



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 20th October 2024

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister Wells](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#)  
| [Assistant Minister Kearney](#) | [Assistant Minister Thwaites](#) | [Department](#)  
| [Vaccines](#) | [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 of Drug Control](#) | [Food Standards](#) | [AICIS](#)

## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sunday Age](#)** (page 1) reports the TGA is taking major medical cannabis prescription service Montu to court over its advertising practices and running an illegal referral scheme, which Montu denies, with the TGA warning repeated contraventions of laws around medical cannabis promotion can lead to public harm.
- **[The Sunday Mail Brisbane](#)** (page 1) reports the LNP has claimed Queensland Labor deliberately delayed the release of a four-year review into Redland Hospital by 39 days as part of a “culture of cover up” within Queensland Health. Queensland Health Minister Shannon Fentiman has refuted the claims, saying the 1000-page document was made available to the public at the same time the ministers received it from Queensland Health.
- **[The Sunday Territorian](#)** (page 3) reports a two-day training course for Aboriginal Health Practitioner students has been held by Careflight and the Batchelor Institute, with spokespeople for the organisations saying the training will help improve remote healthcare in the Northern Territory.
- **[The Sunday Age](#)** (page 4) reports the first vaccinations to wildlife will begin shortly as part of a \$100 million package to fight against the intrusion of H5N1 avian flu into Australia's biodiversity, with vaccinations for livestock workers also available despite a low chance of human infection.

- [The Sunday Mail Adelaide](#) (page 5) reports a doctor who is responsible for half the baby deliveries at a regional Queensland hospital has been restricted from having any contact with female patients or practicing telehealth by AHPRA.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Channel 7, Seven News (Weekend), 19/10/2024, Mike Smithson

New research shows the Federal Government's vaping plan is failing, with 99% of products bought on the black market. A nationwide survey of more than 300 pharmacies found just four stocked legal vapes under the national plan. Health Minister Mark Butler promised Australia's vapers that these products would be available from pharmacies without a prescription.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

## MINISTER WELLS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

### Official opening of headspace in Kiama

The Bugle, General News, 19/10/2024, Neve Surridge, Page 4

Young people in Kiama and surrounding areas will now have access to in-person free mental health care and support with the opening of a headspace clinic. [...] Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Emma McBride and Federal Member for Gilmore Fiona Phillips joined headspace staff and youth groups and community members to celebrate the launch of headspace Kiama.

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[Back to Top](#)

## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## DEPARTMENT

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## VACCINES

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## AGEING AND AGED CARE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## POPULATION HEALTH

### AI revolution fertile territory for women

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 20/10/2024, Robyn Riley, Page 20

Women will soon be able to check the best time to try for a baby and even when menopause is heading their way using a new online AI tool researchers say can revolutionise fertility treatment globally. The Chinese researchers behind the tool called OvaRePred are in Melbourne to present their "trailblazing" tool at the World Congress on Menopause.

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

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### Everything you need to know about menopause

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 20/10/2024, Page 21

Menopause is when a woman's menstrual periods stop because her ovaries are no longer producing eggs. In Australia, the average age of menopause is about 51 years of age and it's 12 months after your final menstrual period. You no longer have menstrual periods and you can't get pregnant.

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### School deals still going vape

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 20/10/2024, Rebecca Borg & Susie O'Brien, Page 30

Brazen school students are pocketing hundreds of dollars each week by dealing vapes on campuses in broad daylight to skirt anti-vaping laws. One former student dealer, who sold vapes at a school to turn a profit, told the Sunday Herald Sun she would buy the illegal goods from a tobacco shop nearby using a fake ID before returning to school to offload the products to young customers.

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### NT Health, police seize hundreds of illegal vapes from Darwin businesses

The Courier Mail, Other, 19/10/2024, Nathaniel Chambers

A joint raid operation targeting three Northern Territory businesses has led to the seizure of about 1700 illegal vapes. More than 60 businesses were investigated as part of the operation, with eight identified as illegal vape sellers through covert purchases.

