



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Saturday, 5th October 2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Saturday Paper](#)** (page 1) reports FOI documents have revealed emails from Salesforce inviting Department of Health and Aged Care members to hospitality events held by the company, which holds several contracts with various government departments. A spokesperson for the health department said "Acceptance of offers of hospitality to department officials are evaluated for compliance with the department's Conflict of Interest and Gifts and Benefits policies".
- **[The Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 1) reports an unnamed source has alleged prisoners are exacerbating hospital ramping by exaggerating or fabricating illnesses to receive treatment, where they are admitted immediately, cutting in front of waiting ambulances, according to the source.
- **[The Hobart Mercury](#)** (page 1) reports the Tasmanian health department has tripled its spending on agency and locum staff since last year, spending \$180 million on temporary staff for 2023-24.
- **[The Ballarat Courier](#)** (page 1) reports regional health services in Victoria are cutting staff through redundancies as part of new budgets that Victorian Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas has said will focus on removing "back of house" roles.

- **The Courier Mail** (page 3) reports the National Asthma Council Australia has issued a warning to asthma and hay fever sufferers ahead of severe thunderstorms coupled with north-easterly winds that are expected to trigger an early pollen season.
- **The Canberra Times** (page 5) reports a new national commission for First Nations children will launch next year, with its focus including targets of reducing the number of children in child protection and combatting high Indigenous suicide rates.
- **The Adelaide Advertiser** (page 7) reports sale plans revealed through FOI requests suggest shutting down the ICU and replacing it with a high dependency unit after changes in Bupa policy meant the unit was losing \$2.4 million a year.
- **The Herald Sun** (page 9) reports the death of a child with a nut allergy at Holmesglen Private Hospital is the subject of an inquiry into whether appropriate care was given to the child, with the attending paramedic saying he informed hospital staff of the child's wheezing in his patient handover.
- **The Weekend Australian** (page 11) reports the cardiovascular medication Vazkepa has been listed on the PBS, with Health Minister Mark Butler saying, "Vazkepa is a life changing drug and now we're making it cheaper for more Australians ... Without this listing Australians would have to pay around \$1800 per year".

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Heart attack drug put on PBS

Weekend Australian, General News, 05/10/2024, James Dowling, Page 11

Mike Lynch was only 12 when his mother died of cardiovascular disease, in the years following he would find out himself and both his siblings were condemned to battle the same condition through their lifetimes. [...] "Vazkepa is a life changing drug and now we're making it cheaper for more Australians," federal Health Minister Mark Butler said.

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

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### Secret plans for ICU unit

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 05/10/2024, Brad Crouch & Andrew Hough, Page 7

Secret plans for the embattled Western Hospital to entice buyers include dumping the only private intensive care unit in the western suburbs and transforming its loss-making hybrid surgical theatre into a money-spinning orthopaedic unit. [...] On January 29, EY was appointed as voluntary administrators and are seeking offers to acquire the business and/or assets of the hospital, which is in federal Health Minister Mark Butler's Hindmarsh electorate.

Also reported by: [Weekly Times Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

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### Grin and bear it? More than a third of lower income Australians are uncomfortable with how their teeth look

The Guardian, Other, 04/10/2024, Josh Nicholas

The latest snapshot of the nation's dental health was released on Friday and it reveals that a growing number of Australians are unhappy with the way their teeth look. [...] Some backbench Labor MPs have recently advocated for expanding Medicare to cover dental but the health minister, Mark Butler, has said it is not something the government is looking at.

[Read More](#)

### RACGP position on UCCs is a strategic dead end

The Medical Republic, Other, 04/10/2024, Jeremy Knibbs

It's hard to see the strategic upside of sending your president on to national TV to face the federal health minister on the important evolving issue of urgent care clinics with a set of arguments that don't stack up in any way. [...] Unfortunately for Dr Higgins and the college, the ABC reporter decided to edit

in a few right of replies to her arguments from federal health minister Mark Butler and if any patients were paying attention (it was all pretty dull stuff so the college probably doesn't have to worry too much) they would have immediately picked up some fundamental problems with her arguments.

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## Delayed dental care leading to more hospitalisations: report

Your Life Choices, Other, 04/10/2024

In 2022–23, more than 87,000 hospitalisations for dental conditions could have been avoided if patients had been treated earlier. [...] In a statement to the ABC, a spokesperson for health minister Mark Butler said the government had begun work in partnership with all states and territories to develop a new National Oral Health Plan for 2025–34.

[Read More](#)

## LA FM, The Richard Perno Show, 04/10/2024, Richard Perno

Perno says a couple of politicians including Labor backbencher Brian Mitchell wants dental care to be on Medicare, however, Health Minister Mark Butler says they can't do that. He points out that if they do that, the Government will be broke again, more so than they are now.

