



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 10th March 2024

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sunday Age \(page 7\)](#)** reports that a new study has found incidental findings are being detected in up to 40 per cent of patients who undergo scans for unrelated health conditions.
- **[The Sunday Herald Sun Melbourne \(page 1\)](#)** reports that a class action involving over 1000 players has been brought against the AFL alleging negligence in ignoring systematic racial discrimination against non-white players.
- **[The Sunday Mail Brisbane \(page 1\)](#)** reports that 75,000 nurses have quit since COVID as nursing associations seek a 35 per cent pay rise to ameliorate the growing staffing shortage.
- **[The Sunday Territorian \(page 1\)](#)** reports that the Supreme Court will hear from a Darwin woman who is suing her GP clinic for medical negligence after they failed to diagnose her breast cancer, assuring her the lump "was benign".
- **[The Sunday Times \(page 1\)](#)** reports that a large number of flu cases over Summer has spurred WA Health to warn parents to vaccinate their children early this year, following cases in children almost doubling in the 2023 season compared to 2022.

- [The Sunday Times \(page 9\)](#) reports that WA schools have received a letter signed by federal and state ministers, including Health Minister Mark Butler, urging schools to help vaping students contact Quitline as figures show one in seven teenagers between 14 and 17 are vaping regularly.

MINISTER BUTLER

Nursing in crisis nationwide

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 10/03/2024, Sue Dunlevy, Page 1

Australia is facing a chronic nursing shortage after 75,000 highly trained staff have quit since Covid. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler already has a review underway that will report on how to expand the scope of practice of pharmacists, nurses, physiotherapists and other health professionals.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#), [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#).

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It's time we repay nurses

Sunday Telegraph, Editorials, 10/03/2024, Page 90

They saved our lives during the pandemic, put their own health at risk and comforted our loved ones as they died but the health system has not repaid their care and consideration. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler is looking at ways of expanding the role of nurses to make the career more fulfilling.

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

'Protect kids from vapes'

Sunday Times, General News, 10/03/2024, Joe Spagnolo, Page 9

The State and Federal governments have joined forces to warn school principals of the serious risks of vaping saying students need support to get help if caught using e-cigarettes. WA Health Minister Amber Jade Sanderson and Education Minister Tony Buti have signed a letter, along with Federal colleagues Mark Butler and Jason Clare, highlighting the seriousness of e-cigarettes, also known as vapes.

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Less shrinks in regional areas doing our heads in

Gympie Today, General News, 08/03/2024, Page 56

Gympie region's mental health is suffering, a new industry survey has revealed, with 94 per cent of regional, rural and remote locations psychiatrists saying workforce shortages are risking patient care in the bush. [...] "We're calling on Jim Chalmers, the Treasurer and Mark Butler, the Minister for Health, to invest in bolstering the mental health workforce in Australia's in every corner, not just cities.

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MINISTER WELLS

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

New headspace Hawkesbury opens

Blue Mountains Gazette, Other, 09/03/2024

Young people in the Lower Mountains have access to a new mental health support service following the opening of headspace Hawkesbury. [...] Assistant Mental Health Minister, Emma McBride, officially opened the new headspace alongside Federal Member for Macquarie, Susan Templeman.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCCARTHY

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DEPARTMENT

Summer flu spike prompts early child vax calls

Sunday Times, General News, 10/03/2024, Hannah Cross, Page 1

WA parents are being urged to vaccinate their kids against the flu as early as April after unusually high virus numbers were recorded over summer. [...] The Federal Department of Health recommends getting an annual flu jab any time from April to be protected at the peak of the season, which is generally between June and September.

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Why this year's flu vaccine includes a strain that went 'extinct' in the COVID-19 pandemic

SBS, Other, 09/03/2024, Emma Brancatisano

Australians will get vaccinated against a flu strain hasn't been detected in years. [...] The federal health department recommends yearly influenza vaccines for everyone aged six months and over.

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CORONAVIRUS

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

The age-old problems women still face

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 10/03/2024, Patricia Sparrow, Page 88

Every International Women's Day serves as a point of reflection on how far we've come, but how far we still need to go. Ageism and gender inequality intertwine, creating significant challenges for women at every stage of life.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#)

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POPULATION HEALTH

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Cancer or harmless? Doctors grapple with a sharp rise in 'incidentalomas'

Sunday Age, General News, 10/03/2024, Henrietta Cook, Page 7

They are the small, dark spots on medical scans that no one expected. They could be harmless, or life-threatening, and they are on the rise.