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

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### Gunnebah drug, alcohol rehab deepens Bond Uni medical students' understanding of addiction

ABC Online, Other, 19/10/2024

Medical student Gordon Nguyen knows he's lived a relatively sheltered life when it comes to substance abuse. "I don't really have a background in addiction — I've never really been affected by it," he said.

## A brave new world is within our grasp

Cairns Post, Other, 19/10/2024, Emily Kowal

A world where disease can be reversed in the womb and extinct animals can be brought back from the dead is just years away. This was the message at South by Southwest Sydney yesterday in two panels dedicated to talks on how DNA, genome, data science and AI research is undergoing explosive change.

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

[Read More](#)[Back to Top](#)

## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### New lease of life gives cancer specialist a royal rendezvous

Sun Herald, General News, 20/10/2024, Garry Maddox, Page 10

Professor Richard Scolyer did not expect to be alive now. When the joint Australian of the Year was diagnosed with brain cancer in May last year, he learnt that the median survival for patients with the condition was just 14 months.

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### CPR saves life of WA man considered clinically dead after cardiac arrest

ABC Online, Other, 19/10/2024, Alex Govan & Charlie McLean

On a warm Friday night in Dampier, a small town on WA's Pilbara coast, Wickham Wolves captain Gavin Mippy was unknowingly about to play his last game of competitive football. [...] Quick response can save lives According to the Heart Foundation, only between five and 10 per cent of people survive a cardiac arrest, but those odds are much higher if CPR or a defibrillator is administered quickly.

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### 'I thought I was stressed about my son's life-saving surgery. Then I received the diagnosis.'

Mamamia, Other, 19/10/2024, Nicole Madigan

When Tracey Ryan's son, Leigh, was born 13 weeks premature, it was the beginning of a lifetime of hospital visits. Little Leigh was diagnosed with neuronal intestinal dysplasia and Hirschsprung's disease, and was unable to use his bowels.

[Read More](#)[Back to Top](#)

## PRIMARY CARE

### Anti-abortion crusaders are on the rise here, ignoring the facts

Sunday Age, General News, 20/10/2024, Jacqueline Maley, Page 24

The change came far too late, but it did, eventually, come. Abortion is now decriminalised in every Australian state and territory, but if you think that means the matter is settled, you're wrong.

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

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### Name a price and we'll pay

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 20/10/2024, Brad Crouch, Page 18

SA Health is inviting applicants for one of its toughest jobs to name their own price. It also is offering two high-level clinical jobs at salaries of up to \$713,000 a year and one for \$620,000, among a host of lucrative positions as the state government tries to "fix" ramping, unclog emergency departments and deal with lengthening elective surgery queues.

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

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## Claims of health cover-up

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 20/10/2024, Hayden Johnson, Page 1

Delays in releasing a damning report into Redland Hospital smacks of a "callous, calculated" cover-up, the LNP has claimed in a scathing attack as it enters the final week of election campaigning. A four-year review into the hospital's endoscopy cancer screening service -which found 12 patients could have lived longer if they received proper care -was finalised on September 9 but was not released until October 18.

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

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## Coroner Olivia McTaggart hands down findings into Jane Chapman's death at the North West Regional Hospital

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 19/10/2024, Simon Mcguire

A Tasmanian coroner has ruled that staffing shortages and a hospital-wide bed block contributed to an older woman's fall in an hospital emergency department that ultimately led to her death. On June 25, 2022, 74-year-old Zeehan woman Jane Chapman was transported by ambulance to the North West Regional Hospital (NWRH) after her daughter had "concerns regarding her mother's sudden onset of confusion and incontinence".

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

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## 'Ignored': Australian father's plea for change

Cairns Post, Other, 19/10/2024, Dr Matthew Roberts

I am smiling in the photos of me and my freshly arrived firstborn, but I remember how long it took for the smiles to feel real. My heart was devoted to the little guy and his amazing mum, but the warmth of mutual enjoyment didn't ignite for many long weeks.