*Also reported by: 7AD (Devonport), 7SD (Scottsdale), 7XS (Queenstown)*

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## MINISTER WELLS

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

### Women risking pregnancy over online fad, experts warn

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 03/10/2024, Sarah Booth

Social media fads are leading young people to risky "alternative" methods of contraception, including weed killer, fruit seeds and even withdrawal as misinformation grows. [...] Federal assistant health minister Ged Kearney, who met with the group on Thursday to release the report, said bias against women in the health system was "deeply entrenched" and the government was "taking women's health seriously".

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### Aussie women say they're not educated on contraception

HealthTimes, Other, 04/10/2024

The vast majority of Australian women fear they have insufficient education on contraception despite more than two thirds opting to use some form of birth control. The fresh insight has been released by Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Ged Kearney in the new national Contraceptive Choice 2024 survey.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

### MIX 104.9, 360: The Week That Was, 04/10/2024, Katie Woolf

Woolf says she has spoken with Assistant Minister Kate Thwaites about the situation and had also again asked the Federal Minister because it's something that both the former Labor and now the CLP Government have been pushing for is the needs-based funding when it comes to domestic violence in the NT.

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## DEPARTMENT

### Exclusive FOI docs reveal courting of health officials

The Saturday Paper, General News, 05/10/2024, Jason Koutsoukis, Page 1

On January 24, 2023, a Salesforce official whose name was redacted emailed the chief digital information officer at the Department of Health and Aged Care, Fay Flevaras, and Amanda Smith, a member of the department's digital transformation and delivery team with responsibility for aged care transformation and quality. "Hi Fay, [name redacted] and Amanda, I hope you're all having a great week so far!" says the email, obtained by The Saturday Paper under freedom of information laws.

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

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### Volunteers bring joy and connection

Shepparton News Online, Other, 04/10/2024

Volunteers such as Margarette are making a profound difference in the lives of isolated and lonely older Victorians through the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme. [...] Elder Rights Advocacy, supported by funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, runs a program designed to match individuals in need of companionship with volunteers who share similar interests, hobbies and backgrounds.

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

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### Inspector-General labels new Aged Care Act elements "largely aspirational"

Helloleaders.com.au, Other, 04/10/2024, Alex Jacobs

Ahead of the Senate's first public hearing on the new Aged Care Act, the Office of the Inspector General of Aged Care has labelled some elements "aspirational", expressing its concern that it will not implement a rights-based framework like the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety wanted. [...] It will also closely work with the Department of Health and Aged Care to transition to the new registration framework with a suite of resources under development to help aged care providers.

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### Aged care residents speak up

National Seniors Australia, Other, 04/10/2024

Safety, respect, independence, and kindness are the top qualities that make older Australians in residential aged care happy, according to a survey. [...] The survey, a Department of Health and Aged Care initiative, is delivered by an independent third party with a qualified survey team and aims to survey around 20% of residents each year, with a minimum of 10% surveyed at each home.

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## VACCINES

### XEC: The newest COVID-19 variant to hit Australia

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 04/10/2024

Over the nearly five years since COVID first emerged, you'd be forgiven if you've lost track of the number of new variants we've seen. Some have had a bigger impact than others, but virologists have documented thousands.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### How quarterly age pension adjustments will affect you

Central Western Daily, General News, 05/10/2024, Noel Whittaker, Page 63

The quarterly age pension adjustments came into play on 20 September, and thanks to inflation all pensioners got an income boost. The pension rates are somewhat confusing because there are four changes a year: in July and January each year they adjust the thresholds, and in September and March they adjust the amount of pension paid.

Also reported by: [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#).

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### How to save lives with genetic testing

AFR Weekend, General News, 05/10/2024, Michael Smith, Page 20

Seven years ago, a scientist and a lawyer working together at Melbourne's Monash University started collaborating on an ambitious idea. They knew genetic testing could save lives and ease the burden on Australia's stretched healthcare system by exposing the hereditary risk of certain cancers and heart disease early.

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

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### Ciggie war now nationwide

Herald Sun, General News, 05/10/2024, Mark Buttler & Regan Hodge, Page 31

Fiery tobacco warfare has spread to every mainland state, despite authorities making unprecedented seizures of illicit smokes. Feuding between syndicates, which started in Victoria, has now spread to South Australia, where that state's police have set up a special operation dubbed Eclipse to investigate a recent wave of arson attacks.

Also reported by: [Weekend Post \(Cairns\)](#).

