



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 29th February 2024

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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports a psychiatrist stood down from Queensland Children's Hospital last year due to her statements on gender dysphoria has criticised the scope of an Australian Human Rights Commission's investigation into the experiences of transgender Australians. *Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia](#)*
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports firefighters in Victoria are awaiting a shift in the weather to determine the fate of severe fires burning near Ballarat, while thousands were urged to evacuate yesterday in the face of extreme heat and strong winds. *Also reported by: [ABC Online](#)*
- The **[Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 1) reports an NDIS support worker has been questioned about leaving an autistic patient alone with a 15-year-old girl in a hotel room being paid for through the scheme.
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 4) reports Health Minister Mark Butler has labelled News Corp reporting on impending health insurance premium rises "a beat-up" and "complete fiction", but industry insiders continue to say they believe the government's decision is being delayed due to the Dunkley byelection.

- **The Age** (page 4) reports wealthy Australians are using more drugs, the latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey has shown, while vaping usage has risen, especially amongst young people, even as overall use of tobacco falls. *Also reported by: [Australian Financial Review](#), [Sydney Morning Herald](#), [Canberra Times](#), [Courier Mail](#)*
- The **Herald Sun** (page 17) reports at least 1.1 million Australians live with an eating disorder, costing up to \$67 billion a year, a new report by the Butterfly Foundation has found, while health experts are calling for the government to invest more in preventative care. *Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph](#)*
- **The Guardian** (online) Aged Care Minister Anika Wells says the government's new "Dollars to Care" tool will "hold providers to account for how they spend taxpayer money, and ultimately help people make informed decisions about their care".

## MINISTER BUTLER

### PM 'not sorry' for health fund delay

The Australian, General News, 29/02/2024, Jess Malcolm and Sarah Ison, Page 4

Anthony Albanese says he makes "no apologies" for pushing back against major health funds over insurance premium rises, dismissing industry concern the annual decision was being delayed until after the Dunkley by-election. This comes after The Australian revealed concern from six of the nation's largest funds that say it is the longest wait on a premiums call from a government in 15 years, and they did not have enough time to notify customers of any price increase if Health Minister Mark Butler did not make a decision this week.

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

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### Anti-vape influencer vapes

The Australian, General News, 29/02/2024, Jenna Clarke, Page 6

An online personality recruited by the federal government to warn young Australians against vaping has published photos of himself reportedly with a vape. Jaxon Fairbairn and his brother Lachlan known as the Fairbairn brothers who have more than 1.7 million subscribers on YouTube and close to 3 million fans on TikTok are among influencers and sporting stars signed up to front Health Minister Mark Butler's anti-vaping campaign.

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

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### Vaped crusader caught in the act

Daily Telegraph, Edition Changes, 29/02/2024, Angira Bharadwaj, Page 9

The federal government has endured an embarrassing 24 hours after photos of a TikTok influencer vaping were circulated online, hours after he was recruited in a highprofile campaign to educate young people on the harms of vaping. [...] The photo was shared by Fairbairn to his 132,000 Instagram followers last year and reappeared on X after Health Minister Mark Butler yesterday announced him as one of eight TikTok stars recruited for the campaign.

*Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).*

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### Bulk billing woes worsening despite funding overhaul

Daily Advertiser, General News, 29/02/2024, Andrew Mangelsdorf, Page 3

Bulk billing services are becoming harder and harder to come by across the Riverina, according to a new report as a Wagga GP calls for greater government support. A national bulk billing study conducted by primary health care support service Cleanbill has found the region has experienced a decline in bulk billing services this financial year, despite a recent federal government funding overhaul. [...] Federal Riverina MP Michael McCormack also raised concerns at the Cleanbill report and took aim at Federal Health Minister Mark Butler.

## Labor to ramp up its war on vapes

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 29/02/2024, Page 18

The sale of vapes could be banned within months with retailers coming into focus as the next battlefield in the war on vaping. The government has already banned the importation of single-use vapes and from Friday more restrictions are set to come into effect including an importation ban on all vapes without a licence. [...] As a result, more than 360,000 vapes worth almost \$11 million have been seized by the Australian Border Force and the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#), [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Tamworth\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Ballarat\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Central Western Daily \(Orange\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#).

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## TikTok recruited in war on vaping

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 29/02/2024, Sue Dunlevy, Page 5

Cricket star Ellyse Perry and TikTok influencer Ella Watkins will star in a campaign to persuade young Aussies to quit vaping as tougher import bans loom. Health Minister Mark Butler has launched an influencer-led campaign to highlight the harms of e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction.

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## Gumeracha remains 'rural'

Mount Barker Courier, General News, 28/02/2024, Joseph Moore, Page 13

The Federal Health Department says it cannot alter a classification system designed to encourage GPs to practice in regional areas, despite the system classing Gumeracha as less rural than Mt Barker. [...] However, despite successfully pushing the former Coalition Government to instigate a review of Gumeracha's classification, Ms Sharkie said the current Health Minister, Mark Butler, told her in January last year that he was "not of the view" that Gum Medical should receive expanded workforce incentives.

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## Vaping and high-risk drinking on the rise

Newcastle Herald, General News, 29/02/2024, Damon Cronshaw, Page 4

Smoking rates fell by five per cent in seven years in the Hunter New England district while vaping rates soared, federal data shows. The data, released yesterday, showed alcohol remained the most commonly used drug, with increasingly risky use in the Hunter. [...] It coincided with federal Health Minister Mark Butler saying the ban on "importation of all vapes without a licence and permit will begin on March 1".

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## Psychology services need to be prioritised

Stock & Land, General News, 29/02/2024, Page 20

Speaking on radio earlier this month about mental health and the Better Access scheme, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler stated that people in rural and regional areas were not being supported by psychologists, which was one of their driving factors for the government cutting the Medicare psychology sessions from 20 to 10 in 2023. We know the pandemic, and now the cost-of-living crisis, has significantly impacted the mental health of many Australians.

Also reported by: [Queensland Country Life \(Brisbane\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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## Dictating Aussie diets not on

Stock Journal, General News, 29/02/2024, Travis Tobin, Page 33

Livestock SA the National Health and Medical Research Council, the statutory agency within the Department of Health and Aged Care that is responsible for developing the Australian Dietary Guidelines, has advised it is making 'sustainable diets' a priority as part of its review of the 2013

Guidelines. [...] Health and Aged Care Minister Mark Butler recently commented that "dietary guidelines are best designed by expert clinicians and scientists, through open consultation with industry groups and stakeholders".