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

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Trauma & stress link in a DNA timebomb

Sunday Times, General News, 20/10/2024, John Naish, Page 39

Can you inherit the emotional scars caused by trauma and stress experienced by your parents, or even your grandparents? A growing body of evidence suggests that may be the case.

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## Dan Andrews wrecked youth mental health, so now he can fix it?

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 20/10/2024, Peta Credlin, Page 29

Late on Friday, news seeped out that former Victorian premier, Daniel Andrews has been controversially appointed as chair of leading youth mental health service, Orygen. The backlash was harsh and immediate.

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## Tasmanian children most medicated in Australia for ADHD, an inquiry has heard

Cairns Post, Other, 19/10/2024, Eleanor de Jong

A child psychiatrist who specialises in ADHD has told a parliamentary committee that the state's prescribing rates of ADHD drugs for children are the highest in Australia. Professor David Coghill is the President of the Australasian ADHD Committee.

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

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## AWH mental health service on notice: eating disorder treatment falls on your watch

The Border Mail, Other, 19/10/2024, Jodie O'Sullivan

Public mental health services including Albury-Wodonga Health will be held "accountable" for their treatment of eating disorders under a Victorian government plan to tackle the escalating health crisis. Every area mental health service in the state has been put on notice that they need to focus their efforts on eating disorders, says Eating Disorders Victoria (EDV) chief Belinda Caldwell, who has welcomed the move to create a long-term "road map" of care.

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## Veteran community to benefit from free mental health and suicide prevention training

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 18/10/2024

Veterans and their families have access to free mental health literacy and suicide prevention training, thanks to an Australian Government-funded initiative launched today by leading health promotion charity Mental Health First Aid Australia. Announcing the official launch during Veterans' Health Week, Acting CEO Ebony Whitehouse says the Mental Health Protect program reflects this year's theme of 'Keep connected' in recognising the role these connections have in keeping the community safe.

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[Back to Top](#)

## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

### Maternity taskforce born

Sunraysia Daily, Other, 19/10/2024, Wade Stephens

A new taskforce will be established to focus on addressing complex challenges affecting Victoria's maternity and newborn services, including models from other regions that could be applied in Mildura. Set to be made up of nursing and midwifery experts, representatives from regional and rural health services, and Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Victorian Branch member Nicole Allan, the taskforce will investigate workforce recruitment and retention issues in the sector.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH WORKFORCE

# Students receive 'vital' training

Sunday Territorian, General News, 20/10/2024, Page 3

Thirty Aboriginal health practitioner students have been given hands-on experience in adult and pediatric emergency care with a view to improving the remote NT emergency medical response. The students received two days of comprehensive training this week, delivered by CareFlight and the Batchelor Institute.

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

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# Here's what Labor has promised if it returns to power

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 20/10/2024, Lucy Bladen, Page 3

Labor has promised to hire an extra 800 health workers. It was the party's first commitment, announced back in May, and the party says it would cost "hundreds of millions of dollars".

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

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

[Back to Top](#)

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No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### Doc can't treat women

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 20/10/2024, Brad Crouch, Page 5

A prominent South East GP who delivers dozens of babies a year has had restrictions imposed on his registration preventing contact with female patients, putting enormous pressure on childbirth services at a regional hospital. Dr Jeffrey Bryan Taylor, a director at Naracoorte's Kincaig Medical Clinic who also was principal medical officer of Naracoorte Health Service, had restrictions imposed by the Medical Board of Australia as of October 1.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

### I won't cop this

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 20/10/2024, Peter Badel, Page 1

New Broncos coach Michael Maguire has vowed to launch a crackdown on player conduct as Brisbane bosses come to terms with the latest off-field scandal to rock the NRL's \$80m glamour club. Maguire moves to Queensland on Wednesday and one of his first tasks will be a crisis meeting with Mam, who was hospitalised after a road accident in Brisbane on Friday.