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### New agency to establish First Nations children's commissioner

Canberra Times, Other, 03/10/2024, Eleanor Campbell

A new national commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people will be launched in January, almost a year after the government announced its response to worsening rates of child removal in First Nations communities. [...] Victoria has the highest rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care in the country, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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## Port Pirie parents fear they are fighting 'a losing battle' against lead exposure from Nyrcstar smelter

ABC Online, Other, 04/10/2024

When Sophie Bucknall fell pregnant with her first child in Port Pirie, she was aware of lead emissions related to the town's lead smelter, but didn't understand how serious the impacts could be. Ms Bucknall moved to the regional South Australian town from the United Kingdom in 2018 to be closer to her friend and never left.

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## 'Exhausted, overworked, transient': Inside Australia's rural surgeon crisis

Newcastle Herald, Other, 04/10/2024, Carla Mascarenhas

Dr Jessica Paynter worked tirelessly as a junior doctor in a regional hospital during the Victorian floods 18-months ago. She's not complaining.

Also reported by: [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Daily Liberal \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Online\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#).

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## ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 04/10/2024, Manny Tsigas

The National Health and Medical Research Council recommends blood lead levels greater than five micrograms per decilitre should be investigated. The latest SA Health report found two thirds of children in Port Pirie have levels higher than the investigation level.

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## ABC Radio Melbourne, Breakfast, 04/10/2024, Sammy J

Sammy J mentions a new report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare that suggests a third of Australians reported feeling uncomfortable about their dental appearance, with 30% avoiding going to the dentist due to cost.

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### Saving Amy How a DNA test identified cancer risk

AFR Weekend, General News, 05/10/2024, Michael Smith, Page 20

The possibility of being diagnosed with cancer has haunted Amy Soulsby for years. The disease ran in her family.

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### Asthma storm warning

Courier Mail, General News, 05/10/2024, Tayla Couacaud, Page 3

Hay fever and asthma sufferers have been put on high alert due to the risk of intense pollen levels amid soaring temperatures and a triple-threat of severe storms early next week. [...] The conditions, particularly northeasterly winds, are expected to trigger an early and intense grass pollen season, according to the National Asthma Council Australia, with a warning issued to hay fever and asthma sufferers.

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

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### 'Good cancer' is a bad term for Renae

Courier Mail, General News, 05/10/2024, Andreas Nicola, Page 29

Renae Ellaway doesn't think she has the "good cancer". The Sunshine Coast, local says her breast cancer diagnosis has turned her life upside down.

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## Something in the air

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/10/2024, Genevieve Holding, Page 1

Health experts are warning of a potentially life-threatening spring and summer for asthma sufferers with a strong pollen season ahead. Air Health and the University of Tasmania's Menzies Institute for Medical Research, which jointly operate the Air Rater Service, are predicting grass pollen levels will be higher than seen in recent years for Tasmania this spring and summer.

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## Follow pollen safety advice

Hobart Mercury, Editorials, 05/10/2024, Page 30

As spring returns, so does the surge in pollen levels. For people with asthma or other respiratory conditions, this is not merely a seasonal inconvenience it's a serious health risk.

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## Please, let's stop calling it 'a good cancer'

Border Mail, General News, 05/10/2024, Madilyn McKinley, Page 9

Bernadette Coates was only 48 years of age when she was diagnosed with early breast cancer. Her diagnosis in March 2022 was "a huge shock".

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## Realities of a 'good cancer' diagnosis

Central Western Daily, General News, 05/10/2024, Grace Dudley, Page 10

A Central West cancer patient is calling for an end to the phrase 'good cancer', saying it offers false hope and belittles the grueling treatments she's endured. Nicki Bassi from Orange was diagnosed with breast cancer three years ago and has since undergone a double mastectomy, chemotherapy, immunotherapy and hormone therapy.

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## 'Stay indoors': asthma warning

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 05/10/2024, Duncan Evans, Page 12

Thunderstorm asthma season has started and a forecasting app could help at-risk Australians dodge the potentially deadly events. The Victorian government's VicEmergency app and website forecast thunderstorm asthma risk over a rolling three-day period, with different colours marking out different levels of risk.

Also reported by: [9News \(Online\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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## Australian doctor Richard Scolyer shares update after cancer win

NEWS.com.au, Other, 04/10/2024, Rebekah Scanlan

The Australian doctor who has been undergoing a first-of-its-kind treatment he helped develop after being told he faced "certain death" from a brain tumour has shared a huge health update. Richard Scolyer, a professor at the University of Sydney, was diagnosed with a glioblastoma after suffering a seizure last June.

