



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 30th June 2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [Sunday Tasmanian](#) (page 1) reports 11-year-old cochlear implant recipient Milly Collins will address Minister for Health Mark Butler and other dignitaries at Parliament House on Wednesday on the need for government support for early-childhood hearing loss intervention services.
- The [Sunday Times](#) (page 4) reports the WA government is launching a graphic advertising campaign to combat vaccine fatigue as hospitalisations from preventable respiratory diseases continue to rise.
- The [Sunday Mail Brisbane](#) (page 5) reports staff shortages in Queensland pathology services are causing a blowout in turnaround times for critical diagnostic tests.
- The [Sunday Canberra Times](#) (page 5) reports Australian authority in paediatric obesity Professor Louise Barr told a conference in Brazil that semaglutide (Ozempic) may be justified in the treatment of severely obese teenagers. *Also reported by:* [Sunday Times](#)
- The [Sunday Territorian](#) (page 5) reports research by the Menzies Ear Health Research Program has identified the most effective vaccine for pneumococcal disease, an essential tool against an epidemic of hearing loss in First Nations children.

- The [\*\*Sunday Telegraph\*\*](#) (page 7) reports NSW Health has made no successful prosecution against a business selling illegal vaping products since laws came into effect at the beginning of 2024.
- The [\*\*Sunday Territorian\*\*](#) (page 7) reports that only 16 of 30 funded places for counsellors in Northern Territory schools have been filled.
- The [\*\*Sunday Telegraph\*\*](#) (page 8) reports the NSW Productivity Commission has found that raising the state's level of influenza vaccination could save \$530 million and 500 lives a year.
- The [\*\*Sunday Herald Sun\*\*](#) (page 8) reports that more Australians lost their lives to eating disorders than road trauma last year, experts warning that the number of cases among 10- to 14-year-olds has tripled since 2012. *Also reported by:* [Sunday Mail Adelaide](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane](#), [Sunday Telegraph](#), [Sunday Herald Sun](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide](#)
- The [\*\*Sunday Canberra Times\*\*](#) (page 9) reports Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called on "out of touch", "arrogant" social media executives to take responsibility for damage done to young people's mental health, following Meta's denials before parliament on Friday. *Also reported by:* [SBS News](#)

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Government's vaping flip is for the better

Sunday Telegraph, Editorials, 30/06/2024, Page 86

Not since Kevin Rudd declared climate change the greatest moral challenge of our time has there been a moral panic as great as the one around vaping. And just as the former PM had little hesitation in ditching his signature climate policy as soon as the Greens opposed it, the current PM has had little hesitation in flipping his vaping policy as soon as the Greens did the same thing. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler's one-eyed sledgehammer approach has failed.

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### Inspiring Milly's call must be heard

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 30/06/2024, Sue Bailey, Page 1

Milly Collins was just nine weeks old when she became one of the youngest Tasmanians to be fitted with hearing aids. [...] As part of her passionate advocacy, she will address politicians, including federal Health Minister Mark Butler, and other dignitaries at Parliament House in Canberra on Wednesday about the importance of continued government support for early intervention services for children with hearing loss.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### No gold medals for govt

Sunday Telegraph, Sport, 30/06/2024, Michael Randall and Julian Linden, Page 76

The deafening silence from Australia's Olympic and Paralympic sports following the government's latest funding announcement speaks volumes about the fractured relationship between sporting officials and Canberra. While the Prime Minister continues to pass himself off as a sports lover, administrators who deal with Anthony Albanese and federal sports minister Anika Wells paint a different picture.

*Also reported by:* [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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## DEPARTMENT

### Drinking study sounds warning

Buloke Times, General News, 28/06/2024, Page 3

Almost half of young adult men (aged 18-29) are consistently drinking at risky levels, with 48% consuming more than 4 standard drinks on a typical occasion above the national alcohol guidelines. [...] Funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care, the study has been tracking more than 16,000 boys and men since 2013, asking them about significant issues such as gambling, drinking, drug use, family violence, social connection and mental health.