Also reported by: [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Hope for women with rare ovarian cancer as new drug combo is shown to shrink tumours

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 19/10/2024, Shaun Wooller

There is hope for women with a rare type of ovarian cancer after a clinical trial showed that a new combination of drugs can reduce the size of tumours. Almost a third (31%) of women with low-grade serous ovarian cancer, which does not respond well to chemotherapy, saw their tumours shrink or stop growing when taking a combination of avutometinib and defactinib.

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### 'They're not me': Adelaide tattoo lover Lexi Dignam has change of heart about her tattoos

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 19/10/2024, Kate Uren

The tiger tattoo that prowls along Lexi Dignam's forearm is a permanent reminder of the snap decision she made as a 20-year-old obsessed with body art. It sits near a tattooed homage to Ms Dignam's favourite film – 2007's Bee Movie, starring Jerry Seinfeld – that she chose on a whim at the age of 21.

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

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Governments prepare to prevent bird flu catastrophe

Sunday Age, General News, 20/10/2024, Mike Foley, Page 4

Environmental officers will soon be vaccinating wild populations of endangered animals against an inevitable outbreak of deadly bird flu, breeding captive "insurance" populations of threatened species and picking up carcasses to limit the spread of the disease. These are the unprecedented actions Australian governments are preparing for under a new \$100 million funding package to prepare for what experts say is an inevitable outbreak of a deadly variant of bird flu, known as H5N1, which has decimated wildlife on every continent except Australia.

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

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## Australia look to NZ for advice on bird flu threat

Kaloorlie Miner, Other, 19/10/2024, Caitlin Powell & Rachael Ward

Australia is looking to New Zealand for advice on how to cope with the "unprecedented threat" of an explosion of a dangerous strain of bird flu. So far both countries and the wider Pacific region have escaped the deadly H5N1 strain of avian influenza, which has triggered the death, illness and reduced egg production among millions of wild birds and tens of thousands of mammal species elsewhere.

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

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## ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 19/10/2024, Johanna Nicholson & Fauziah Ibrahim

Victorians are being urged to get vaccinated against mpox as cases surge. The State has already seen ten times as many cases as last year, with 83 cases reported, compared to eight in 2023.

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[Back to Top](#)

## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### Cannabis Inc: Pushing the legal limits

Sunday Age, General News, 20/10/2024, Clay Lucas, Page 1

The nation's biggest medicinal cannabis company engineered a legally contentious referral scheme and set up an "independent" public lobby group as it built a dominant position in the industry. [...] After four years of warnings that the company's advertising broke these laws, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in April commenced Federal Court action against Montu.

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

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### Medicinal cannabis line risks going up in smoke

Sun Herald, Editorials, 20/10/2024, Page 38

If the medicinal cannabis industry isn't careful, it risks going up in smoke. [...] As health reporter Angus Thomson has outlined, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved two cannabis products to treat specific conditions one to treat muscle rigidity caused by multiple sclerosis and another to alleviate symptoms of a rare childhood epilepsy.

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### Generic medicines tend to be cheaper than brand names. Here's how much you could save

ABC Online, Other, 19/10/2024, Hanan Dervisevic

Any Australian who has filled a prescription at the chemist will have been asked if they want a branded product or the generic version. [...] According to the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), a generic medicine is an additional brand of an existing medicine.

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### A GP guide to Botox for movement disorders

Australian Doctor, Other, 19/10/2024, Kelly Bertram

Botulinum toxin has a long history of safe and effective use in the management of movement disorders including cervical dystonia, hemifacial spasm, blepharospasm and spasticity. It is PBS-listed for management of these conditions.

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[Back to Top](#)

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No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## FOOD STANDARDS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## AICIS

### **Most common US pesticide may affect brain development similarly to nicotine**

The Guardian, Other, 20/10/2024, Tom Perkins

Industry research reviewed by independent scientists show that exposure to the nation's most common pesticides, neonicotinoids, may affect developing brains the same way as nicotine, including by significantly shrinking brain tissue and neuron loss. Exposure could be linked to long-term health effects like ADHD, slower auditory reflexes, reduced motor skills, behavioral problems and delayed sexual maturation in males, the new review found.

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[Back to Top](#)

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