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## Influencer-led campaign

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 28/02/2024, Page 1

the Federal Government is launching today a new influencer-led youth vaping campaign to spark a conversation with the next generation of Australians about the significant harms of vaping and nicotine addiction. With the next stage of import restrictions on vape products just days away, several influencers popular with 14 to 20-year-olds will be engaged to combat the misinformation on social media, awash with pro-vaping content. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said, "there is an enormous amount of misinformation and online advertising designed to lure teenagers into vaping".

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

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## Wealthiest Australians drive surge in illicit drug taking

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 29/02/2024, Natassia Chrysanthos

The wealthiest Australians have driven a surge in the country's illicit drug consumption over the past three years as the use of cocaine, ketamine and hallucinogens such as magic mushrooms became more popular. The latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey from 2022-23 has also revealed that fewer Australians are smoking tobacco than ever before but vaping among young people has risen fourfold, as it offers the first national snapshot of Australians' drug and alcohol habits since 2019.

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

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## The Pocock support for a Babet move that has raised eyebrows

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, Karen Barlow

Independent ACT senator David Pocock has denied he has bought into COVID-19 conspiracy theories after becoming the deciding vote in urging an unspecified inquiry into excessive deaths during the pandemic. [...] The Canberra Times has sought comment from the Health Minister Mark Butler.

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## TikTokers are the next weapon in government's vape war

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, Kat Wong

Social media influencers and sports stars have been recruited for the federal government's war on vaping, ahead of a new tranche of e-cigarette restrictions. [...] Since the government's January 1 ban on importing single-use vapes, more than 360,000 vapes worth almost \$11 million have been seized by the Australian Border Force and the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

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

[Read More](#)

## Influencers recruited in anti-vape campaign as import crackdown continues

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024, Tom Lowrey

Prominent social media influencers are being recruited in a new effort to combat pro-vaping messaging online, and try and convince young Australians to give up the nicotine habit. The federal government has signed up nearly a dozen influencers with backgrounds in areas like sport, gaming, lifestyle and comedy to push a message that vaping is doing harm. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said their campaign has to lean on voices younger people trust.

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## Federal Government enlists the help of influencers for anti vaping campaign

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024, Elizabeth Cramsie

The federal government is taking a new approach in its battle to stop teenagers taking up the electronic cigarette habit. For the first time, it's partnering with social media influencers to counteract what it says are the strategies of big tobacco companies to lure young consumers into vaping. Featured: Lottie Dalziel - Sustainability expert and founder of Banish Mark Butler - Federal Health Minister Johanna-Lee Bou-Samra - Tobacco treatment specialist Elizabeth Cramsie, Reporter

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## **Albanese government brazenly shows off massive haul of seized vapes - as young Aussies are recruited to fight war on illegal e-cigarettes**

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Olivia Day

The Albanese government will collaborate with teen influencers in an anti-vaping campaign in a bid to stop young people from using the illegal devices. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler announced the initiative while standing between towering piles of vape pens that had been intercepted at the Australian border.

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## **Health Minister teams up with social media influencers to launch anti-vaping campaign**

Sky News Australia, Other, 28/02/2024

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has teamed up with social media personalities to launch an influencer-led anti-vaping campaign aimed at young Australians. Under the \$11 million initiative, the government will work with popular influencers across multiple platforms, including TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Spotify.

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## **5 big pharmacy changes coming in March**

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 28/02/2024, Chloe Hava

Along with a change in season, pharmacists should gear up for a raft of changes set to take place on 1 March 2024. From policy updates, scope of practice announcements to the Eighth Community Pharmacy Agreement – here's all the impending changes you need to know about. [...] At a press conference today (28 February 2024) on vaping reforms, among other things, federal Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler seemed confident in the border force's ability to uphold the job.

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## **Channel 7, The Latest: Seven News, 27/02/2024, Angela Cox**

There's a new influencer-led blitz against the harms of vaping and stopping young Australians. Health Minister Mark Butler is looking to set-up a campaign with a team of influencers to combat misinformation around vaping online targeting young people, particularly 14 to 20 yos.

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## **Channel 7, The Latest: Seven News, 28/02/2024, Angela Cox**

Mark Butler has denied claims the government is postponing announcements around health insurance premium hikes.

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## **ABC, ABC News, 28/02/2024, Jessica Van Vonderen**

The Federal Government is paying social media influencers to help tackle the rise of pro vaping content on TikTok and Instagram. The Government has hired influencers, including cricketer Ellyse Perry and other online personalities, as part of a broader \$11 million effort aimed at deterring young Australians from vaping. Mark Butler, Health Minister, says 1 in 6 high school students vape.

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## **Channel 9, Nine News, 28/02/2024, Andrew Lofthouse and Melissa Downes**

Social media influencers and sports stars are being enlisted to combat a wave of pro vaping propaganda on platforms like TikTok. A quarter of \$1 million will be spent by the Albanese government sponsoring anti-vaping posts with cricketers including Ellyse Perry and other online personalities leading the charge. Health Minister Mark Butler admits that they cannot reach young people through traditional advertising, which is why they have resorted to an online charge.

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### **Sky News Live, Newsday, 28/02/2024, Kieran Gilbert**

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has teamed up with social media personalities to launch an influencer-led anti-vaping campaign. Under the \$11 million initiative, the government will work with popular influencers across multiple platforms, including Instagram and Spotify. The new initiative comes after reports many school-aged children, some as young as ten and 11, become addicted to vaping and this is causing real issues.

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### **ABC News, Mornings, 28/02/2024, Gemma Veness**

Press conference with Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler. Butler points out that the Government views vaping as a very serious public health menace and in accordance to that he is launching an influencer-led youth vaping campaign targeted particularly on 14 to 20 yos. He states that this is a new approach for Government information campaigns, which have traditionally been run by TV, newspapers alike. Butler adds that they are promising \$11m for the youth vaping campaign.

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### **ABC Radio Perth, Drive, 28/02/2024, Jo Trilling**

Interview with Lottie Dalziel, influencer. Trilling plays an excerpt from Health Minister Mark Butler, who mentioned that they will be combating vaping through an influencer-led youth vaping campaign targeted at 14 to 20 yos and she states that Dalziel is one of the influencers that are part of this campaign. Dalziel discusses that she does not have friends who regularly vape, but she does have friends that would "socially vape".

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### **ABC Radio Melbourne, Drive, 28/02/2024, Ali Moore**

Moore points out that the Government is counting kids' and teenagers' connections on social media to get them to stop vaping, as they have recruited a whole lot of social media influencers to spread the message that vaping is bad. She plays an excerpt of Health Minister Mark Butler who made the announcement today.

