



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 27th October 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sunday Age](#)** (page 1) reports more pregnant women should be included in clinical trials for medications to aid expectant mothers in making informed choices for them and their baby, according to a paper released by an Australian-led group of researchers.
- **[The Sun Herald](#)** (page 3) reports a number of medical devices are likely to be affected by the shutdown of the 3G network tomorrow, with the TGA warning devices such as pacemakers, personal medical alarms and devices bought online or imported may be impacted. *Also reported by: [Sunday Age](#)*
- **[The Sunday Telegraph](#)** (page 6) reports concerns have been raised over links between Meta and several mental health organisations who signed a joint letter opposing the proposed social media age bans, with all four groups having engaged in various partnerships with Meta, Tik Tok or Snap Chat. *Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun](#), [Sunday Territorian](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane](#), [Sunday Tasmanian](#)*
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports federal Opposition members have called for tobacco taxes to be reduced in the face of rising demand for illegal tobacco, with AIHW data showing almost 25 per cent of smokers report having used under-the-counter products.

- [ABC Online](#) reports a doctor at Gadigal Eye Clinic in Sydney says he wants to send retinal cameras, that send real-time data and images to clinics in the city, to regional and Aboriginal health clinics to aid in virtual treatment of First Nations and regional patients who otherwise have to travel hundreds of kilometres to receive care.
- [The Sunday Herald Sun](#) (page 13) reports the TGA has seized \$8 million worth of nicotine vapes discovered by police after they were called to a burglary at a warehouse in Box Hill.

MINISTER BUTLER

\$8m in illegal vapes found

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 27/10/2024, Regan Hodge, Page 13

An \$8m stash of illegal vapes has been uncovered and seized with the help of a burglar attempting to ransack a warehouse in Box Hill South. [...] Vapes are now available for adults to purchase at pharmacies with photo ID in a plan executed by federal Health Minister Mark Butler.

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

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Mudgee health in crisis

Mudgee Guardian & Gulgong Advertiser, General News, 26/10/2024, Benjamin Palmer, Page 1

The Mudgee region is facing a health services crisis that is among the worst the rural sector has ever seen. [...] Mr Gee said he will continue to call on federal health minister Mark Butler to visit the region to see the effects of the doctor shortage first-hand.

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Pathology companies say bulk billing is at risk from rebate freezes, but health experts say they are 'bluffing'

ABC Online, Other, 26/10/2024, Paige Cockburn

If you've looked around the waiting room of your local GP clinic recently you may have noticed posters urging you to email your MP to "keep pathology bulk billed". [...] "Technological advances are continuing to drive down the cost of providing and operating many pathology services," Health Minister Mark Butler said.

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Coalition not thanking Jacinta Price for raising abortion debate

PS News, Other, 26/10/2024, Chris Johnson

Women's reproductive rights are posing a serious headache for the Coalition as senior Liberals and Nationals try to hose down controversial statements made by one of their own. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler issued a statement: "I am committed to ensuring that all Australian women have equitable access to the healthcare they need, particularly women in rural and regional areas and those experiencing disadvantage."

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MINISTER WELLS

New reforms help seniors to remain at home as they age Advertising Feature

Central Western Daily, Other, 26/10/2024, Nicki Davey

Around 1.4 million Australians will benefit from a new Support at Home program by 2035, as part of the federal government's historic aged care reforms that will allow seniors to retain their independence and

remain in their homes for longer. [...] Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells said they have heard the message from older Australians - they want support to stay in the homes and communities they love.

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Sky News Live, Queensland Decides: Election Night LIVE, 26/10/2024, Kieran Gilbert & Peta Credlin

Panel discussion with Pat Gorman and Annastacia Palaszczuk on the Queensland election. Pat Gorman is asked if David Crisafulli should adopt a plan towards building a larger Brisbane Olympics stadium. Gorman says he is sure Sports Minister Anika Wells and the new government will come to an agreement regarding infrastructure for the Olympics.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

Take notice of symptoms

Murray Valley Standard, Other, 26/10/2024

Despite being a notoriously deadly disease, ovarian cancer treatment options still lag behind. [...] Federal Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Ged Kearney, said the funding would ensure the project stayed the course to help more women and their families now and in the future.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

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DEPARTMENT

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VACCINES

4BC, Weekend Breakfast, 26/10/2024, Olympia Kwitowski

Kwitowski says police officers and staff are launching a class-action lawsuit against the Queensland Government, claiming the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination orders were coercive and devastating. She says the lawsuit includes Queensland Ambulance Service officers. She says billionaire Clive Palmer is funding the case, filed yesterday after a Supreme Court ruling declared the police vaccination order unlawful.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Older Australians deserve better than a 50-50 shot at health

Canberra Times, Other, 26/10/2024, Peter Breadon

Three years after a royal commission uncovered horrific failures in Australia's aged care, new figures show the treatment of our vulnerable elderly remains shameful. In December last year, only 31 per cent of aged care residents had been vaccinated for COVID in the previous six months.