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

## 2GB, Afternoons, 04/10/2024, Michael McLaren

McLaren says Hearing Australia has been named Reader's Digest Most Trusted Hearing Brand for the fourth year on a row.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### 'Relatable' Miles off to better start

Courier Mail, Edition Changes - Metro, 05/10/2024, Andreas Nicola, Page 6

Premier Steven Miles is winning over voters with his relatable "man of the people" style, prolific social media presence and his commitment to reducing cost-of-living pressures. But neither of the men in line to lead Queensland have dazzled undecided voters in the first week of the election campaign, with voters saying that they were unimpressed by slick slogans and policies lacking in substance and detail.

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### The go gently

The Saturday Paper, General News, 05/10/2024, Julia Leigh, Page 10

Lynne Spender said she'd never had a fear of death. She was a confirmed atheist, not agnostic.

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### Cons jump ramp queue

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 05/10/2024, Elizabeth Henson, Page 1

About 2000 prisoners a year are clogging up hospital beds and enjoying a holiday from jail, costing taxpayers millions of dollars. Freedom of Information documents reveal the cost to transport and guard prisoners in hospital is more than \$26m over the past three years.

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

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### Stop the crooks malingering to clog hospitals

Adelaide Advertiser, Editorials, 05/10/2024, Page 46

It is preposterous that criminals are deploying get-out-of-jail-free cards to clog the hospital system while the ambulance ramping crisis escalates to historic levels. The Advertiser today reveals a significant number of prisoners are routinely taking up beds in public hospitals by concocting fake illnesses or exaggerating symptoms.

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### Leaders: We won't keep you waiting

Courier Mail, General News, 05/10/2024, Brendan O'Malley, Page 7

A Rockhampton reader's question on hospital wait times had both leaders scrambling to be the first to respond with an answer on how they will fix the problem. Ridgeland's resident Lynda Harding asked The CourierMail to put her question, "how will you reduce hospital waiting times for patients to receive urgent surgery", to Premier Steven Miles and Opposition Leader David Crisafulli.

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### Health staff forgotten

Courier Mail, General News, 05/10/2024, Page 5

Queensland's peak medical body has exposed a vital element missing from the leaders debate - the workforce crisis. While Opposition Leader David Crisafulli mentioned the Australian Medical



Association Queensland several times, neither leader addressed the desperate need to recruit and retain medics.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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## Soaring health gap cost

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/10/2024, David Killick, Page 1

Health department spending on locum doctors and nurses to plug gaps in Tasmania's hospitals has more than tripled to top \$180m last financial year, Labor says. Opposition health spokeswoman Ella Haddad said the government relied on huge numbers of agency and locum staff across the health system instead of directly employing health workers.

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## Hospital staff face axe

Ballarat Courier, General News, 05/10/2024, Ben Silvester, Page 1

Victoria's regional health services are facing restructuring and redundancies as they work to meet strict government budgets for 2024-25. Hospitals across the state have already faced more than six months of attrition, with contracts not being renewed and roles left vacant.

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

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## MP urged to get on board

Border Mail, General News, 05/10/2024, Anthony Bunn, Page 1

Albury MP Justin Clancy is in danger of a voter backlash if he continues to not support a new Border hospital, Wodonga's mayor believes. Ron Mildren said the Liberal Party representative was clearly at odds with his own community, given the support for pro-greenfield hospital candidates in the recent Albury Council election.

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## Clinical care the priority over court mental health reports

Burnie Advocate, General News, 05/10/2024, Helen Kempton, Page 2

The state government has acknowledged there are sometimes delays in completing the forensic health reports needed to finalise matters in Tasmania's courts because clinical care needed to be prioritised. Two Burnie magistrates in as many months have expressed their frustration that delays in getting the reports needed to sentences offenders are holding up an already-clogged court system.

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## Hospital spends \$183m on temp staff

Launceston Examiner, General News, 05/10/2024, Benjamin Seeder, Page 2

Hospital spending on medical locums - doctors and nurses hired on a temporary basis usually via an agency - has skyrocketed since 2020-2021, new figures revealed in budget estimates and under right to information laws have revealed. The new data spending on locums by the state's hospitals reached \$183 million last financial year, with the figures inclusive of locum doctors, nurses and mental health locums.

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## 'I'll resign': Crime pledge

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 05/10/2024, Hayden Johnson, Page 6

David Crisafulli has pledged to resign as premier after one term if the number of Queensland crime victims does not fall. In a stunning commitment to Queenslanders, the man on track to become premier on October 26 said he would not seek a second term in 2028 if he failed to drive down victim numbers.

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## Advocacy groups state their cases

Weekend Post, General News, 05/10/2024, Arun Singh Mann, Page 16

Relocating the Cairns Hospital emergency department and investment in skills and training are shaping as critical state election priorities as Cairns' major advocacy organisations reveal their wishlists. Advance Cairns has presented a 30-page document outlining what the peak advocacy group believes is required to propel the Far North's economy and industry.