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### **ABC News, Drive, 28/02/2024**

Compere says the Federal Government they are tackling the rise of pro-vaping content in TikTok and Instagram, as it launched a campaign with its social media influencers. She states that influencers include cricketer Ellyse Perry and Olympic diver Sam Fricker. Compere plays an excerpt of Health Minister Mark Butler who says the messaging on social media about vaping is overwhelming.

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### **2GB, Mornings, 28/02/2024, Ray Hadley**

Hadley says the country's biggest health insurers fear that Labor is delaying a decision on how much to increase premiums for millions of Australians to avoid a cost of living backlash before the crucial Dunkley election. He states that The Australian newspaper has spoken to six of the nation's largest funds, who say it's the longest wait on a premium call from a government in 15 years, however, they don't have enough time to notify their customers of any price increase if Health Minister Mark Butler, doesn't make a decision this week.

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## ABC Radio Brisbane, Mornings, 28/02/2024, Steve Austin

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, says vaping is a very serious public health menace and is a deliberate exercise by the tobacco industry to recruit a new generation to nicotine addiction. The government's partnering with social media influencers to get information to young Australians about the health risks of vaping.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### New online tool reveals how much Australian aged care homes spend on food, care and services

The Guardian, Other, 28/02/2024, Josh Butler

Aged care residents and their families will be able to see exactly how their home spends their money on food, care and services through a new online tool the Albanese government says will hold providers to account for how they spend taxpayer money. [...] The aged care minister, Anika Wells, said that while most facilities were doing the right thing, "we have to shine a light on those who aren't and take action".

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

### Mental health centre now open

Burnett Today, Other, 28/02/2024

A new mental health service has been established in the South Burnett. The Kingaroy Head to Health Centre was officially opened on 31 January, with the help of Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Emma McBride. "Many Australians don't know where to turn if they, or a loved one, are struggling with their mental health," Ms McBride said.

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### Koori Radio, Blackchat, 28/02/2024, Lola Forester

Forester discusses with Jeff(\*), who she asked whether he has discussed matters with Minister Emma McBride and Shadow Minister Melissa McIntosh, in regards to his talks regarding suicide and going around regional areas.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

### Radio 4KZ, 08:00 Rural Northern News, 28/02/2024

Residents and families across the far north are being urged to discuss organ and tissue donation, following the release of the latest official figures. They show nearly 1400 lives were saved through organ donation last year, thanks to the generosity of 513 donors. However, consent rates remain concerningly low. Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Ged Kearney says it's a timely reminder for locals to register as organ donors and discuss their wishes with family.

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## Calls for Closing the Gap to be 'above politics'

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, Rudi Maxwell

Calls for courage, unity, change and accountability have been issued from across the political spectrum in parliament when senators rose to make statements on Closing the Gap. And while the ideas on what will help improve equity between First Nations and other Australians differed wildly, they all agreed on one fundamental aspect: past approaches have not worked. [...] But Labor senator Malarndirri McCarthy described Senator Hanson's remarks as degrading and said Indigenous people wanted the same things as other Australians.

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

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## Lidia Thorpe labels Malarndirri McCarthy a member of the 'native police' in 'derogatory' Senate speech

The Guardian, Other, 29/02/2024, Kate Lyons

The Labor frontbencher Malarndirri McCarthy has accused Lidia Thorpe of using "reprehensible" language and making her feel "culturally unsafe" in the Senate after the independent senator referred to her as being a member of the "native police" in the government's ranks. Thorpe, an independent senator for Victoria, made the comments in the Senate on Monday in a speech about the policing of First Nations people and the incarceration of Indigenous children.

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## DEPARTMENT

### Health Dept partners with Google Cloud

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 28/02/2024, Page 3

The Australian Department of Health & Aged Care has partnered with Google Cloud to consolidate its data assets for greater regulatory compliance, and cost savings. [...] "We're delighted the Health Department has selected Google Cloud to help govern and secure citizens' personal data against increasingly sophisticated threats, while also creating a more conducive environment for digital innovation and skills development within Australia's public sector," he added.

Also reported by: [Pharmacy Daily \(Online\)](#), [GovTech Review \(Online\)](#), [Hospital and Healthcare \(Online\)](#)

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### Jacqui Lambie loses it after your tax dollars were spent on teddy bears for politicians

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, David Southwell

Independent Senator Jacqui Lambie has slammed the use of \$3000 in public money to send teddy bears to all MPs that promote a key Albanese government health policy. The small brown teddy bears wear a t-shirt that reads, 'Medicare Urgent Care Clinic', promoting the government's drive to open 58 urgent care clinics across the country.

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## CORONAVIRUS

### Roll up sleeve for jab compo

Courier Mail, General News, 29/02/2024, Toby Crockford and James Hall, Page 20

Teachers sacked for refusing to have Covid-19 vaccines are hopeful of receiving compensation after



this week's landmark court ruling in favour of police and ambulance officers. More than 1200 state school teaching and non-teaching staff were sacked or suspended for half of the 2022 school year under the Queensland vaccine mandates before they were allowed to return for Term 3 when the Department of Education's mandates were lifted.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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## Covid 2024: New hope for Aussies with Long Covid

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Sue Dunlevy

More than 1000 Australians a day are catching Covid. And if it is six months since you had your last Covid vaccine or infection you are vulnerable, experts have warned. Unlike the flu, Covid is not seasonal evidenced by the fact Australia recently weathered a peak in infections in the middle of summer, whereas influenza is traditionally a winter virus. The vast bulk of the population has not had a recent booster jab against Covid and experts are calling on the Federal Government to provide more clarity to Australians about when they are eligible.

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

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## Qantas worker scores payout after airline's unbelievable act

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Lisa Edser

A Qantas worker has been awarded compensation from the airline after he was sacked for raising safety concerns at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Theo Seremetidis, a trained health and safety representative, was stood down and isolated from his colleagues by Qantas in February 2020.

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## Dr Nick Coatsworth admits the big vaccine mistake he made as one of the country's top doctors during the Covid pandemic

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Eliza McPhee

Dr Nick Coatsworth has said that government officials including himself 'got it wrong' when it came to supporting Covid vaccine mandates - and that future pandemics should prioritise convincing people to get vaccinated. His comments come after Queensland's Supreme Court on Tuesday found that police and ambulance workers in the state were given unlawful directions to get vaccines or face potential disciplinary action.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### Infinite Care to run new home in Melbourne

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 28/02/2024

Aged care provider Infinite Care is expanding its footprint into Victoria with the construction of a 177-bed, six-story home in Melbourne. Bankrolled by health and aged care property investor Australian Unity Healthcare Property Trust, the facility will be run by Infinite Care under a 25-year lease.

