer maternity and medical imaging services.

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

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## Frankston Healthcare Medical Centre to close its doors

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 23/01/2024, Carly Douglas

A GP clinic providing 10 per cent of the state's methadone services is shutting its doors permanently, raising concerns it could create a crime hotspot. A bayside GP clinic which provides more than 10 per cent of the state's methadone services will shut its doors, sparking fears the closure will create a crime hotspot and overwhelm local hospitals.

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## Channel 7, Sunrise, 23/01/2024, Natalie Barr and Matt Doran

Adelaide's hospitals are on high alert as the city heads for a top of 41 degrees today. Emergency departments are already stretched thin, and health authorities are urging people to stay indoors, particularly young children and the elderly.

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## 2CC, Canberra Live, 23/01/2024, Leon Delaney

Interview with ACT Emergency Services Minister Mick Gentleman. Delaney says the ACT Government is putting more ambulance paramedics on the front line with 11 additional crews available in any given 24-hour period. Gentleman says their new roster system will be able to assist the paramedics in shorter night shift hours and make sure they have more paramedics in the peak times.

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## 3AW, Drive, 23/01/2024, Jacqui Felgate

Interview with Independent MP Monique Ryan. Ryan says the taxpayer has a right to expect that they'll receive the care that they need if the federal and state governments are giving public funds to hospitals as it is really distressing for people when they're told that they have to go somewhere else to get the care that they need. She notes Fiona Patten produced a private member's bill that said publicly funded

denominational hospitals have to provide all aspects of care, but it didn't receive support at a state level.

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## 5AA, Mornings, 23/01/2024, Matthew Pantelis

Interview with SA Treasurer Stephen Mulligan. Mulligan says they provided a short-term loan to Western Hospital to pay its landlords as they recognise it is a health hub for the western suburbs despite being a for-profit hospital. He notes the Government does not plan to take over the hospital as it is not a hospital that has an emergency department.

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### ACT government to continue funding for mental health response service

Canberra Times, General News, 24/01/2024, Lucy Bladen, Page 10

A mental health response service will receive funding until June, but the government has not expanded the service despite pressure from police. The program with front-line service providers, including police, paramedics and clinicians, specifically set up to respond to mental health incidents has two teams at present.

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### Fresh solutions for teen issues

Herald Sun, General News, 24/01/2024, Emma Cam, Page 16

Teenagers who slash the amount of sugary drinks they consume and swap junk food for fruit and vegetables could cut their risk of depression and anxiety. It would also provide the protein and calcium they need for the huge growth spurt they experience during these years.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#).

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### Clinic funds urgent

Herald Sun, Editorials, 24/01/2024, Page 20

One of the most drastic side effects of pandemic lockdowns was the dramatic rise of patients, mostly teenage girls, with eating disorders. Last year, when 15-year-old Olivia Evans died with anorexia, her father Robb made an impassioned plea.

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### Summit to focus on empowering women

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 24/01/2024, Natalie Croxon, Page 4

Almost half of all Australian women report having experienced a mental health disorder at some point in their life, research from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows. It is this kind of statistic that prompted Illawarra friends Deborah Devaal, an art therapist and wellbeing coach, and Sonia Rivas, a spiritual and empowerment coach, to create a mental health event aimed at women.

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

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### Mental health boost for valley

Newcastle Herald, General News, 24/01/2024, Damon Cronshaw, Page 8

A free mental health service will open in the Upper Hunter in April, providing support and referrals for people in distress. The federally-funded Head to Health centre will be based at Muswellbrook, with outreach services provided to Singleton and Scone.

## Families concerned about eating disorder treatment at Monash Children's Hospital

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/01/2024, Jade Gailberger

Teens with life-threatening eating disorders are getting kicked out of a vital adolescent treatment unit in Melbourne's southeast early and without support due to a lack of funding. Desperate parents and patients have asked the state and federal governments to urgently fix the troubled funding model, warning that under-resourcing at Monash Children's Hospital is traumatising patients and putting their recoveries at risk.

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

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## Radio National, Breakfast, 23/01/2024, Patricia Karvelas

Interview with Australian Catholic University Institute for Child Protection Studies director Prof Daryl Higgins. Karvelas says research from the Australian Catholic University shows those who see themselves as sexually or gender diverse are three times more likely to experience child abuse than others. Higgins says they are now recognising that they want people to speak up about their childhood experiences and it is often related to a range of different mental health and health impacts. He notes they need to work on making sure those who are working on treatment responses have evidence-based interventions to address the kind of trauma that has been experienced by these people.