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## Solving hospital car park issue a work in progress

Weekend Post, General News, 05/10/2024, Leena Singh, Page 43

Why isn't there enough carparking at Cairns Hospital? Does this sound familiar? You're running late for an appointment at Cairns Hospital, (pictured right) and you have to circle the block a few times before you find somewhere to park

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## Off-key: payroll tax harmony still lacking

medicSA, General News, 01/10/2024, Page 16

While all jurisdictions have taken steps to align payroll tax provisions – South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory have even adopted identical legislation – payroll tax rates and thresholds vary and there are different interpretations and applications of the law. [...] Over the past 12 months AMA(SA) president Dr John Williams has advocated against payroll tax, describing it as an unacceptable burden on the health system.

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## Mount Louisa Medical Centre officially reopens after dramatic transformation

The Courier Mail, Other, 05/10/2024, Leighton Smith

The Mount Louisa Medical Centre has undergone a dramatic expansion, taking over two residential blocks to meet increased patient demand, create more space, upgrade their service offering, and to help recruit more general practitioners. Located in the Crestbrook Plaza on Bayswater Road, the cramped medical centre was ready to spread its wings after its co-owners, Eric Lollo and Peter Hayes, purchased a neighbouring house and land to extend the Crestbrook Plaza Centre eastwards to Cardiff Crt.

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

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## 'Mobile petri dishes': What bugs are lurking on GPs' phones?

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 04/10/2024

We take our phones everywhere – to work, in the car, running errands, and even to the toilet. But a new study carried out at last year's WONCA World Conference has revealed the concerning biohazard risks found on our mobile phones.

[Read More](#)

## ABC Radio Brisbane, Breakfast, 04/10/2024, Craig Zonca & Loretta Ryan

Interview with Dr Nick Yim, President, AMA Qld, about Qld Premier Steven Miles and State Opposition Leader David Crisafulli's debate. Yim says there have been a bit of a split debate from both parties. He adds that there would have been a great opportunity for both sides of politics some of the key challenges and one of the key challenges that they are facing in Qld is workforce. Yim admits that they do not have enough doctors, nurses, and allied health workers.

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## Focus on teen mental health

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 05/10/2024, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 9

Teens are waiting months and in many cases a quarter of the year to get access to specialist mental health treatment and services, despite being referred by their local doctor. In response, a new Flinders University-led project has been devised to help those youngsters who find themselves facing long wait times in excess of 100 days.

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## Stressed at work? Move it

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 05/10/2024, Page 29

The mental health of office-based workers starts to decline after just two hours of continuous effort at their desk, a new global study shows. According to the research which involved 26,000 participants worldwide, including from Australia, stress levels "rise significantly" after four hours.

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## Ed Dept spurns school bullying

Weekend Post, General News, 05/10/2024, Emma Cam, Page 5

The Queensland Education Department says bullying is not tolerated in any school after a family of a teen said she was verbally abused and tormented on social media before she ended her life. Corrine Lee-Cheu died by suicide in September 2023.

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## Struggling after a crisis, the shame of financial distress pushed Leah over the edge

The Guardian, Other, 05/10/2024, Natasha May

Leah Sheppard was on holiday with her partner overseas when he dumped her. Even though the relationship had been very rocky, she returned to Melbourne distraught it was over.

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## Deni MHAG wins state award

Shepparton News Online, Other, 04/10/2024, Zoe McMaugh

Mental Health Month has kicked off spectacularly for the Deniliquin Mental Health Awareness Group, who last week won a state award for making a difference in their community. Deni MHAG was a joint winner of the 2024 NSW Mental Health Commissioner's Community Champion Award, which it shared with Tamil Resettlement and Community Konnect (TRACK Australia).

[Read More](#)

## Mental health aid

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 04/10/2024

A new project led by Flinders University aims to assist Australian teenagers facing long wait times for mental health treatment. The project, titled 'Left to their own devices', focuses on helping GPs better support adolescent patients while they await specialist services.

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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# HEALTH WORKFORCE

## Working on the frontline

Herald Sun, General News, 05/10/2024, Lauren Ahwan, Page 72

Traditional medical professions are not the only career paths for those with ambitions to save and improve lives. As school leavers near the end of their studies and ponder what's next, six inspiring Australians share their experience helping others.

Also reported by: [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#).

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## Indigenous TAFE numbers skyrocket on back of government's fee-free enrolments

National Indigenous Times, Other, 04/10/2024, Dechlan Brennan

First Nations enrolments in TAFE courses now make up more than 5 per cent of all enrolments, with the federal government saying their Fee-Free TAFE initiative continues to exceed targets. As of July this year there were 500,000 TAFE enrolments, with 26,500 enrolments being First Nations people - accounting for 5.