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### Grants now open to support social connections among older Queenslanders

HelloCare, Other, 28/02/2024, Bianca Iovino

Applications are now open for organisations across the State of Queensland to apply for grants to prevent social isolation among older people. Organisations of all sizes that can help older people aged 60 years and over and First Nations peoples aged 50 years and over to feel more connected, supported and active within their communities are encouraged to apply.

## Should the Age Pension be indexed more often?

Your Life Choices, Other, 29/02/2024, Jan Fisher

The Age Pension is indexed twice a year, March and September, and benchmarked to whichever is higher of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI). The CPI covers all Australians, but the PBLCI specifically measures changes in the cost of living experienced by pensioner and beneficiary households.

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### Vaping use triples as teen use skyrockets

Canberra Times, General News, 29/02/2024, Lanie Tindale, Page 13

Vaping rates have tripled in the last four years, new data reveals. While there has been a particularly significant uptick in teenagers and young people using cigarettes, experts disagree on whether this is good or bad. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2022-2023 results were published on Thursday.

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

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### Smoking makes kids fat

Daily Telegraph, General News, 29/02/2024, Page 5

A study into parental smoking and childhood obesity has challenged previous notions by revealing the links between the two are not confined to a specific socio-economic group. The RMIT University data shows a strong correlation between parents who smoke and their children's consumption of high calorie unhealthy foods and drinks across social classes.

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

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### Pink's sizzling concert leaves fans faint

Adelaide Advertiser, Edition Changes, 29/02/2024, Dylan Hogarth, Page 5

Tuesday night's sweltering humid weather conditions resulted in 145 fans being treated at Adelaide Oval's medical bays during Pink's concert. At midnight, it was still 31.5C in the city and a concertgoer told The Advertiser some fans struggled in the conditions right until the end, with the Adelaide Oval footbridge "packed like sardines at a shuffle pace".

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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### Magnesium vs melatonin?

The Nightly, General News, 28/02/2024, Renee Onque, Page 29

The list of remedies for a good night's sleep is growing A third of Americans are getting "fair" or "poor" sleep at night, according to a survey, and the list of remedies people are using for sleep is constantly growing - from sleepy girl mocktails to listening to true crime podcasts before bed.

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### Is menopause leave enough for gender equity at work?

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024

Some health conditions, like menstruation and menopause, affect only women or those born female, with others impacting women disproportionately. Aside from being painful and debilitating, this can result in reduced workplace participation. Unions and other bodies are calling for specific types of leave

for things like menstruation and menopause, but do we need additional solutions to create truly equitable workplaces?

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## **Options if you need a medical certificate for sick or carer's leave**

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024, Daniel Johnson

Many workplaces require documentation for sick and carer's leave but with the rising price of GP consultations, getting one can be an expensive and time-consuming exercise. So what options are available and what are the most cost-effective choices? Shae Crystal, a Professor of Labour Law at the University of Sydney Law School, specialises in employees' rights and responsibilities and advises workers to make sure they are familiar with their enterprise agreements and industrial awards.

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## **Fixing insomnia: what Dr Michael Mosley and researchers have learned**

Prevention, Other, 28/02/2024, Zoe Meunier

Dr Michael Mosley took part in a groundbreaking sleep study for TV show The Sleep Revolution. Here's how the researchers want to cure insomnia and sleep problems. As World Sleep Day dawns on 15 March, we're once again waking up to the fact that Aussies and restful sleep are pretty incompatible bedfellows. According to the Sleep Health Foundation, almost 60% of us experience at least one chronic sleep symptom (such as trouble falling or staying asleep) that is stopping us from living healthy, happy lives.

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## **SBS, World News Australia, 28/02/2024, Janice Petersen**

Homelessness services are appealing for more financial help, as they fear that they could be forced to turn people away. It comes as the demand for services in WA is at new highs due to the housing crisis. Newly released data by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows Athol is one of 5100 others assisted by homelessness services in WA That's a 27.5% increase over the past five years.

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## **Channel 10, 10 News First, 28/02/2024, Jennifer Keyte**

Some of Australia's most popular social media influencers are being recruited to try to counter misinformation about illegal e-cigarettes. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube are being used to promote vaping to children and teenagers.

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## **Channel 9, Today, 28/02/2024, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo**

Australian influencers are being called in for an anti-vaping campaign aimed at young Aussies. The Cancer Council claims there are over 18 billion vape posts on TikTok, while Instagram has more than 18,000 vaping influencer profiles. Among those taking part are several professional athletes, comedians, and content creators

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## **ABC Radio Canberra, Mornings, 28/02/2024, Georgia Stynes**

Interview with Professor J.R Baker, CEO, Australian Social Prescribing Institute for Research and Education. Stynes says the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare last year said that social isolation and loneliness can be harmful to both mental and physical health and that the frequency of social contact, which may include both in-person and online contact, has been declining across all age groups in Australia for decades. Baker says if people have access to food and adequate shelter and have social connections, it will translate to how a person is truly healthy.

[Play Now](#)

## **Radio National, Breakfast, 28/02/2024, Patricia Karvelas**

A team of social media influencers has been hired to help convince younger Australians to quit vaping.

The influencers include Australian cricketer Ellyse Perry and Olympic diver Sam Fricker, along with actors and comedians with significant social media followings. It's part of a broader government campaign targeting people aged 14 to 20 yos.

[Play Now](#)

## 2CC, Breakfast, 28/02/2024, Stephen Cenatiempo

Interview with Dr Kerrie Aust, President-elect, ACT AMA. Cenatiempo discusses cigarette alternatives like nicotine pouches and vaping. Aust explains that people can have nicotine toxicity wherein a person experiences too much nicotine in their system. She adds that there have been cases in other countries, wherein children that consume nicotine products accidentally and experiences those sensations.

[Play Now](#)

## ABC Radio Sydney, Breakfast, 28/02/2024, Craig Reucassel

Interview with Dr Michael Bonning, President, NSW AMA. Reucassel says the Australian Medical Association has raised the alarm about, are saying they're popping up illegally in tobacconists around the country It's yet another kind of colourfully packaged and addictive tobacco alternative to go with the rise in vaping. Bonning admits that some alternatives like nicotine pouches are illegal in several countries like Australia back in 1991. He explains alternatives like oral nicotine wherein it can be chewed like a gum.