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

### Mum's cries for help missed, says coroner

Herald Sun, General News, 24/01/2024, Aneeka Simonis, Page 15

A coroner has called for reform to Victoria's maternal and child health services after finding failings in the lead-up to the killing of a nine-week-old baby by her desperately unwell mother. Melissa Arbuckle was suffering from severe post-partum depression and possible psychosis when she laid her daughter Lily on the train tracks near Upwey station in July 2021.

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

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Junior docs 'owed millions' in overtime

Herald Sun, Edition Changes, 24/01/2024, Shannon Deery, Page 9

The state government faces claims of wage theft by up to 15,000 junior doctors who say they are owed millions of dollars. Healthcare providers including St Vincent's Hospital, Alfred Health and the Royal Women's Hospital are facing class actions by doctors fighting to recoup unpaid overtime.

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### Labor backs GP debt plan

Hobart Mercury, General News, 24/01/2024, Duncan Abey, Page 3

Tasmania's Labor opposition has backed a proposal to boost GP numbers in the state, in which the government would pay off the HECS bills of graduating doctors. The attraction and retention scheme, put forward by General Practice Training Tasmania and reported by the Mercury on Monday, would require participating medicos to work for five years in regional and rural parts of the state.

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

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## NT welcomes its newest nurses

Northern Territory News, General News, 24/01/2024, Jordan McCarthy, Page 3

The NT has welcomed its latest batch of graduate nurses set to embark on their careers in the medical industry across the Territory. A total of 82 graduate nurses have come into the system with 50 of them at Royal Darwin Hospital, another 26 at Alice Springs Hospital and a further five at Katherine Hospital.

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

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## Doctors out to give regions a healthy boost

Cairns Post, General News, 24/01/2024, Catherine Duffy, Page 3

In an effort to bolster GP numbers, more than 100 James Cook University general practitioner registrars will start specialty training in regional communities across Queensland, including two born and bred Far North Queenslanders. Doctors Baylie Fletcher and Matthew Kresevic, from Port Douglas and Edmonton respectively, are part of a 102-strong JCU cohort who will refine their skills as rural GPs through programs run by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, in partnership with the university.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Royal Australian College of General Practitioners \(Online\)](#).

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## Jenna's healthy career switch

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 24/01/2024, Page 11

Jenna Pearson's new job will be in familiar surroundings. The 29-year-old, who has been a Barwon Health patient services assistant (PSA) since 2015, starts work as a graduate nurse next month.

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## Subsidies to study pharmacy degrees

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 23/01/2024

Students enrolled in healthcare degrees in NSW can apply for up to \$12,000 in subsidies to support them in their studies. Subsidies are available for students of pharmacy among several other health professions.

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## A taste of rural practice

Shepparton News Online, Other, 23/01/2024

Diana Barez and Charlotte Kenny were given a taste of living and working in Deniliquin through the annual Bush Bursary program. Charlotte Kenny and Diana Barez – both first year medical students at the University of Notre Dame in Sydney – recently completed a stay in Deniliquin as part of the NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN) Bush Bursary program.

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# TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

## Fears dispensing regime may spell end of free services

Western Advocate, General News, 24/01/2024, Amy Rees, Page 2

No more free pharmacy services for patients is what can be expected if 60-day dispensing continues, according to Bathurst pharmacist Tu Anh Vo. Westpoint Pharmacy, like many others, offers a range of free or cheap services to patients, but with pharmacies now facing a massive income loss, cuts will have to be made to remain viable.

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## More than 10,000 spared GP visit under new trials

Canberra Times, Other, 24/01/2024

Women running short on the contraceptive pill have jumped at new trials loosening restrictions that forced them into busy GP clinics. The trials in Victoria, NSW and the ACT began in late 2023 and allow eligible women already prescribed the pill to get up to one year's supply of the pill from trained pharmacists, without needing a GP visit.

Also reported by: [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#).

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## Mixed views on Medicare Provider Numbers push

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 23/01/2024, Geoffrey Timbs

Securing Medicare Provider Numbers could boost pharmacists' remuneration, advocate Pardeep Singh believes, but others in the profession warn of hidden costs. Calls for pharmacists to be given Medicare Provider Numbers are generating mixed views, with some readers of the AJP backing the move, while others suggest it may not deliver the desired outcomes.

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# MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

## Genetic testing saves lives but can lead to discrimination when it comes to life insurance

ABC Online, Other, 23/01/2024, Dana Morse

Three months before undergoing a preventative double mastectomy, 25-year-old Meg Hermann completed her first half marathon and was the fittest she had ever been. Now, 10 weeks after her surgery, she's just starting to get her strength back through an intensive rehab program.

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

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## ABC, 7:30, 23/01/2024, Laura Tingle

Report by Dana Morse, ABC News. More Australians are able to take tests which determine hidden health risks, but doing such is making it harder for them to get life insurance. Monash University's Dr Jane Tiller says it is legal for life insurance companies to use people's genetic results to discriminate against them. Meg Hermann says she is a BRCA-2 gene carrier and will never be able to take out more than \$500,000 in life insurance cover as a result. Assistant Treasurer Stephen Jones says there's a case for a change to be made.