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

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Cancers may be missed, say docs

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 10/03/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 19

Doctors fear the state will see a surge in debilitating and terminal illnesses as rising numbers of Queenslanders cannot afford to book a medical appointment or fill prescriptions. "There will be missed diagnoses, late diagnoses and worsening of chronic conditions. If a patient who has symptoms cannot afford to see their doctor or has to put it off, their health outcomes may worsen. Cancers could be missed," Australian Medical Association Queensland president Maria Boulton said.

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

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Libs' breast cancer pledge hailed

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 10/03/2024, Sue Bailey, Page 7

Breast cancer survivor Natalie McCullum is delighted at the Liberals' promise to establish a \$15m public diagnostic breast care centre if re-elected. "It's just amazing," she said.

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My beauty spot turned deadly

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 10/03/2024, Madeline Crittenden, Page 27

Just five months was the difference between having a beauty mark removed and a shock melanoma diagnosis for criminal barrister Imogen Hogan. The beauty mark on her face had been there since birth, and her mum told her it made her look as cool as Cindy Crawford, but when friends started commenting about its change in shape and colour, Ms Hogan knew she needed it examined.

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WA's cancer warriors with skin in the game

Sunday Times, General News, 10/03/2024, John Flint, Page 24

The world is entering a remarkable new frontier in the fight against cancer, with the development of an array of cutting-edge vaccines offering hope for sufferers of tumours once considered incurable. [...]

Last year, Professor Creaney was awarded a Cancer Council WA Research Fellowship to support her research into anti-cancer vaccines.

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Young arthritis cases rising

Sunday Examiner, General News, 10/03/2024, Duncan Bailey, Page 2

At 26 years old, an arthritis diagnosis was the last thing Legana resident Jason McMahon expected. But it's a growing issue for millennials, according to new research from Monash University and Arthritis Australia, which predicted one in six millennials will be suffering from arthritis by 2040.

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'Most pain I've ever experienced': Young Aussie reveals endometriosis journey

NEWS.com.au, Other, 09/03/2024, Ally Foster

From the age of 11 Chloe Jackson knew that "something wasn't quite right" with the way her body was functioning. She was in Year 6 when she got her first period, an experience that was so painful that she knew it couldn't be normal.

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

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ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 09/03/2024, Johanna Nicholson and Fauziah Ibrahim

Regular Segment: Newspaper Headlines with Madonna King, Author & Columnist, The New Daily. Sydney Morning Herald - ADHD may now be the most common mental health condition on Earth, with more than 1 million diagnosed in Australia. King tells Weekend Breakfast that increased awareness in the condition and parents supervising their children more during the pandemic has led to a rise in reported cases.

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PRIMARY CARE

Bill fury after hospital infection costs fingers

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 10/03/2024, Brad Crouch, Page 5

An NDIS client who had a leg amputated in Royal Adelaide Hospital, then caught an infection resulting in fingers being amputated, says he was asked to sign paperwork agreeing to a \$74-a-day charge to continue to stay in the RAH. Tony Di Giovanni, 55, of Joslin, refused to sign and says he is exhausted physically, emotionally and mentally from the ordeal.

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

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Doulas on rise in regional areas as maternity services close down and women seek continuity of care

ABC Online, Other, 09/03/2024, Amelia Costigan

With regional maternity wards closing across the country and a parliamentary inquiry into birth trauma underway, doulas are rising in popularity as a source of emotional support for women during pregnancy and birth. Doulas are non-medical support people who offer educational, physical and emotional guidance before, during and after the birth of a child.

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Hospice's 'groundbreaking' support program helps patients, families navigate voluntary assisted dying

ABC Online, Other, 09/03/2024, Georgina Carroll

A Victorian hospice is earning widespread acclaim for a program supporting patients and their families to navigate the voluntary assisted dying (VAD) process. Rosehaven, a five-bedroom facility in Mansfield, in Victoria's north east, offers non-clinical respite and end-of-life support.

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Women's health experts praise support for endometriosis services in

Tasmanian election — but who will staff them?

ABC Online, Other, 09/03/2024

Jordi Apted waited almost a decade before she received her endometriosis diagnosis — her "horrific" pain often dismissed. "[The] crippling pain ended up taking over my life quite a lot, so that was really, really tough," she said.

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Pursuit of the perfect smile contributes to surge in cosmetic procedures amid fears patients being lured in

ABC Online, Other, 09/03/2024, Claire Moodie

Since he was 15, Jayden Vilardi has been self-conscious about his smile – enough to stop him from posting photos of himself on social media. "The main issue I had with my teeth personally, and not everyone will agree with me, is that they were gappy," he said.

