



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 26th May 2024

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister Wells](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#)
| [Assistant Minister Kearney](#) | [Assistant Minister McCarthy](#) | [Department](#)
| [Coronavirus](#) | [Ageing and Aged Care](#) | [Population Health](#)
| [Cancer, Hearing and Chronic Conditions](#) | [Primary Care](#)
| [Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](#) | [Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office](#)
| [Health Workforce](#) | [Technology Assessment and Access](#)
| [Medicare Benefits and Digital Health](#) | [Benefits Integrity](#)
| [Health Systems Strategies](#) | [Sport](#) | [Health Economics and Research](#) |
[First Nations Health](#) | [Interim Australian CDC](#) | [Therapeutic Goods Administration](#)
| [Office for Drug Control](#) | [Food Standards](#) | [AICIS](#)

LINKS

[Click here to view full print articles in this report](#)

[Click here to view front pages of today's newspapers](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [**Sun Herald**](#) (page 3) reports that experts fear domestic shortages of over 400 key medicines are putting lives at risk. Minister for Health Mark Butler referred questions to the TGA, which said the number of reported shortages has been consistent since mandatory reporting began in 2019. *Also reported by:* [Sunday Age](#), [Sun Herald](#)
- The [**Sunday Mail Adelaide**](#) (page 3) reports researchers and clinicians warn that falling childhood immunisation rates are making a major measles outbreak inevitable. *Editorial:* [Sunday Mail Adelaide](#)
- The [**Sunday Mail Brisbane**](#) (page 3) reports Queensland Children's Hospital on Friday launched its Advanced Therapies and Clinical Trials Innovations Centre to research novel treatments for rare and complex diseases.
- The [**Sunday Telegraph**](#) (page 5) reports the NSW government is directing people seeking non-urgent medical help to the HealthDirect hotline to relieve pressure on stretched emergency departments.
- The [**Sunday Herald Sun**](#) (page 5) reports that Victoria has failed to acquire stocks of RSV vaccine nirsevimab, now in short supply globally. Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas has urged federal counterpart Mark Butler to bring new treatments like nirsevimab under the National

Immunisation Program. Also reported by: [Herald Sun](#), [The Courier Mail](#), [Adelaide Now](#), [The Mercury](#), [NT News](#)

- The [Sunday Mail Adelaide](#) (page 7) reports that Australia Post and Beyond Blue are launching Connection Postcards, a mental health initiative to help people struggling with social or geographic isolation.

MINISTER BUTLER

Medicine stocks at critical levels

Sun Herald, General News, 26/05/2024, Mary Ward and Amber Schultz, Page 3

Hundreds of key medicines are in short supply in Australia as experts warn the problem is putting lives and livelihoods at risk. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) lists more than 420 medicines as being in shortage, 20 of which are at critical levels, including blood thinners, antibiotics and hormone replacement therapy medication. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler referred questions to the TGA, which said managing medicine supply is a priority for the Australian government.

Also reported by: [Sunday Age \(Melbourne\)](#). Editorial: [Sun Herald \(Sydney\)](#).

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

'Blunder' deprives babies access to lifesaving shot

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 26/05/2024, Shannon Deery, Page 5

The state government has been accused of a vaccine ordering blunder that has left children vulnerable to a potentially fatal virus. [...] "I want all Victorians to benefit from new lifesaving vaccines and treatments, which is why I wrote to the federal Health Minister Mark Butler about the need for the commonwealth to update its legislation to allow new treatments like nirsevimab to be eligible for the National Immunisation Program," she said.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#). No Minister mention [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#).

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

Herbert Family Medical Centre shutting its doors after failing to attract new doctors

Whitsunday Times, Other, 25/05/2024, Paul Brescia

Not even an offer of a free car and unit was enough to attract crucially-needed doctors to a 14-year-old bulk-billed practice in Bowen, forcing its imminent closure. [...] This publication contacted Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, Queensland Health Minister Shannon Fentiman, the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care, and Mr Collins, but did not receive responses before publishing.