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## Royal Flying Doctor Service's \$30m Aeromedical Training Academy to entice pilots amid global shortage

ABC Online, Other, 04/10/2024

Amid a global pilot shortage, the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) has opened a "one-of-a-kind" training facility in regional Queensland in a bid to attract more staff to the service. The \$30 million Aeromedical Training Academy in Bundaberg, 400 kilometres north of Brisbane, houses the only Beechcraft King Air Pro Line Fusion Full-Flight Simulator in Australia.

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

No relevant coverage

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

### System rollout brings patients back home

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 05/10/2024, Phoebe Doyle, Page 5

Robinvale District Health Services officially became part of the Northern Mallee Health Connect project with the admission of the project's first patient using virtual care yesterday. RDHS follows in the footsteps of Mallee Track Health and Community Services as the second hospital in the region to implement the virtual care model, working with Mildura Base Public Hospital in an attempt to improve health-care accessibility across the region.

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### Bupa launches free doctor telehealth consults

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 04/10/2024

More than 2.2 million Aussies will have access to several free telehealth consults with doctors, in a private health insurance first, as part of a cost-of-living health measure, aimed at also relieving strains on emergency hospital departments and GPs. Through Bupa's digital health platform, Bluea, eligible Bupa health insurance members will pay zero out of pocket costs for three telehealth bookings per person, per year, as part of their policy.

## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### James's death must be warning

Herald Sun, General News, 05/10/2024, Aneeka Simonis, Page 9

Within just 20 minutes, beloved Brighton Grammar student James Tsindos went from experiencing mild allergy symptoms to severe respiratory distress from which he never recovered. The 17-year-old had a nut allergy which he took seriously and would conscientiously flag before consuming meals.

Also reported by: [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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### ABC News, News Breakfast, 04/10/2024, Michael Rowland & Stephanie Ferrier

Interview with Dave Marchese, Triple J Presenter. Rowland says getting access to mental health support in Australia can be a great challenge, but many young Australians are saying that even if they do find some assistance, they are sometimes receiving some questionable advice. Marchese points out that they have discussed with a few psychologists about this and some organisations representing psychologists as well as AHPRA, the regulatory body, mentioned that this is unacceptable.

Also reported by: ABC (Adelaide), ABC (Albany), ABC (Brisbane), ABC (Canberra), ABC (Darwin), ABC (Hobart), ABC (Melbourne), ABC (Perth), ABC (Regional NSW), ABC (Regional Queensland), ABC (Regional Victoria), ABC (Sydney), ABC News (Adelaide), ABC News (Brisbane), ABC News (Canberra), ABC News (Hobart), ABC News (Melbourne), ABC News (Perth), ABC News (Regional NSW), ABC News (Regional Queensland), ABC News (Regional Victoria), ABC News (Regional West Australia)

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

### Helping parents to connect and thrive

Newcastle Herald, General News, 05/10/2024, Page 44

Clinical psychologist Penny Marshall, director of Forest for the Trees Perinatal Psychology, passionately believes if infants feel well connected with their mothers it sets them up for better mental health outcomes for the rest of their lives. Her team at Forest for the Trees are dedicated to facilitating this connection, believing the service fills a much-needed gap and truly supports the local community.

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### Yes, vapes should be available beyond Australian pharmacies like they are in other countries

Crikey, Other, 04/10/2024, James Martin

Australia is unique in treating vapes as therapeutic devices restricted to behind-the-counter sales at pharmacies. Under our current system, to access a vape a "patient" must first have a consultation with their pharmacist in which their medical history is considered.

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

[Read More](#)

### No, vapes shouldn't be available beyond pharmacies (for now)

Crikey, Other, 04/10/2024, Kathryn Steadman

From July 1 this year, the only way to legally obtain a vape in Australia was from a pharmacy. This includes everything to do with vapes, from the devices to the liquids, regardless of whether they contain nicotine or not.

## SPORT

### WADA exec in Masters media pass scandal

Weekend Australian, Sport, 05/10/2024, Jacquelin Magnay, Page 44

The World Anti Doping Agency is under pressure to explain why one of its senior executives received a journalist pass at the Masters Golf in Augusta this year. WADA's credibility is already under enormous strain for its less than robust handling of two significant tranches of positive drug tests, one involving three Chinese swimmers and then another involving 23 Chinese swimmers by fulsomely accepting the Chinese explanations, including false claims of contamination as a result of Australian beef hormones.

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### Former star under-19 batter speaks out on abuse allegations

Sydney Morning Herald, Sport, 05/10/2024, Daniel Brettig, Page 56

A former junior Australian captain who is suing Cricket Australia over a historical allegation of sexual abuse says he has come forward "to call out both those who take advantage of the vulnerable and the organisations who protect them". Dean Reynolds led Australia on the 1985 under-19s tour to India and Sri Lanka, where he has alleged he was sexually touched by the coach Bob Bitmead.