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

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POPULATION HEALTH

Syndicates growing own tobacco in Victoria to circumvent borders

Sunday Age, General News, 27/10/2024, Marta Pascual Juanola, Page 12

Criminal syndicates involved in Melbourne's tobacco war are increasingly growing their own crops in secret farms across Victoria as law enforcement agencies crack down on the lucrative black market trade. The farms, which syndicate members and facilitators lease from unsuspecting owners, act as insurance for cigarette shipments intercepted by border officials and provide a steady supply of "chop chop" to sell in tobacco shops.

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Give up tax grab ban tobacco

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 27/10/2024, Peter Goers, Page 69

Don't smoke. Don't start. If you are a smoker give up. I wish I'd never started. For years now I've smoked just one or two a day, down from 30 a day, not for health reasons because we know it's a slow suicide but because it is ridiculously unaffordable.

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Broome needle and syringe exchange program confirmed after residents raise safety fears

ABC Online, Other, 26/10/2024

Intravenous drug users in Western Australia's north will soon be able to exchange used needles for sterile ones, as the state government moves to address concerns around discarded needles littering the streets of Broome. On Thursday, WA Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson announced the existing Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) in Broome would become an exchange program.

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Leading youth advocate warns we are criminalising childhood trauma

Cairns Post, Other, 26/10/2024, Sarah Booth

Childhood trauma is criminalised, a top advocate for youth has warned, after alarming national data found 70 per cent of kids in youth detention had "interacted" with the child protection system. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's report revealed a staggering 94 per cent of 10 year-olds under youth justice supervision had been involved with child protection, while half of all kids in detention were the subject of a "substantiated" report of neglect or abuse.

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

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How abortion debate impacted the Queensland election campaign

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 26/10/2024, Aisling Brennan

It's normally a taboo topic, but when a minor party threatened to push to change abortion laws in Queensland, the upcoming state election was turned on its head, with experts warning the discussion was entering "dangerous" territory. Queenslanders will be voting on Saturday to elect their next government for the next four years.

Also reported by: [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#),

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Marcus feels like he's 'breathing underwater' — but he's been trying to prove his disability to the NDIS for 18 months

7news.com.au, Other, 26/10/2024, Hayley Taylor

When a chronic illness becomes permanent, partners become carers, careers come to an end, and savings dwindle as the various costs of treatment and management mount. It might be assumed securing some additional support for such challenges would be simple, but the reality can be very different.

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After a genetic test, Georgie is taking steps to reduce her cancer risk

ABC Online, Other, 26/10/2024, Alex Barwick & Sabra Lane

A simple saliva test showed 30-year-old Georgie Bellette has a high risk of developing cancer. Although the news was a shock, the Hobart mother-of-two has taken it in her stride and is now taking steps to reduce her cancer risk and help her large extended family do the same.

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Former AFLW Cats player Renee Garing lucky after skin cancer scare

Adelaide Now, Other, 26/10/2024, Abby Walter

A former AFLW Cats player is encouraging people to be sun smart and get their skin checked after a melanoma was cut out of her leg in the final trimester of her pregnancy. [...] Professor Anne Cust, chair of Cancer Council's National Skin Cancer Committee, said new data from the council reinforced Australians were not doing enough to protect themselves in summer.

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

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PRIMARY CARE

Straight off to work for state

Sunday Mail Brisbane, Edition Changes - Metro, 27/10/2024, Brendan O'Malley, Page 16

The LNP has ambitious plans for its first 100 days in office. Premier-elect David Crisafulli said in his first week, the LNP's promised youth crime crackdown would be among his first priorities.

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Our NT ambos get top marks

Sunday Territorian, General News, 27/10/2024, Alex Treacy, Page 5

Patient satisfaction among Territorians with their emergency ambulance services continues to nudge

perfection, with the NT sitting jointly at the top of the nation according to the annual Council of Ambulance Authorities' Patient Experience Survey. For the second consecutive year, 99 per cent of patients surveyed found their experience dealing with St John NT to be positive overall equal with New South Wales in leading the nation.

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Rex deal aims to ease debt

Sunraysia Daily, Other, 26/10/2024, Allan Murphy

Administrators for Rex Airlines have sold its business arm that supplies ambulance services to Ambulance Victoria and NSW Ambulance in the wake of a Federal Government commitment to ensure the ongoing viability of key regional aviation services. Regional Express Holdings Limited and the wider Rex Group entered voluntary administration in July, however regional Saab 340 flights, including those operating out of Mildura, had so far been unaffected and continued to operate.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide, drugs videos fed to teens

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 27/10/2024, Danica Clayton, Page 40

Teenagers as young as 13 are being fed distressing content linked to suicide, extremist behaviour and drug use within just 20 minutes of signing up to social media giant TikTok. A Sunday Mail investigation, which involved signing up for a new TikTok account as a 13-year-old, has revealed how online algorithms are luring children along dark pathways through its "For You" feed based on geographic location and interactions with trending videos.