Also reported by: [Bowen Community News \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Health Minister Mark Butler commits Australia to U=U campaign

OUTinPerth, Other, 25/05/2024, Graeme Watson

Australia's Health Minister Mark Butler has committed to supporting the international U=U campaign. U=U is an evidence-based principle that recognises that people with HIV with undetectable viral loads, thanks to treatment, cannot transmit HIV through sexual contact.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER WELLS

No relevant coverage

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

Health help arrives

CQ Today, General News, 25/05/2024, Page 35

The Ipswich Medicare Mental Health Care centre had its official opening this week, offering immediate walk-in support to people experiencing distress or crisis. Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride MP and Blair MP Shayne Neumann were in attendance, promoting the impact of the centres across Australia.

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

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCCARTHY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

DEPARTMENT

\$891 for a sniffly nose

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 26/05/2024, Linda Silmalis, Page 5

People turning up to emergency departments with sprained ankles, rashes and migraines are costing hospitals \$1.2 billion a year, with the average presentation \$891 each. [...] Figures from the Department of Health and Aged Care show despite the rising population, numbers of GP have hovered between 9300 and 9500 over the past six years.

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

Herbert Family Medical Centre shutting its doors after failing to attract new doctors

Whitsunday Times, Other, 25/05/2024, Paul Brescia

Not even an offer of a free car and unit was enough to attract crucially-needed doctors to a 14-year-old bulk-billed practice in Bowen, forcing its imminent closure. [...] This publication contacted Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, Queensland Health Minister Shannon Fentiman, the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care, and Mr Collins, but did not receive responses before publishing.

Also reported by: [Bowen Community News \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CORONAVIRUS

Hospital Covid a mystery

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 26/05/2024, Brad Crouch, Page 13

SA Health is unable to say how many people admitted to hospital for treatment for unrelated medical conditions then caught Covid and subsequently died from the disease. Among limited available figures obtained by the Sunday Mail, more than 1700 people who went to Adelaide's metropolitan public hospitals for help for other medical conditions ended up being treated for Covid, including an unknown number who subsequently died.

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

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

[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

Maggie Beer's recipe to fix the horrors of aged care

The New Daily, Other, 25/05/2024, Louise Talbot

In 2019, Maggie Beer walked out of the Cairns Convention Centre in shock at the gastronomical horror stories she had heard during her appearance at the Royal Commission into Aged Care. The commission learned aged care menus came down to how much the facility paid per resident and how substandard meats and frozen vegetables were used and reheated by poorly trained chefs.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

POPULATION HEALTH

How cops swooped on \$12m of vapes

Sunday Times, General News, 26/05/2024, Lily McCaffrey, Page 14

In less than one week, the Australian Border Force has stopped almost 400,000 disposable vapes worth more than \$12.47 million from entering Australia. ABF officers uncovered the products in three separate sea cargo consignments, all originating from Asia, at Sydney's container examination facility.

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

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

Why the rich are drinking more than the poor

The New Daily, Other, 25/05/2024, John Elder

Where are the big drinkers in Australia? And what are the main trends in consumption? A new study from the University of Queensland goes some way to answering these questions, with limitations.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Brain cancer fight fund

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 26/05/2024, Page 11

As families of children with the aggressive brain cancer DIPG wait for Federal Government funding, charities are stepping up to help bridge the gap. The Charlie Teo Foundation has awarded \$2.68m in global grants this month to fund seven brain cancer researchers over the next two years across Australia, North America and Europe – two of which are for DIPG-specific research in partnership with the Little Legs Foundation.

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

Lions offering chance to get free skin check

Sunday Territorian, General News, 26/05/2024, George Yankovich, Page 7

Skin cancer checks in Darwin have led to referrals for one in five cases, with locals urged to take advantage of free screenings available now. Community group Lions Australia is operating a melanoma screening van at the Darwin Waterfront until this coming Monday.

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

[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

NSW Ambulance encourages people to volunteer to help with GoodSAM program

NEWS.com.au, Other, 25/05/2024, Aisling Brennan

A NSW man has thanked the stranger who saved his life after they were alerted he was having a heart attack through the GoodSAM program. The NSW Ambulance's GoodSAM program offers volunteers a chance to sign up to assist those suffering a heart attack.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Parents 'stumbling in the dark'

Sun Herald, General News, 26/05/2024, Mary Ward, Page 6

In the final years of his son Eden's life, NSW upper house MP Jeremy Buckingham woke up each morning, and went to bed each night, with the same concern: Is Eden OK? "I could just see it creeping up," he recalled.