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## 3AW, Mornings, 23/01/2024, Tom Elliott

Interview with Greens Senator Nick McKim. McKim says putting dental health into Medicare would not be inflationary, but it would offer genuine cost-of-living relief to people who are really struggling and provide material health benefits for millions of Australians.

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### Hospital tech guru's '\$281k rort'

West Australian, General News, 24/01/2024, Page 22

A tech guru at Sir Charles Gairdner hospital has been recommended for prosecution by the State's corruption watchdog, after an investigation uncovered an alleged "perfect circle" of dishonesty which netted \$280,000 in a year. Suresh Kumar was a senior biomedical engineer in the Bioelectronics Engineering Division of the Department of Medical Technology and Physics - responsible for the maintenance of medical equipment.

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### Pharmacist banned after 'experiment'

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 24/01/2024, Page 14

A Victorian pharmacist who swapped out narcolepsy medication for similar looking vitamin D tablets as part of an experiment has had his registration cancelled. Mina Tawadros has also been disqualified from applying for registration for 12 months for the "experiment", as well as inappropriate behaviour with three female clients and inappropriate dispensing.

Also reported by: [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#).

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### Psychologist suspended after having 'personal relationship' with patient

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/01/2024, Sarah Keoghan

A psychologist who tried to keep her identity a secret to protect her famous brother-in-law has had her registration suspended after having a "personal relationship" with one of her patients. Sydney therapist Julie Ann Catt was handed a 12-month suspension in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal on Monday after failing in her bid to anonymise her identity to shield her family from "embarrassment and distress".

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Liberal \(Online\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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### Midwife banned after telling woman to ignore doctor 'scare tactics' and reject urgent caesarean

Australian Doctor, Other, 23/01/2024, Heather Saxena

Martina Gorner, who did not attend the tribunal hearing, was struck off for 10 years. A midwife who convinced a hospitalised patient to delay a caesarean even though CTG monitoring showed the fetus was at risk of dying has been struck off for 10 years.

[Read More](#)

### Mundaring doctor Andrew Dunn banned for creepy behaviour towards four women

West Australian, Other, 23/01/2024, Tim Clarke

A veteran doctor – who was once grilled in court over his relationship with a murdered woman – has been banned by medical authorities for repeated inappropriate behaviour with female patients. Dr Andrew Dunn has worked in Mundaring for decades, as a stalwart of the local medical centre and a long-time sailing identity.

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Thousands of patients could lose access to their heroin medication after the closure of Frankston Healthcare Medical Centre. The clinic has been unable to attract more than one doctor and it has been pleading for urgent government assistance like wage subsidies. The Vic Government maintains funding for the clinic is the Commonwealth's responsibility and the Albanese Government says the clinic is closing due to its own reasons.

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## SPORT

### Captain's call for Australia Day to move

The Australian, General News, 24/01/2024, Peter Lalor, Page 3

Cricket Australia chief Nick Hockley has been forced to clarify that the organisation had not banned the phrase "Australia Day" from the public address system at the Test in Brisbane on Friday, after earlier claiming there would be no mention. The confusion came as Test captain Pat Cummins called for the date to be changed from January 26.

*Also reported by:* [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Sydney\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [National Indigenous Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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### An 'embarrassed' Maxwell being checked for band-room concussion

Age, General News, 24/01/2024, Daniel Brettig, Page 10

Australian cricketer Glenn Maxwell has been left embarrassed by the fallout of a big night out in Adelaide, which took place after he had already been told he would be rested from the Australian ODI squad to face the West Indies next month. National captain Pat Cummins conceded in Brisbane yesterday Maxwell might need to examine his behaviour after a trio of accidents over the past 18 months, but backed the Australian team's move towards a more autonomous environment.

*Also reported by:* [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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### Olympics boss 'not married' to Gabba

Courier Mail, General News, 24/01/2024, Stephanie Bennett, Page 3

Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games boss Andrew Liveris says he is "not married" to the Gabba being rebuilt for the event, but has called on the government to make a decision sooner rather than later. It comes as Premier Steven Miles revealed he had written to the International Olympic Committee to reassure the organisation of the government's commitment to the Games.

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### Is there anyone for tennis? Not without our own stars

Cairns Post, General News, 24/01/2024, Steve Georgakis, Page 15

Our last hope at the Australian Open men's and women's singles competition was eliminated on Sunday night when Alex de Minaur was beaten in five sets. Now that our last chance is out, have we lost hope for the future?