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# CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

## How the risk of cancer changes as we get older

Australian Financial Review, General News, 29/02/2024, David Cox, Page 36

The disease tends to strike different organs and stem from different causes in the three main stages of life, writes David Cox. A cancer diagnosis is perhaps one of the most devastating events that can occur within your lifetime, but the varying fo...

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

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## Pooling resources to save swimmers

Hobart Mercury, General News, 29/02/2024, Tahlia Leathart, Page 24

The University of Queensland and Swimming Australia have joined forces to run a pilot program, working on early detection and prevention of skin cancer in athletes. With 90 per cent of elite Australian swimmers based in Queensland, Swimming Australia exercise physician Dr Rachel Harris said it was vital to get the program off the ground to safeguard the health of the athletes.

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

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

## Small steps to help protect your heart and save your wallet

Hobart Mercury, General News, 29/02/2024, Nicci Dent, Page 28

This February was REDFEB - heart awareness month. In addition to encouraging people to wear red and donate, Heart Research Australia is raising awareness about how Australians can take control of their cardiovascular wellbeing without breaking the bank. Heart disease doesn't discriminate based on your income. Whether you're a millionaire or living on a tight budget, taking care of your heart is paramount.

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

## 'A silent warrior'

Northern Territory News, General News, 29/02/2024, Alex Treacy, Page 1

A young Darwin law student, who lived with a debilitating illness all her life yet racked up a laundry list of accomplishments, died earlier this month in her sleep, just hours after watching her brothers play rugby union, the woman's crestfallen mum says. Jessica O'Garey breathed her last on February 9. She was 24 years old.

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

## Concerns as cancer screening rates drop

Ballarat Courier, General News, 29/02/2024, Michelle Smith, Page 2

Ballarat residents have been urged not to put off vital cancer screening tests after new data revealed screening rates for some common cancers have fallen. That is resulting in some cancers only being diagnosed at a more advanced stage, when the survival rate is poorer and some treatment options might not be available.

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## Diagnosis, treatment and support a challenge for millions of Australians with rare diseases

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024

Anna Pak Poy's son Sebby was diagnosed with an ultra-rare disease called Tay-Sachs when he was just seven months old. "It's like watching your child die in slow motion," Ms Pak Poy said. She said the condition, which has a life expectancy of about four years, causes someone to lose their movement, eyesight, hearing and ability to swallow.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### APM to 're-engage' with CVC after sweetened \$1.8bn offer

The Australian, Business News, 29/02/2024, Glen Norris, Page 15

Health and human services group APM has received a sweetened \$1.8bn takeover bid from global buyout fund CVC after rejecting an earlier lowball offer. The shares of the Perth-based group rose 13.5 per cent to \$1.60 after it agreed to "re-engage" on a higher takeover offer by the previously rejected suitor.

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

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

### Drive-time for the kids

Herald Sun, General News, 29/02/2024, Jackie Epstein and Nui Te Koha, Page 29

In the tradition of Neil Mitchell's Cruise for the Kids, which has raised \$1.73m since 2018, the 3AW fundraiser for The Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal is back. This year's challenge is for the first time taking over Eureka Tower and the Melbourne Skydeck.

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

### Palliative care medicines pharmacy network

Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Chris Owen

South Australians will have better access to palliative care medicines at community pharmacies, allowing them to continue treatment at home and avoid visiting an Emergency Department. A network of 30 community pharmacies located across regional and metropolitan South Australia has been established to ensure people with a life-limiting illness can access medicines to receive their treatment at home.

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## Trans rights inquiry 'not open to debate'

The Australian, General News, 29/02/2024, Ellie Dudley, Page 1

A national inquiry into transgender human rights focusing on "anti-trans mobilisation" and "disinformation" has been branded a "serious misuse of taxpayer funds" by experts concerned it fails to balance the rights of transgender people with the rights of women and girls. Specialists and lobby groups have also flagged a possible "bias" exhibited in the Australian Human Rights Commission's inquiry because it restricts submissions to experts "in trans and gender diverse matters".

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

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

## It's our \$67bn disaster

Herald Sun, General News, 29/02/2024, Jade Gailberger, Page 17

Eating disorders are costing Australia a massive \$67 billion a year, according to alarming new figures, as experts call on the federal Government to commit more funding to prevent the public health crisis. A new Butterfly Foundation report released today reveals the social and economic costs have soared 36 per cent over a decade.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

### Charleville graduate nurses help boost local workforce as UniSQ provides training closer to home

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024, Peter Quattrocelli

Bianca Bain grew up on a cattle station in south-west Queensland where her closest neighbour was more than 20 kilometres down the road. Despite living in such a remote part of the country, the 21-year-old always aspired to follow in her mother's footsteps as a nurse.

[Read More](#)

### Supporting nurses to work to their scope of practice

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 28/02/2024, Jane Douglas

In October 2023, the federal government launched Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce – scope of practice review. The independent review will examine the barriers and incentives faced by health practitioners working to their scope of practice (SoP) in primary healthcare (PHC). [...] For nurses, these are set by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) who advise that the foundational education of registered nurses (RN), enrolled nurses (EN), and NPs in Australia captures the full breadth of the scope of the profession at the graduate entry level.

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### GP stress a real thing, but there's a solution

Burnie Advocate, General News, 29/02/2024, Page 19

Imagine a worst-case scenario at a GP surgery in regional Tasmania - a small town with one or two small GP clinics serving the local area. Three GPs decide to close their Tasmanian surgery and head to the mainland where they can work less days. Their regional centre would be devastated. We are

aware of GP clinic closures around the state - but unseen are those clinics teetering on the edge of losing their doctors due to job pressures.

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## Health workers 'welcome to reapply' amid vaccine ruling

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, Keira Jenkins

State Minister Shannon Fentiman says Queensland Health workers who were sacked for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine are "welcome to reapply" for their jobs. Ms Fentiman reiterated that the state government was considering a Supreme Court decision after a successful challenge to Queensland's COVID-19 vaccine mandates.

[Read More](#)

## Workers at 16 Sydney hospitals to down tools over fury over staff hospital parking hikes

Adelaide Now, Other, 29/02/2024, Jessica Wang

Furious hospital workers will walk off the job on Thursday after staff parking hikes have been raised from nothing, to as much as \$2600 a year. Fury is brewing among hospital workers over drastic increases to parking in metropolitan Sydney hospitals, with staff across 16 hospitals walking off the job over hikes to staff parking amid a cost-of-living crisis.