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

Bullies killed her and never punished

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 26/05/2024, Cydnee Mardon, Page 30

Jess Tolhurst didn't stand a chance. Teachers tried to keep her away from the bullies at school, her parents kept her safe at home but no one could keep her tormentors from bombarding her online, from infiltrating her thoughts, from breaking her spirit.

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

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

Desperate parents fight kids' addiction

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 26/05/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 23

Brisbane mum Jane Rowan says some teenagers are so obsessed with social media that taking it out of their hands is like removing it from someone who has an addiction. The mum-of-four thinks social media is as dangerous as alcohol and has been campaigning for children under 18 to be banned from accessing it.

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

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

Postcard plan for lonely hearts

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 26/05/2024, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 7

Australia Post and Beyond Blue are partnering to roll out an "ambitious", nationwide mental health campaign. It is the fourth consecutive year the national postage service and major mental health not-for-profit have come together to raise awareness of mental health issues.

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

AI to offer peace of mind

Sunday Times, General News, 26/05/2024, Claire Sadler, Page 18

A WA researcher has developed a therapy tool in the hopes of providing mental health treatment to people without access to traditional services including fly-in, fly-out workers and farmers. For many, barriers to accessing mental health services include cost, location, waiting lists, and the social stigma attached to physically visiting a therapist.

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

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

Honey helps soothe Phil's troubled soul

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 26/05/2024, Sue Bailey, Page 9

After experiencing the trauma of war, the Port Arthur massacre and Beaconsfield mine collapse, former police officer Phil Pyke has found salvation in Honey, a rehomed golden retriever. Mr Pyke, 60, speaks candidly on SBS's Insight program, To The Rescue, about guarding the Port Arthur gunman's room at the Royal Hobart Hospital in 1996, and his attempts to save veteran journalist Richard Carlton when he collapsed while covering the mine rescue in 2006.

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

Lifeline trials support program for suicide survivors in WA's Wheatbelt

West Australian, Other, 25/05/2024, Adam Poulsen

A virtual peer support program for regional West Australians who have tried to take their own lives is being trialled in the Wheatbelt. Run by Lifeline WA, the Eclipse program connects survivors, who are encouraged to share their lived experiences in a judgement-free environment.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

How a done deal blew up in the nursing union's face

Sunday Age, General News, 26/05/2024, Henrietta Cook and Jewel Topsfield, Page 14

It's been a bruising week for both the head of Victoria's nurses and midwives union and its members. Long-time Victorian branch secretary Lisa Fitzpatrick has been left chastened following a shock vote on Monday against a pay deal stitched up between the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and the Allan government.

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

[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Doctor barred from practice

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 26/05/2024, Amber Wilson, Page 12

A scandal-ridden medical director who worked as a Launceston General Hospital boss for decades has been suspended from practice. Disgraced Peter Renshaw, who started in the role of executive director of medical services in 1989 after just two years as a junior doctor, retired in 2022 after giving evidence at Tasmania's child sexual abuse commission of inquiry.

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

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

SPORT

Bol assured of Paris run, says CEO

Sun Herald, General News, 26/05/2024, Michael Gleeson, Page 1

Peter Bol's place on the Australian athletics team for Paris is secure, says the head of Athletics Australia, and unaffected by revelations in an anti-doping court last week, including that he was found to have had a screenshot of doping information on his phone.

Full story: [Sun Herald \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Age \(Melbourne\)](#).

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

Feel the Reid for speed

Sunday Telegraph, Sport, 26/05/2024, Brayden May, Page 71

When Amanda Reid became the first woman to win a Paralympic gold medal in cycling, while also breaking the world record, she was just one of three Indigenous athletes selected on the Australian team. She hopes her determination to win back-to-back Paralympic gold in the 500m time trial C2 at Paris will help inspire the next generation of Indigenous stars.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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

'Segregated' at home of sport

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 26/05/2024, Rose Innes, Hayden Johnson and Jeremy Pierce, Page 12