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### Fly-in fly-out healthcare cuts daunting trips, helps residents stay in their home town

ABC Online, Other, 29/06/2024, Andrew Chounding and Samantha Goerling

In the clouds over regional Australia a different kind of fly-in fly-out workforce is taking to the skies and it's changing the face of regional healthcare. On the ground, an airport that once serviced the defunct Ravensthorpe nickel mine has replaced hi-vis-clad workers with medical specialists in blue polo shirts. [...] A spokesperson for the federal Department of Health said it was spending \$24 million on trials of new primary care models to reduce workforce shortages and improve access to rural services.

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

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## CORONAVIRUS

### Jab decree still stings

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 30/06/2024, Brooke Grebert-Craig and Mitch Clarke, Page 19

Thousands of Victorian workers remain barred from their jobs for refusing to get Covid jabs despite the virus now being treated in a similar way to the annual flu. Employees from state government organisations such as Ambulance Victoria and Fire Rescue Victoria must be vaccinated to be able to work.

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

## AGEING AND AGED CARE

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### Why I quit grog

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 30/06/2024, Phil Rothfield, Page 1

Chris Minns is coming up to two years since giving up alcohol. He hasn't touched a drop since being NSW Opposition leader, months before being elected Premier March, 2023.

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### Blokes boozing to excess

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 30/06/2024, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 18

Almost half of young Aussie men drink at risky levels, while a significant proportion down "about nine" standard drinks in a typical drinking session. The findings are contained in the latest data release of a world-leading study tracking males across a decade.

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### Pledge to get tough on vapes runs out of puff

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 30/06/2024, Jake McCallum, Harrison Finlay and Robert White, Page 7

Not a single tobacconist or convenience store owner has been fined, arrested or charged over the sale of illegal vapes in NSW since sweeping laws prohibiting them were rolled out on January 1. Despite 124,881 illegal nicotine e-cigarettes being seized across the state so far this year, there have been no successful prosecutions recorded by NSW Health inspectors against any business owner for the sale of illegal vapes in 2024.

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### Nutrition rules need a sugar hit

Sunday Times, Editorials, 30/06/2024, Page 43

Can a poor diet trigger poor behaviour in children? Just about every parent would attest to witnessing their child enter a Wizz Fizz-induced meltdown after devouring the contents of a show bag in a single sitting. But the proposition that food can be blamed for children's bad behaviour is the subject of some debate by experts.

*Related coverage:* [Sunday Times \(Perth\)](#).

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### Cancer so rare it has no name

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 30/06/2024, Iwan Jones, Page 26

A Brisbane mum thought she had fractured her foot, only to discover she had a cancer so rare it didn't even have a name. [...] The 38-year-old is sharing her story as part of Sarcoma Awareness Month in July to advocate for awareness, research and support for osteosarcoma and other rare cancers.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Sick way to treat hospitals

Sunday Age, General News, 30/06/2024, Neil Mitchell, Page 25

The state government has been accused of bully-boy tactics. The level of bastardry being inflicted by the state government on the most vulnerable and the most valued in Victoria is unprecedented. There is now panic, fear, uncertainty and anger as the hospital system staggers through a fog of personal and professional turmoil.

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### Government extends OCP prescriptions

Sunday Examiner, General News, 30/06/2024, Aaron Smith, Page 7

The Tasmanian Government has announced extended prescriptions for the oral contraceptive pill (OCP) as part of its ongoing community pharmacy program. Women aged 16 to 50 will be able to get a two-year supply of the pill with just one script from July 1, an increase from the usual 12-month prescription.

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### Demand for Ozempic a boon for plastic surgeons

Sunday Times, General News, 30/06/2024, Madison Muller, Page 26

Jennifer Witherspoon can't stop sharing photos of her new body. After losing more than 45kg on a weight-loss drug, the 47-year-old in Austin, Texas, got a tummy tuck and breast lift to get rid of the loose, sagging skin she was left with. [...] But WA plastic surgeon Brigid Corrigan, the vice-president of the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons, said a lack of funding and access could mean some of those patients may struggle to get the surgery they need, in part because their high-risk nature makes them unattractive to private operators.

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

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### NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying board releases first data since its introduction

ABC Online, Other, 29/06/2024, Sam Nichols

Two of the words Conor Fitzpatrick uses to describe his mother's death are humane and dignified. Last month, Mr Fitzpatrick's mother, comedian Geraldine Doyle, passed away following a 15-year experience with cancer through voluntary assisted dying (VAD).