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### Driving athletes to new heights

Newcastle Herald, General News, 24/01/2024, Madeline Link, Page 9

A new cutting-edge facility at Hunter Sports Centre is set to raise the bar on athlete performance and push aspiring Olympians to new heights. The Trevor Height Athlete Testing Facility is decked out with the latest equipment and techniques to test, benchmark and improve strength, speed, power and endurance.

## ABC News, ABC Evening News, 23/01/2024, Joe O'Brien

Interview with AFL general manager of inclusion Tanya Hosch. O'Brien says teenager Sophie says she experienced racial vilification during a recent junior league game in Darwin and there have been no repercussions. Hosch says there are opportunities to bring complaints forward and other team-mates can stand up even though they are not the victims. She states Sophie is a brave woman and they should allow the coach to take responsibility for engaging in the systems that are in place through community football code to raise a complaint about racial vilification in the game.

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## ABC Radio Brisbane, Mornings, 23/01/2024, Steve Austin

Interview with 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Brisbane Organising Committee board president Andrew Liveris. Austin says there is a 60-day review into Brisbane's Olympic and Paralympic Games venues. Liveris says options outside of the Gabba-based option have been exhaustively looked at and it is the responsibility of the Governments to make sure that taxpayer dollar is spent according to the needs of the city and the region versus the needs of the Olympics.

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

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Ulcer mystery solved

Herald Sun, General News, 24/01/2024, Robyn Riley, Page 12

Victorian researchers have solved an 80-year-old mystery about how humans are infected by the flesh-eating bug that causes Buruli ulcer. The dedicated sleuths have confirmed "without doubt" that mosquitoes are the culprit spreading the skin disease.

*Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#). [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#).*

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### Alzheimer's breakthrough

Herald Sun, General News, 24/01/2024, Robyn Riley & Kaya Burgess, Page 13

Victorians have helped to confirm a simple blood test to detect the earliest stages of Alzheimer's works, paving the way for prevention of the most common type of dementia. University of Melbourne's Professor Chris Rowe, who is also the director of the Australian Dementia Network (ADNeT), recently returned from two conferences in America where the results of studies in 400 Melbourne patients with memory problems were presented.

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### The one and only way to discover new cures

West Australian, Business News, 24/01/2024, Cheyanne Enciso, Page 26

Pyc Therapeutics is laser-focused on curing single-gene disorders in order to give the company the best chance of successfully launching its drug aimed at treating a degenerative eye disease. The Perth clinical-stage biotech, headed up by Rohan Hockings, develops RNA therapies to treat patients with genetic diseases and no available treatment options.

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### Research reveals stunning effect of cervical cancer vaccine

9News, Other, 23/01/2024, Eleanor Wilson

A new study has found a common immunisation completely prevented the development of cervical cancer in women who were vaccinated as teenagers. The study, conducted by Public Health Scotland and published in Journal of the National Cancer Institute,

[Read More](#)

## It seems to be working: Top doctor with glioblastoma gives update on his experimental treatment

Australian Doctor, Other, 23/01/2024, Carmel Sparke

The melanoma expert is up for an Australian of the Year award. Professor Richard Scolyer has spoken about the results of his latest scan following his diagnosis with a grade 4 isocitrate dehydrogenase-wildtype glioblastoma last year.

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### Indigenous life expectancy shows Australia still divided by race

The Mandarin, Other, 23/01/2024, Dan Holmes

Aboriginal Australians are still dying more than eight years earlier than the rest of the population. According to ABS data from 2020-22, the life expectancy of an Aboriginal man at birth is 71.9 years for males – 8.8 years less than for non-Indigenous males, and 75.6 years for females – 8.1 years less than for non-Indigenous females.

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## OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

### High cost of global discord

Herald Sun, General News, 24/01/2024, Page 13

The World Health Organisation fears plans for a pandemic preparedness agreement will fall apart amid wrangling and disinformation, warning that future generations "may not forgive us". Shaken by the Covid-19 pandemic, the WHO's 194 member states decided two years ago to negotiate an international accord aimed at ensuring countries were better equipped to deal with the next health catastrophe, or to prevent it altogether.

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

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### Plastic surgeon and reality star reveals why he 'quit' Ozempic

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/01/2024

A popular cosmetic surgeon who stars on a hit reality show has revealed why he's stopped taking a weight loss drug he described as a "miracle". [...] In response to the growing demand in Australia, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) introduced new rules to handle a shortage, expected to last until at least the end of the year.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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### Channel 7, Sunrise, 23/01/2024, Natalie Barr and Matt Doran

Interview with GP Ginni Mansberg. Barr says new weight loss jab Zepbound has been found to be

even more effective than Ozempic at tackling obesity. Masnberg says Mounjaro is similar but it was only recently released for diabetes. She notes Zepbound has not told when they're going to apply for TGA approval.

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