Disabled sports fans are segregated from family, get wet when it rains and must navigate cracked footpaths and huge crowds to get to the stadium from the drop-off zone 250m away, a shocking assessment of the 'tired' Gabba stadium has revealed. The Gabba has not had a major upgrade in 25 years and was slammed by Graham Quirk this year as part of his independent review into venues for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Editorial: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

Ambitious Hobart AFL stadium bid at Elwick racecourse by Melbourne developer fails to clear starting gate

ABC Online, Other, 25/05/2024, Chris Rowbottom

An ambitious bid to construct a mega sporting, entertainment and housing precinct in Hobart's northern suburbs has been pitched to members of the Tasmanian parliament, but is highly unlikely to get off the ground as the state government progresses stadium plans at Macquarie Point. The ABC understands Melbourne property developer David Marriner has spearheaded a push for a massive sports and entertainment development on the site of the Elwick racecourse in Glenorchy.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Hospital opens kids' gene therapy centre

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 26/05/2024, Taylah Fellows, Page 3

There are 400,000 Australian children living with a rare disease, with a third not expected to reach their 5th birthday. The Queensland Children's Hospital on Friday officially launched the Advanced therapies and Clinical Trials Innovation (ACTION) Centre, a hub to expand advanced clinical trials for children with rare diseases and complex illnesses.

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

[Back to Top](#)

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

NT kidney plan released promising more community care in face of 'unprecedented burden'

Northern Territory News, Other, 25/05/2024, Fia Walsh

Programs to allow Territorians with kidney disease to access treatment closer to home will be piloted in communities, as NT Health admits it will not be able to cope with the rapidly growing burden of the disease under current care models. Rates of kidney disease in the NT are four times the national average, with Aboriginal people at even greater risk.

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

[Read More](#)

Private consultants brought in to speed up possible reintroduction of alcohol to remote Aboriginal communities in the NT

Northern Territory News, Other, 25/05/2024, Fia Walsh

The Territory government will task private consultants with helping dry Aboriginal communities develop management plans for the reintroduction of grog, as Alcohol Minister Brent Potter says too much anti-social behaviour lands in urban centres when people travel to access drink. The Department of Health and the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT have issued a tender for a panel of consultants to engage with remote communities who want to participate in the development of Community Alcohol Plans.

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

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

Measles cases on the rise as travellers import virus

Sun Herald, General News, 26/05/2024, Amber Schultz, Page 15

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has warned of a worrying increase in measles cases in returning travellers amid a global outbreak of the disease. Thirty-five cases have been recorded nationally this year, compared with 26 last year.

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

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

Measles outbreak feared

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 26/05/2024, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 3

A resurgence of measles and a drop-off in kids' vaccination rates has health authorities worried a deadly outbreak of the disease is "only a matter of time". Experts are seeking to understand why fewer parents are getting their young children vaccinated and the role anti-vaxxers and post-Covid "immunisation hesitancy" are playing.

Editorial: [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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

Experts urge vaccination as RSV and 'whole bunch of viruses' circulate across the country

ABC Online, Other, 25/05/2024, Madi Chwasta

Recorded cases of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) have nearly doubled on last year across Australia, as a "whole bunch of viruses" continue to circulate throughout the country. According to the federal government's National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System, there were 56,063 RSV cases recorded in Australia up to April.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Ozempic drug aids in kidney, cardio ills

Sunday Times, General News, 26/05/2024, Kate Pickles, Page 15

Weight-loss jabs can slash the chances of dying from kidney disease by almost a quarter, a world-first Australian study has found. Patients given semaglutide – the key ingredient in Ozempic and Wegovy – were less likely to progress to kidney failure or need transplants in what has been hailed a "game changer" for the condition.

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

[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

FOOD STANDARDS

Bird flu spread fears mean 500,000 chickens must be culled

ABC Online, Other, 25/05/2024, Warwick Long, Jane McNaughton and Rochelle Kirkham

[...] Victoria's Chief Vet was confident in reassuring Australians that their food was safe to eat. "There is no risk. The Department of Health work very closely with us and their advice of food remains the

same," Dr Cooke said. "We don't want the general consumer to feel like they can't consume either poultry or egg products.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

AICIS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

Prepared by Isentia

Subject to copyright. For internal use only.
See [Copyright Terms of Use](#)