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

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### Chairman backs move

Weekend Post, General News, 05/10/2024, Samuel Davis, Page 3

North Queensland Cowboys chairman Lewis Ramsay has publicly declared his commitment to moving its women's program to Cairns and fired a parting shot at Townsville fans for failing to get behind the NRLW team. As exclusively reported on Friday, the rugby league powerhouse is committed to investing up to \$10m in the region and the construction of a \$25m high performance facility at West Barlow Park before relocating the NRLW side to Cairns in 2027.

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### ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 04/10/2024, Manny Tsigas

An Adelaide 36 international recruit has been racially abused online following the team's first win of the NBL season. Former NBA star Montrezl Harrell called out the racial slurs on social media, which were posted by an anonymous account after defeating the South East Melbourne Phoenix.

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Inside the chamber

Sydney Morning Herald, Good Weekend Magazine, 05/10/2024, Sarah Berry, Page 12

It's a cool, grey morning in Melbourne's Fitzroy, where I've just been locked inside a vacuum-sealed, temperature-controlled chamber, a lab rat for health data collection. For the next 24 hours, the minutiae of my metabolic inputs and outputs will be measured in real time while I live inside this two-by-three-metre room.

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### New hope for drug to fight dementia

The world-first's treatment for a cruel and deadly form of dementia that is more common in young people may be sitting in a Melbourne laboratory. Frontotemporal dementia hit headlines after actor Bruce Willis revealed his diagnosis, but the incurable disease, which can hit as early as 35, has been under-diagnosed.

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## Water fluoridation 'less effective' than in the past - study

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 04/10/2024

Adding fluoride to drinking water may be less effective now than it was in the past, according to a major review. The benefits of fluoridating water supplies appear to have declined since the 1970s when fluoride toothpaste became widely available in the UK, academics found.

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## World's first vaccine for ovarian cancer 'could wipe out the disease'

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 04/10/2024

The world's first vaccine for ovarian cancer – being developed in the UK – could wipe out the deadly disease, researchers say. Scientists at the University of Oxford are creating OvarianVax, a vaccine which teaches the immune system to recognise and attack the earliest stages of ovarian cancer.

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

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## 'Amazing' trial shows drug combination stops lung cancer advancing for longer

The Guardian, Other, 05/10/2024, Andrew Gregory

Doctors are hailing "amazing" trial results that show a new drug combination stopped lung cancer advancing for more than 40% longer than the standard treatment. Lung cancer is the world's leading cause of cancer death, accounting for about 1.8 million deaths every year. Survival rates in those with advanced forms of the disease, where tumours have spread, are particularly poor.

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## Dental health benefits of fluoride in water may have declined, study finds

The Guardian, Other, 04/10/2024, Andrew Gregory

The dental health benefits of adding fluoride to drinking water may be smaller now than before fluoride toothpaste was widely available, a review suggests. Researchers from the universities of Manchester, Dundee and Aberdeen assessed evidence from 157 studies comparing communities that had fluoride added to their water supplies with communities that had no additional fluoride in their water.

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

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### How to close the gap

The Saturday Paper, General News, 05/10/2024, Dr Tracy Westerman, Page 7

Governments are supposed to be all about accountability. Yet the "gap" widens each year, and the statistics provide stark evidence of this failure.

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### Water lifeline for remote community

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 05/10/2024, Douglas Smith, Page 18

A remote drought-stricken community that has struggled to maintain its water supply for the past five years has been thrown a lifeline by the Albanese government. The tiny town of Scotdesco, 100km west of Ceduna, which has a water catchment capacity of 1.5 million litres, ran completely dry as a result of extreme drought in November 2019, leaving the community with water cartage costs it could not afford.

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## New national commissioner

Canberra Times, General News, 05/10/2024, Eleanor Campbell, Page 5

A new national commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people will be launched in January, almost a year after the government announced its response to worsening rates of child removal in First Nations communities. The move follows years of advocacy from Aboriginal organisations who have urged for more government action into the rising number of children being placed into out-of-home care.

Also reported by: [Northern Daily Leader \(Online\)](#), [National Indigenous Times \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#).

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## SNAICC welcomes "major milestone" in creation of National First Nations Child Commissioner

National Indigenous Times, Other, 04/10/2024, Dechlan Brennan

The peak body for Indigenous children in Australia has welcomed the next step in the appointment of a national commissioner to turn around the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care and youth detention. On Friday, the government said the National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People will begin operations in January, with a First Nations person to be appointed to lead the body.