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Parents' push to keep kids phone-free

Sun Herald, General News, 30/06/2024, Andrew Taylor, Page 16

Sydney parents are joining forces to stop children using smartphones, which they say are addictive, increase the risk of anxiety and depression and put kids at greater risk of bullying. Within two days of the Wait Mate website launching, more than 300 parents had pledged to delay giving their kids smartphones, as a leading child psychologist says children should have a licence before using a mobile device.

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### A disease deadlier than our roads

Social media fuels a deadly epidemic that kills more people every year than die on the nation's roads. Eating disorders claimed the lives of 1273 Australians last year, compared to 1266 who died on the roads, with anorexia nervosa the nation's deadliest mental illness.

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

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## Only we can rescue kids

Sunday Herald Sun, Editorials, 30/06/2024, Page 50

It's well established that social media is dangerous for our children. In recent weeks, the Herald Sun and our sister News Corp publications have highlighted the rise in the number of suicides and spikes in the rates of depression, anxiety, eating disorders and bullying as a result of social media use.

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## Unsocial menace eating away at kids' self-esteem

Sunday Mail Adelaide, Editorials, 30/06/2024, Page 71

A land mine planted about two decades ago is blowing up in our faces, with teenage girls among the main victims. Social media, which seductively enticed followers with the promise of friendships, also brought danger and despair through the front door, past well-meaning parents and into the bedrooms of children.

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## Obsession sparked by online trend

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 30/06/2024, Kylie Lang, Page 6

Heartbroken single mother Mia Bannister blames social media for her only child's battle with anorexia nervosa and his shocking suicide. Oliver Hughes died in his room on January 9. He was 14. "There is no doubt in my mind that social media is responsible for taking Ollie down that path," Ms Bannister, 51, said.

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

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## PM takes aim at 'arrogant' social media giants

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 30/06/2024, Keira Jenkins, Page 9

Tech bosses need to "fess up" for the damage their platforms have caused, the Prime Minister says, while taking aim at the "arrogant" and "out of touch" social media giants. Anthony Albanese's comments come after Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, told a parliamentary inquiry in Canberra it didn't think social media had harmed children.

Also reported by: [SBS \(Online\)](#)

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## I can't escape the images in my mind

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 30/06/2024, Cydnone Mardon, Page 8

Adam Bray made the impossible choice, yet the only choice he had – to view his son's remains after he was killed in the Hunter Valley bus crash. "Other family members didn't want to see him like that; they wanted to remember Zach as the beautiful human that he was, but I needed answers. I wanted to understand whether he passed away quickly, whether he suffered," Mr Bray told The Sunday Telegraph.

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

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## Pupils left to struggle

Sunday Territorian, General News, 30/06/2024, Sierra Haigh, Page 7

Almost half of the Territory's school counsellor roles are empty despite warnings for the Education Department to lift its game when supporting students' mental health. During last week's budget estimates, Education Minister Mark Monaghan revealed there were 14 vacant school counsellor roles in the Territory.

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Life-and-death logjam

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 30/06/2024, Taylah Fellows, Page 5

Two-thirds of cancer patients are not receiving their test results on time due to critical staff shortages in Queensland's pathology laboratories, with turnaround times stretching well beyond nationally recommended time frames. As of April, only 34 per cent of HISL6 tests conducted at state-run pathology labs were returned within the seven-day recommended time frame, with some patients waiting more than two months for test results informing them whether their cancer treatment had worked.

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

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### Canberra caves

Sunday Times, General News, 30/06/2024, Joe Spagnolo, Page 1

WA has scored a massive victory against Canberra after the Albanese Government folded and agreed to allow 10,000 overseas skilled workers to come west to help address crippling labour shortages. [...] Cardiologists, clinical psychologists, dentists, midwives, occupational therapists, registered nurses, speech pathologists and surgeons are also among occupations that qualify.

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### Package to lure GPs to regions

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 30/06/2024, Genevieve Holding, Page 9

A new Tasmanian government funding incentive looks to lure 40 new graduates to the state's more remote areas, but the state's general practitioner college remains wary of its potential. Health Minister Guy Barnett has announced a new incentive of a five-year \$100,000 settlement allowance to attract up to 40 GPs to rural and regional Tasmania.