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

[Read More](#)

## Corporate GPs more conscientious and just as satisfied with their work, researchers claim

Australian Doctor, Other, 28/02/2024, Sarah Simpkins

GPs working for corporates are more conscientious than their non-corporate peers and have similar job satisfaction but are less happy with their work-life balance, say researchers. Led by health economist Professor Anthony Scott, their study was based on 2017 data from the national Medicine in Australia: Balancing Employment and Life (MABEL) survey.

[Read More](#)

## Why is the impact of menopause on older female doctors still a taboo topic?

Australian Doctor, Other, 28/02/2024, Heather McNamee

Last year the annual scientific meeting of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) gathered in Sydney. One of the headline topics was menopause. Not the debates about the latest techniques in sedation or ICU care you would probably expect of the specialty. Instead, this was a discussion about the impact of menopause — not on patients, but on college members, given that 36% of its fellows aged 45-54 are women.

[Read More](#)

## PDL on UTIs in SA

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 28/02/2024

South Australian pharmacists will soon be able to dispense antibiotic treatment without a prescription for uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs) to all patients who meet certain criteria. Beginning 01 Mar, pharmacists who complete the training are authorised to supply the approved antibiotics, with the service coming into full effect straight away, rather than being a trial.

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

### Concern over 60-day dispensing no 'furphy'

Claims that the government has stood up to the Pharmacy Guild of Australia in rolling out its double dispensing policy are being criticised by pharmacists.

[Read More](#)

## Ozempic scam threatens compounder's reputation

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 28/02/2024

Sydney-based compounder, Adam Reinhard, believes the reputation of The Compounding Pharmacy Australia is at risk after being contacted by Queensland Police accusing him of taking payments from a customer, but failing to deliver them.

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

### Sexual therapy deals on the NDIS

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 29/02/2024, Clare Armstrong, Page 9

People with disabilities can use the NDIS to access sex workers and therapy to allow them to live an "everday life" . The National Disability Insurance Scheme is intended to provide eligible Australians with the choice to fund services and supports that best allow them to live normally, a remit that has at times lead to public controversy.

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### Medicare Bulk Billing rates hit 80% in Bennelong

Weekly Times, General News, 28/02/2024, Page 8

New data compiled by the Department of Health and Aged Care for December 2023 shows the bulk billing rate in Bennelong has now increased to 80%. The Albanese Government went to the last election promising to strengthen Medicare.

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### Medicare text scam targeting vulnerable Australians

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Carla Mascarenhas

A scam which threatens to "suspend access to Medicare" unless Australians handover personal information is part of a spike in scams around welfare initiatives looking to exploit the current cost-of-living crisis, say authorities. The scam warns the receiver they have lost access to Medicare, and asks them to click a link for more information. When they do, they are asked to update their payment details and they need a one-time-pin to confirm their personal details.

[Read More](#)

### MedAdvisor turns to AI to support patients

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 28/02/2024

Medication management platform provider, MedAdvisor unveils plan to develop an AI-powered solution MedAdvisor Solutions is partnering with artificial intelligence (AI) specialist, Brand Engagement Network (BEN), to create a new medication management platform. In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange today (28 February) MedAdvisor said the arrangement would address "today's challenge where traditional chatbots have

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY



## You pay for sex abuse

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 29/02/2024, Leah Smith, Page 1

Taxpayers footed the bill for a carer to take a man with autism to buy underpants, pick up a young girl and then take them both to an NDIS-funded hotel room where she was sexually exploited. The 15-year-old victim was in the care of the Department of Child Protection when she was collected by the carer and Hayden Wade Richman, 20, to be taken to Mawson Lakes Hotel where they had sex.

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## Doctor appeals finding implicating him in wife's death

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, Emily Woods

A doctor is appealing coroner's findings that referred him to prosecutors for a negligent manslaughter charge after he sliced his wife's throat open and waited three hours before calling an ambulance. [...] Dr Spencer argued with Mr Keith and Coroners Court lawyer Laura McDonough about his need to give notice to other parties about the appeal, including the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

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

[Read More](#)

## Hendra GP James Malcolm Deveney slapped with ban on treating women by med watchdog

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Vanda Carson

A veteran Brisbane doctor whose special interests include men's health and mental health, has been slapped with a ban on treating women by the healthcare watchdog. James Malcolm Deveney, who has been a doctor for over 32 years, and recently worked at the Medicross Medical clinic in Hendra in Brisbane's inner northeast suburbs, was the target of immediate registration action by the state's health watchdog effective from Monday February 26, an announcement published on its website states.

[Read More](#)

## AMA concerned about listing full disciplinary history of doctors found guilty of sexual misconduct

Australian Doctor, Other, 28/02/2024, Heather Saxena and Antony Scholefield

The racgp HAS given 'in principle' support but wants more detail. The AMA will back the Medical Board of Australia permanently publishing doctors' history of sexual boundary violations if they are found guilty of professional misconduct.

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

### Prevention or patch up? Linking scientific knowledge with policy to advance human well-being

The Mandarin, Other, 28/02/2024, Geoff Edwards

If current policy and practice in the Australian health sector were adequate, the rates of chronic ill health, domestic violence and substance abuse would be far lower than they are. Statistics on, for example, the proportion of children who are overweight or obese (about 25%) before the age when they can be deemed responsible for their own well-being should galvanise governments into remedial action.

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## SPORT

### Misguided case of white line fever

So much is wrong with the 'drug scandal' narrative. An AFL player was caught using cocaine? How the? What the?! I'm sorry, but this stuff bores me to tears. If I had a bingo card for the footy season, one of the absolute certainties would be a player getting caught up in a cocaine scandal. And yes, I would specify cocaine as the drug of choice because it's almost always cocaine, right?

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

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## Tillies' charge for Paris

Herald Sun, Edition Changes, 29/02/2024, Ed Bourke, Page 1

Veteran striker Michelle Heyman did all she could to book a spot on the plane to Paris as the Matildas emphatically sealed Olympic qualification with a blistering 10-nil win over Uzbekistan on Wednesday night. A key piece of the Matildas' attacking puzzle without injured superstar Sam Kerr looks to have been solved after Heyman scored four first-half goals in her first start for the national side since 2018.

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## Broncos legend's admission of dementia signs

Courier Mail, Sport, 29/02/2024, Page 60

Former Brisbane Broncos and Queensland Origin star Corey Parker has made the worrying admission he has "no doubt" he is suffering symptoms of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE). Amid lawsuits across the AFL and with concussion management among the biggest issues facing most collision sports including rugby league, Parker, who played more than 347 NRL games, the fourthmost in league history, said he was worried that "the damage is done".