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## Cherbourg to receive \$26 million for upgrades to contaminated water supply

ABC Online, Other, 04/10/2024

The residents of Cherbourg are finally getting a secure water supply that will make a major difference to their health and lives. Alerts advising residents to boil their water have been a frequent occurrence for the First Nations settlement three hours' drive from Brisbane, known as one of Australia's most disadvantaged communities.

[Read More](#)

## Patient furious as health centre demands proof she's Indigenous

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 04/10/2024

When Cheri Power tried to book a new round of therapy this week at her clinic of 16 years, she got an unwelcome email. "You must provide proof of Indigenous ancestry," it said.

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## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Mpox vaccinations

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 04/10/2024

NSW Health is urging the public to get two free doses of the mpox vaccine as cases surge in the state. Since 01 Jun, NSW has reported 433 mpox cases, with 26 hospitalisations due to severe symptoms.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION



## Sensor could be a lifesaver

Courier Mail, General News, 05/10/2024, Isabella Pesch, Page 33

A Brisbane company leading the world in wearable health tech is set to launch a new product that allows users to get real-time data on their body's vital signs sent straight to their phone. Healthtech company WearOptimo is developing a Microwearable sensor which can record a person's hydration levels instantaneously.

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## Alarm over vape 'upgrades'

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 05/10/2024, Tayla Couacaud, Page 21

Authorities have raised the alarm on illegal nicotine pouches in colourful packaging being marketed to young Queenslanders as an "upgrade" to vaping and smoking. [...] A Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) spokesman told the Courier Mail there has been an increase in the number of nicotine pouches being stopped by Australian Border Force between January 1, 2024 and September 13, 2024.

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## Steph Claire Smith rips toxic Oatzempic Challenge to shreds

Cairns Post, Other, 04/10/2024, Claudia Poposki

A "quick fix" weight loss fad is being praised all over social media – but experts are warning those wanting to lose weight to stay far away from it. [...] It's been touted as an alternative to Ozempic, a diabetes drug prescribed off-label that is constantly in short supply that has not been approved as a weight loss drug in Australia by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

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## Oral drug for kids with T2D

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 04/10/2024

Jardiance (empagliflozin) has become the first oral treatment to be available on private script for type 2 diabetes (T2D) in children and adolescents, since metformin was indicated for use in this growing patient group. Approved by the TGA, Jardiance is now available for patients aged 10 years and older and can be prescribed alongside metformin to help manage the disease.

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## OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

### Drug overdose deaths in Ballarat remain high for second year

Ballarat Courier, General News, 05/10/2024, Adam Spencer, Page 2

The need for more support and funding for drug and alcohol treatment in Ballarat has been highlighted again, with a new report revealing the city averaged about one drug overdose death per month last year, while Victoria has recorded its second deadliest year on record. The Coroners Court of Victoria released its Victorian overdose deaths report 2014-2023 on Thursday, revealing there were 14 overdose deaths in the Ballarat local government area in 2023, the same number as in 2022 and 2019.

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### Overdose toll rises

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 05/10/2024, Ben Silvester, Page 1

Greater Bendigo recorded nine drug overdose deaths in 2023 as the Victorian toll rose to near record highs, according to the state coroner. The Victorian Overdose Deaths 2014-2023 report released on October 3, 2024 recorded 543 deaths in 2023 with regional Victoria representing a quarter of that figure.

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

## 'Overdoses will grow': calls for more injecting rooms

Shepparton News Online, Other, 04/10/2024

More medically-supervised injecting centres are needed across Australia to help prevent drug overdose deaths, safety advocates say. Action is overdue and urgently required as dangerous synthetic opioids continue to be detected, Alcohol and Drug Foundation chief executive Erin Lalor says.

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## FOOD STANDARDS

### Kitchen nightmare: cafe's filth exposed

Ballarat Courier, General News, 05/10/2024, Alex Dalziel, Page 2

Rodent faeces, spilled meat juice, mould, grime and sludge were found in the kitchen of a Wendouree cafe taken to court by the City of Ballarat. Pictures from the investigation into Groundworks Cafe, in Stockland Wendouree, were shared after the business' director pleaded guilty to 44 food safety violations at the Ballarat Magistrates' Court.

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### Red tape business killer

Weekend Post, General News, 05/10/2024, Arun Singh Mann, Page 7

A Far North business owner is considering closing due to "red tape stress", as administrative costs across the state double in just three years. Helga's Pancake House owner Birgit Machnitzke says she spends as much time in the books as she does operating her hospitality business after first opening in 2015.

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## AICIS

### On the cutting edge

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 05/10/2024, Page 53

Dr Elsa Antunes is a busy woman. [...] That led to a bigger project with six northern Queensland councils, which looked at how contaminants such as Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) could be removed from wastewater before they went into the environment.

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