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Thousands get cheaper medicines, but chemists 'struggling to pay bills'

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 09/03/2024, Kate McIlwain

Residents in one Illawarra electorate have saved almost \$2 million on prescription medicines since early last year, according to the federal government. But pharmacies say they have been hit hard by the introduction of 60-day scripts, with one prominent Wollongong pharmacist saying he's had to slash staff hours and is struggling to pay bills for the first time in his career.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Convoy to honour lost mate, brother

Sunday Territorian, General News, 10/03/2024, Harry Brill, Page 1

The last time Berni Kelly saw his younger brother, he knew something was wrong. Berni and Jim had not seen each other in six years when they caught up in January for an overdue schooner. While enjoying their drinks in a North Queensland pub, Berni noticed his Darwinbased brother was upset.

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Long Patrol endure 96km marathon walk for charity

Sunday Examiner, General News, 10/03/2024, Duncan Bailey, Page 7

At a temperature of 29 degrees, an arduous walk awaits the 20 walkers from Long Patrol, who will walk 96 kilometres in 20 hours to Deloraine and back to Launceston. But it's all in the name of Soldier On - a campaign that raises awareness and supports the mental health and well-being of current and ex-serving veterans.

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

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Analysis 'Exhausted at work' and 'emotionally drained': Why chefs are leaving the hospitality industry

ABC Online, Other, 09/03/2024, Richard Robinson, Matthew Brenner and Shelagh K Mooney

Chefs are in hot demand. "Chefs, chefs, chefs! Virtually impossible to find anyone," lamented one Auckland restaurant owner recently.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Spat at due to a uniform

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 10/03/2024, Sue Dunlevy, Page 19

Already burnt out, the final straw for Rhonda Halabi came when a group of men spat at her when she visited a cafe in her nurse's uniform. "I was hysterical. I had never felt so humiliated, so degraded, so embarrassed and so worthless in my whole life," she said.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#).

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Nurses have earnt respect and reward

Sunday Mail Brisbane, Editorials, 10/03/2024, Page 64

They are literally life savers. A shoulder to cry on when we're sick or have lost a loved one. They put their lives on the line during the pandemic to treat the sick. And they are the backbone of our world-class health system.

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

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Frustrated, tired nurses walking away from job

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 10/03/2024, Sue Bailey, Page 17

The nurses' union says there are hundreds of vacancies in Tasmania as people leave the profession burnt out from working overtime and young nurses seek career changes. Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation secretary Emily Shepherd said many nurses had brought their retirement forward after the demands of the Covid pandemic.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

doctors deny negligence

Sunday Territorian, General News, 10/03/2024, Jason Walls, Page 1

A Darwin woman who claims her GP failed to diagnose a breast cancer that has since metastasised to her brain is suing the former Palmerston medico for medical negligence. Rachel Pickett has filed a

statement of claim in the Supreme Court naming Victoria Evans, along with fellow GPs Valentina Olakengal and Israt Hafiz and radiologists Anthony Lamont and Ahmed Bilal as defendants in the suit.

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ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 09/03/2024, Johanna Nicholson and Fauziah Ibrahim

Australia's health authorities have launched a crackdown on cosmetic procedures, including Botox injections and dental veneers, to protect young and vulnerable people who undergo these procedures. Dental Board of Australia chairman Dr Murray Thomas says people who are having their veneers done may not know that it requires lifelong maintenance. Authorities plan to discourage practitioners from doing advertising that glamourises cosmetic procedures, avoid misleading before and after photos, and assess patients for psychological conditions.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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SPORT

Foster has a rethink, says sorry to Kerr

Sunday Age, General News, 10/03/2024, Andrew Wu, Page 10

Ex-Socceroo and anti-racism advocate Craig Foster has apologised to Matilda Sam Kerr for condemning her alleged remark to a UK police officer as racist. Foster issued a lengthy statement yesterday explaining his 180-degree change in position, saying he had been mistaken in thinking any "discriminatory, demeaning or hostile" comments referencing any colour were a form of racism.