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Australia\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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## Play on

Hobart Mercury, General News, 29/02/2024, Brayden May, Page 1

Tasmania Football Club will not reschedule its March 18 launch despite Premier Jeremy Rockliff making a surprise request to delay the event. Mr Rockliff wrote to club chair Grant O'Brien on Wednesday, suggesting a delay of the announcement by one week. It followed a meeting between the pair earlier this week.

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## Top scores for mental health

West Australian, Today, 29/02/2024, Kellie Balaam, Page 1

Footy fans were invited to watch former AFL players kick for a cause at the WA All Stars Charity Game at Leederville Oval. Presented by local mental health charity Happiness Co Foundation, the action-packed day saw six-time All-Australian Matthew Pavlich and five-time All-Australian Alex Rance leading the teams in an Aussie Rules game dedicated to raising funds to support mental health initiatives in local and regional football clubs across the State.

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## Bendigo 'no longer cycling capital'

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 29/02/2024, Tom O'Callaghan, Page 3

Bendigo can no longer call itself a key cycling capital, a club leader has told a state parliament inquiry. "That's my opinion but no, I don't believe we can [call ourselves that]," Bendigo and District Cycling Club secretary Glenn Harrison has told MPs delving into the 2026 Commonwealth Games. "There are a number of other places in Victoria and even across Australia that have probably taken that mantle from us."

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## Channel 9, Today, 28/02/2024, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

A new proposal for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games has been pitched by a Brisbane power

couple former South Bank chairman Steve Wilson and company director Jane Wilson expressing their disappointment with Brisbane's focus on cost over legacy.

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## 4BC, Afternoons, 28/02/2024, Sofie Formica

There have been calls to transform Brisbane's Victoria Park into almost 50,000 stadium seats for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### How AI can fight cancers

Herald Sun, General News, 29/02/2024, Robyn Riley, Page 26

Melbourne researchers are using artificial intelligence to develop faster personalised radiation treatment plans for cancer patients. Using image prediction similar to facial recognition, researchers at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre say the AI-generated program will reduce treatment planning from days to hours. Dr Mathieu Gaudreault, who is leading the research project, says while radiation therapy is already lifesaving, the AI program would improve the process.

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

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### World-first drug hope

West Australian, General News, 29/02/2024, Harriet Flinn, Page 34

A potentially life-saving drug will be tested at Perth's Sir Charles Gairdner and Fiona Stanley hospitals - in a worldfirst treatment for stroke victims. The breakthrough medication, designed to protect brain cells from dying after the onset of the most common type of stroke, would be the first neuroprotective drug on the global market. Called ARG-007, the drug is in its second phase of clinical trials, and will now be administered to a sample of patients who have suffered an acute ischaemic stroke - caused by a blocked vessel, or clot, to part of the brain.

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

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### Bacteria discovery may beat tooth decay

The Nightly, General News, 28/02/2024, Nyk Carnsew, Page 30

Transplanting bacteria from the mouths of donors with healthy teeth through toothpaste or gel could be the next leap forward in treating tooth decay. The oral microbiome the collection of bacteria that naturally occupies the human mouth contains over 700 bacteria and a healthy microbiome reduces the risk of oral health problems including tooth decay.

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### Killer fungi detectives: inside the lab that may be fighting the next pandemic

The Guardian, Other, 29/02/2024, Tory Shepherd

The first tray of yellow-lidded specimen jars holds chunks of flesh lung, perhaps, or muscle some cerebrospinal fluid and another liquid, possibly from a brain abscess. The second holds a rainbow of colourful fungi, cultivated from those specimens. One growth is green and fluffy, like something you'd find in a sharehouse fridge penicillium, maybe. Another is a dark grey or brown, like animal fur. There are bright white fuzzballs and blackish blobs. One growth leaches red into the medium it sits in.

[Read More](#)

### Cauldron receives licence for precision fermentation technology

Future Alternative, Other, 28/02/2024, Jonathan Seidman

Australian precision fermentation company Cauldron has received regulatory approval for its proprietary hyper-fermentation technology, a first for the domestic novel foods sector. The licence – issued by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) under Australia's Department of Health and Aged Care – allows Cauldron to use its technology and Pichia Pastoris yeast to produce dairy, egg, and spider-silk proteins.

[Read More](#)

## MS gene study on

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 28/02/2024

Australian research to uncover the genes that could repair the damage inflicted by multiple sclerosis (MS) will soon be underway. One of 17 cutting-edge projects to receive funding today from MS Australia's latest \$4.5m grant round, the research has the potential to provide significant clues about how progression works at a genetic level, with the ultimate aim of slowing the disease progression in people with MS.

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

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## ABC Radio Brisbane, Breakfast, 28/02/2024, Craig Zonca and Loretta Ryan

Interview with Dr Julia Morahan, Head of Research, MS Australia. Zonca says MS Australia is committing more than \$4m to fund new research which they hope will give new chances of discovering that cure of understanding. Morahan reiterated that they are looking to introduce \$4.5m for MS research in Australia today which covers a total of 17 new research grants around the country. She adds that they have a good suite of treatments for people that live with what they call the relapsing form of the disease.

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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## OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

### Watchful in the west as weather takes a turn

Age, General News, 29/02/2024, Bianca Hall and Marta Pascual Juanola, Page 1

Western Victoria spent yesterday evening - predicted to be the most dangerous bushfire conditions since Black Saturday - in nervous limbo awaiting soaring temperatures and a gusty wind change. Conditions in the Wimmera were "catastrophic" while residents in Dereel - north of Rokewood - were warned to shelter indoors immediately as a grassfire took off.

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

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### STI shock

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 29/02/2024, Kate McIlwain, Page 1

Gonorrhoea cases in the Illawarra have risen faster than anywhere else in NSW over the past 10 years, according to infectious disease data, prompting a health warning from the local health district. Acting director of the region's Sexual Health Service Dr Alison Rutherford said there has been a concerning increase in the number of gonorrhoea cases in the past decade. "There were 71 notifications of gonorrhoea in 2014, 310 cases in 2019 and 433 cases in 2023," she said.

## Health alert after measles case detected in western Sydney

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Jessica Wang

Sydney residents have been put on alert for signs and symptoms of measles after a positive case was detected in a child. People who attended Blacktown Hospital emergency department from 9.30am to 3pm on Friday, February 23 have been told to be on the lookout for symptoms, such as a fever, runny nose, sore eyes and a cough, that could appear between seven to 18 days after exposure.