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Bub's sporting chance

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 30/06/2024, Sarah Perillo, Page 31

A Melbourne woman living with chronic endometriosis whose dream of falling pregnant was "virtually lost" is expecting her first child in January after the innovative use of a blood treatment used by professional athletes. The baby was conceived following ovarian reactivation using platelet-rich plasma (PRP) – believed to be among the first in Australia.

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### Key vaccine find to combat early hearing loss

Sunday Territorian, General News, 30/06/2024, Sierra Haigh, Page 5

Fewer First Nations children could be affected by hearing loss after researchers determined the most effective vaccine to treat pneumococcal disease. Menzies Ear Health Research Program lead Professor Amanda Leach AM spent five years comparing two vaccines known as +P and +S - and their impact on the disease.

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## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Flu shot boost worth 500 lives, \$530m

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 30/06/2024, Madeline Crittenden, Page 8

With cases of the flu surging across NSW a new report has found that increasing vaccination rates could save 500 lives and at least \$530 million annually across the state. So far this year more than 63,390 people in NSW have had the flu a jump of 20,000 cases on the same period last year.



## Injection of graphic images to boost jabs

Sunday Times, General News, 30/06/2024, Joe Spagnolo, Page 4

Premier Roger Cook is warning against "vaccine fatigue" as the State Government launches a new multimillion dollar campaign to boost immunisation rates in WA. The Government will on Sunday launch a hard-hitting campaign to encourage people to get immunised against potentially deadly illnesses such as influenza, meningococcal and shingles.

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

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### Multivitamins 'won't do much': study

Sun Herald, General News, 30/06/2024, Lauren Ironmonger, Page 17

More than 8.2 million Australians buy some form of vitamin, supplement or mineral every six months, but a new study in the US found that multivitamins do not increase longevity. In the study, published in JAMA, researchers surveyed almost 400,000 generally healthy US adults over two decades. They concluded that "people who take daily multivitamins are no less likely to die from any cause than those who don't".

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### Australian expert backs weight-loss drugs for obese teens

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 30/06/2024, Storm Newton, Page 5

There is "growing evidence" that weight-loss drugs could be effective in treating severely obese teenagers, an expert has said. The medication acts "in exactly the same way" in younger patients as it does in adults, and while no evidence exists for use in patients under the age of 12, it "may be justified" in extreme cases.

Also reported by: [Sunday Times \(Perth\)](#).

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## OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

### Testing how cannabis hits driving

Sunday Age, General News, 30/06/2024, Kieran Rooney, Page 7

A world-first Victorian trial into whether users of medicinal cannabis can drive safely has sparked a push from lawyers and MPs to protect motorists who use the treatment from prosecution while the testing is under way. The use of medicinal cannabis has surged in Victoria but it is illegal to drive with any trace of THC a compound found in cannabis that can remain in the body for days in your system.

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### The hidden costs that are turning up the heat on live music festivals

Sunday Age, General News, 30/06/2024, Karl Quinn, Page 13

Pill testing at music festivals is supposed to reduce risk. But as far as the insurance industry is concerned, it only increases it. "Clearly it's the legal liability," Insurance Council of Australia senior policy officer Tom Lunn told a parliamentary inquiry in Canberra last week.

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

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## ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 29/06/2024, Johanna Nicholson and Fauziah Ibrahim

Victoria has become the third Australian jurisdiction to introduce pill testing at music festivals, bringing it in line with the ACT and Queensland. Critics have long argued that pill testing gives drug users a false sense of security. But Melbourne woman Adriana Bucciante, who lost her son 12 years ago, told the ABC free pill testing could have saved his life.

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## FOOD STANDARDS

### Mushroom gummies: powerful cannabis product could have caused 'disturbing hallucinations' and hospitalisations

The Guardian, Other, 29/06/2024, Tamsin Rose and Natasha May

A cannabis product could be to blame for more than six people being hospitalised with symptoms including seizure-like twitching, vomiting and hallucinations after consuming gummies marketed as containing mushrooms, according to experts. The Cordyceps and Lion's Mane flavours of Uncle Frog's Mushroom Gummies were recalled this week by Food Standards Australia New Zealand after reports of hospitalisations in New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria.

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