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Footy racism claim racism 'blind eye'

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 10/03/2024, Michael Warner and Sam Landsberger, Page 1

Footy greats have been accused of vile racism against North Melbourne's Krakouer brothers in an explosive class action levelled against the AFL. Essendon greats Kevin Sheedy, Terry Daniher, Roger Merrett and Bill Duckworth, as well as Carlton's four-time premiership hero Wayne Johnston, are named in a bombshell Supreme Court statement of claim that was lodged against the league last Tuesday.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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Upgrade doubts 'hurting' sport

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 10/03/2024, James Hall, Page 7

Queensland kids could be benched from gymnastics mats if the sport is starved of a promised facility upgrade, the state's sporting body has claimed. Young gymnasts across the state have been forced on to wait lists amid "unprecedented" growth in participation as the sport's boss fears the 60day review of Olympic Games infrastructure has cast doubt over an upgrade to its base in Chandler.

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\$50m works plan in play

Sunday Territorian, General News, 10/03/2024, Jordan McCarthy, Page 4

The federal and Territory governments have announced the first nine projects under the \$50m Community Infrastructure Package, following consultation with the Central Australia Plan's Aboriginal

Leadership Group and local communities. The governments will partner with the Central Desert and MacDonnell Regional councils, and the local communities, to deliver the projects across Central Australia.

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2024 Darwin City2Surf fun run will have new look, new sponsors and new events

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 10/03/2024, Darcy Jennings

The 51st running of Darwin's iconic City2Surf is slated to be the biggest in history. The fun run, which attracted just over 2k runners last year, is seeking to have an influx of interstate runners and locals to take to the pavement Sunday, June 2, 2024.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), and widely syndicated across regional publications

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Test for driver fatigue

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 10/03/2024, Sarah Booth, Page 9

A blood test could reveal when a person last slept, paving the way for drivers to be tested for sleep deprivation by the police. A Monash University-led team has invented a simple blood test that can discover if someone has been awake for more than 24 hours, by identifying specific biomarkers.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Flinders Territory Medicine Program enrolls record number of students in boost for workforce

ABC Online, Other, 09/03/2024, Olivana Lathouris

Born and raised in Darwin, First Nations woman Ebony Hill has always aspired to become a doctor. "Growing up as an Indigenous woman in the Northern Territory, I witnessed first-hand the plight of my mob and I was inspired by that to pursue a career in health," she said.

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ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 09/03/2024, Johanna Nicholson and Fauziah Ibrahim

The NT Medical Program at Flinders University has seen a record-high enrollment of 40 students this year, thanks to a funding boost. The program, which has been running for over a decade, has been helping First Nations students pursue healthcare careers. Program Director Dr Emma Kennedy says 95% of enrollees are local Territorians. However, AMA NT President Dr Robert Parker says developing local postgraduate training hubs is a must to retain doctors in the territory.

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OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Parents warned on flu jab as kids' vax rates plunge

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 10/03/2024, Madeline Crittenden, Page 23

Just three in 10 Aussie kids are vaccinated against the flu, with experts warning the falling immunisation rates could lead to preventable deaths this winter. Flu vaccination rates have fallen across the country - particularly in those aged under 15, with doctors warning the upcoming flu season could quickly become dangerous if people don't get the jab.

Also reported by: [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Flood of fake meds seized

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 10/03/2024, Sarah Booth, Page 36

"Snus" pouches, "study pills", "herbal" remedies laced with banned medications, counterfeit drugs - including fake Ozempic - and a notorious poison were among the millions of illegal health products seized on their way into Australia last year. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration said it would continue to disrupt the trade of fake, often dangerous medicines, particularly "substances that pose a risk to human health and/or safety".

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#).

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Free RSV vaccine for bubs

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 10/03/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 27

Queensland babies would be given free vaccines for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) under a push by Health Minister Shannon Fentiman to secure the jabs to keep children out of hospital. [...] "The RSV jab has been TGA approved but it's not a traditional vaccine.

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Funding to curb long wait for women's disease diagnosis

West Australian, Other, 09/03/2024, Savannah Meacham

Seven years and 11 general practitioners - that's how long it took Jessica Taylor to receive an endometriosis diagnosis. [...] More recently, the Therapeutic Goods Administration approved Ryego as a treatment for moderate to severe endometriosis.

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OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

Hope for dope or noxious weed?

Sunday Examiner, General News, 10/03/2024, Barry Prismall, Page 19

I used pot three times in my younger, more ridiculous years when I thought I still had an age to get a grip on life or the lack of it. Each time ended in wild, psychedelic euphoria and then disappointment.

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FOOD STANDARDS

Yet another bean encounter makes it rat-a-two-ey

A South Australian shopper has become the second customer to find part of what she believes is a dead rat inside a can of red kidney beans bought from a major supermarket. A Kangaroo Island woman made the shocking discovery while straining the kidney beans out of the can and claims the top part of a rat's body was submerged inside the tin.

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

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