Also reported by: [9News \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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## SafeWork NSW referred to ICAC over 'life-saving' device designed to protect workers from silica dust

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024, Nick Dole

It was billed as a "game-changing, life-saving" solution to a growing workplace safety threat. An award-winning device, developed in partnership with the NSW government, that could detect fine silica dust and help protect workers from a potentially deadly disease, known as silicosis.

[Read More](#)

## Australia to be 'vigilant' as deadly bird flu reaches mainland Antarctica for the first time

9News, Other, 28/02/2024, Yashee Sharma

The bird flu has reached mainland Antarctica for the first time, leaving Australia on alert as the only continent in the world free from the devastating virus. Scientists from the Spanish Council for Scientific Research confirmed cases of avian influenza in two seabirds called skuas found dead near the Primavera Base on the icy continent.

[Read More](#)

## Shingles spotlight

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 28/02/2024

This Shingles Awareness Week (26 Feb to 3 Mar), new research sheds light on Australians' limited understanding of shingles, highlighting an important opportunity for healthcare professionals to dispel common misconceptions. Knowledge gaps and misconceptions held by Australians about the cause, signs, symptoms and impact of the disease have been identified through two recent surveys: a GSK Australia survey and a GSK global Misconceptions Survey.

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

[Read More](#)

## Channel 9, Nine News Late, 28/02/2024, Jane Goldsmith

A 60 year old man awaiting a heart transplant is the first person in Australia to roll up his sleeve to receive a recently approved jab to combat RSV. The vaccine is now available for Australians over 60, one of the age groups most at risk of developing serious illness. Every year there's well over 10,000 people hospitalised with RSV and sadly, a proportion of those it's well over 100 patients will die every year.

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# THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

## Labor to ramp up its war on vapes

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 29/02/2024, Page 18

The sale of vapes could be banned within months with retailers coming into focus as the next battleground in the war on vaping. The government has already banned the importation of single-use vapes and from Friday more restrictions are set to come into effect including an importation ban on all vapes without a licence. [...] As a result, more than 360,000 vapes worth almost \$11 million have been seized by the Australian Border Force and the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#), [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Tamworth\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Ballarat\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Central Western Daily \(Orange\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#).

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## Democratise weight loss

The Nightly, General News, 28/02/2024, Jeni O'Dowd, Page 13

In the heart of Sydney's eastern suburbs, a discreet trend is reshaping the narrative of weight loss. [...] And as new products hit the market, their popularity will only skyrocket, despite only Ozempic being listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme even though similar products are approved safe by Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration.

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## Vape shops could close as government eyes sales ban

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, Kat Wong

The sale of vapes could be banned within months with retailers coming into focus as the next battleground in the war on vaping. The government has already banned the importation of single-use vapes and from Friday more restrictions are set to come into effect including an importation ban on all vapes without a licence. As a result, more than 360,000 vapes worth almost \$11 million have been seized by the Australian Border Force and the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

[Read More](#)

## TikTokers are the next weapon in government's vape war

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, Kat Wong

Social media influencers and sports stars have been recruited for the federal government's war on vaping, ahead of a new tranche of e-cigarette restrictions. [...] Since the government's January 1 ban on importing single-use vapes, more than 360,000 vapes worth almost \$11 million have been seized by the Australian Border Force and the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

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

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## Asthma drug omalizumab may offer a safety net for those with multiple food allergies: study

ABC Online, Other, 28/02/2024, Paige Cockburn

In a discovery researchers say could be "life changing" for some, an injection currently used to treat asthma may also benefit people with multiple food allergies. A study published this week in the New England Journal of Medicine found the drug, called omalizumab, can reduce reactions to small amounts of allergens found in nuts, eggs, wheat and milk. [...] Australia's regulatory agency, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), told the ABC it has not received an application to approve the drug for the treatment of food allergies at this stage.

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## OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

### Wealthy drive surge in illicit drug taking: survey

Age, General News, 29/02/2024, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 4

The wealthiest Australians have driven a surge in the country's illicit drug consumption over the past

three years as the use of cocaine, ketamine and hallucinogens such as magic mushrooms became more popular. The latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey from 2022-23 has also revealed that fewer Australians are smoking tobacco than ever before but vaping among young people has risen fourfold, as it offers the first national snapshot of Australians' drug and alcohol habits since 2019.

*Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald \(Sydney\)](#), [Australian Financial Review \(Australia\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Australian Financial Review \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).*

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## FOOD STANDARDS

### **Channel 9, A Current Affair, 28/02/2024, Allison Langdon**

Archer Brewing, the brewery where dogs are allowed, is facing criticism for allowing dogs, as patrons are worried about food standards. Should the brewery owner wish to have the regulations changed, an application could be provided to Food Standards Australia New Zealand for consideration.

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## AICIS

### **Forced to pay for this dog act**

Herald Sun, General News, 29/02/2024, Mark Buttler and Mitch Clarke, Page 13

Dogs Victoria is facing a hefty clean-up bill after it was ordered to fix land on its headquarters in Melbourne's southeast where PFAS-contaminated soil from an old fire station was dumped. The 470 cubic metres of dirt was trucked in to the Skye property from the former Metropolitan Fire Brigade station on Foote St at Templestowe, four years ago.

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

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### **Asbestos not the only miracle product that became a curse**

Canberra Times, Other, 28/02/2024, John Hanscombe

When humans first learned of its properties, it seemed miraculous. The fibrous mineral did not burn and could be used in everything from cooking utensils to inexpensive building materials. After using it for thousands of years, we only learned of its cost to human health in the mid-1960s and asbestos became a dirty word, something to be feared and avoided. But it had spread throughout Australia, principally as cladding for low-cost houses. [...] But chances are it's been treated with a type of PFAS, a chemical used to make paper greaseproof and water-resistant.

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### **Are children and young people at risk of asbestos detected in parks, schools and playgrounds?**

The Guardian, Other, 29/02/2024, Natasha May

Sydney's escalating asbestos mulch crisis started in early January when a child took home a piece of bonded asbestos from a playground at Rozelle parklands in the city's inner west. Parks closed after more asbestos was detected in mulch across the inner city, including friable asbestos discovered in mulch at Harmony Park in Surry Hills and Bicentennial Park in Glebe.

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### **Queensland school among 25 entities supplied with mulch that could be contaminated with asbestos**

The Guardian, Other, 28/02/2024, Eden Gillespie and Andrew Messenger

A school is one of 25 entities in Queensland's south-east that were supplied mulch that could be contaminated with asbestos. The dangerous material was found at waste facility NuGrow on 20 February in a proactive investigation by the government after asbestos was discovered at more than 60 sites across New South Wales in what has become an ongoing crisis in that state.

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

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