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Tech giants help fund social media ban opponents

Sunday Telegraph, Edition Changes, 27/10/2024, Remy Varga, Page 6

Opponents of a proposed aged-based social media ban have links to some of the world's biggest platforms including Instagram, TikTok and Snap. Reach Out, the Butterfly Foundation, Project Rockit and Orygen which recently appointed former Victorian premier Daniel Andrews as chairman all have current or former partnerships with Meta, the owner of Facebook and Instagram, some of which have involved funding.

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

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Feeling climate dread? Nature may be the best medicine

Bathurst Western Advocate, Other, 26/10/2024, Stephanie Gardiner

A glossy black cockatoo struts along a tree branch, chirping and preening as he flicks his red tail to impress a female in a dramatic courtship ritual. Environment worker and photographer Jayden Gunn remembers the sheer joy of watching this mating display, a rare sight in the elusive threatened species.

Also reported by: [Daily Liberal \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Dear diary.. My job's a nightmare

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 27/10/2024, Madeline Crittenden, Page 18

Crying in the tea room, coping abuse from patients upset by cancelled surgeries, enforced overtime the five-year diary of NSW nurse Rebekah Fox paints a harrowing picture of life inside the state's hospital wards. The 29-year-old registered nurse started penning her frustrations at the job during the height of the Covid pandemic, yet four years on there's little improvement, so this week she mailed all her diary entries to Premier Chris Minns.

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\$332m to plug gaps in nursing

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 27/10/2024, Madeline Crittenden, Page 19

Millions of dollars are being spent on contract nurses and overtime for already overworked staff to fill gaps in hospital rosters across NSW, the nurses' union claims. New data highlights the state's heavy reliance on agency staff, with nurses labelling the shortage of workers as a "crisis".

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Paramedic shortages and ambulance delays laid to bare in new data from the 2023-24 financial year

Cairns Post, Other, 26/10/2024, Simon McGuire

Ambulance crews took over an hour to respond to more than to 1000 emergency triple-0 calls in Tasmania over a 12-month period, new data obtained by the Greens shows. Additionally, 8700 paramedic shifts went unfilled in the state for the past financial year.

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

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

4BC, Weekend Breakfast, 26/10/2024, Olympia Kwitowski

Kwitowski says AHPRA is investigating claims that one of the nation's largest dental practises scammed an early access superannuation scheme that helps patients with chronic pain and life-threatening conditions. She says a practitioner at a cosmetic dentistry clinic and a Sydney GP allegedly created false declarations for the Australian Taxation Office that enabled a 46-year-old patient to withdraw \$41,000 from his retirement savings for dental veneers and crowns.

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

ABC Radio Darwin , Saturdays, 26/10/2024, Lyrella Couzens

There are growing calls for the federal government to reconsider high tobacco taxes, which critics say are ineffective and add financial strain. Tobacco Harm Reduction Association chair Dr Colin Mendelsohn says vaping is the most effective quitting treatment for smoking, not high taxes.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 26/10/2024, Johanna Nicholson & Fauziah Ibrahim

Report by Kathleen Calderwood on nuclear waste. In Australia, the Coalition is pushing to build seven nuclear power plants, but in Taiwan, they are working to phase out their nuclear energy grid because of unsafe nuclear waste disposal. Investigations have found nuclear waste has been badly managed, potentially exposing workers to high levels of radiation.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Device warnings abound as 3G shuts down

Sun Herald, General News, 27/10/2024, Mary Ward, Page 3

Tens of thousands of older mobile phones and other devices will cease to work from tomorrow, when the nation's 3G network is shuttered. [...] " The Therapeutic Goods Administration has said the shutdown may affect medical devices including personal medical alarms, glucose data transmitters, pacemakers, fall monitors and telehealth devices.

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'There's no research'

Sunday Age, General News, 27/10/2024, Wendy Tuohy, Page 1

When she became pregnant after careful planning and medical support, Angelie O'Brien was faced with a choice women's health experts say she should not have had to make: take medication that had not been trialled in pregnant women for her chronic disease, lupus, or risk potential disaster. "I kind of got to a point where I was obsessing about whether or not I had the right information ... Some of the information on the internet is very conflicting because there's been no research to make an informed choice," says O'Brien.

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Sydney eye clinic gives regional towns across NSW access to top doctors via remote retinal cameras

ABC Online, Other, 26/10/2024, Nick Dole

John Reid has had stitches in his eyeball for 890 days, but he's looking on the bright side. After once losing almost all of his vision, the 30-year-old can now see images of his cornea, retina and optic nerve displayed in high-definition on a screen at the Sydney Eye Hospital.

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Police find \$8m worth of vapes in warehouse after responding to a burglary

Adelaide Now, Other, 26/10/2024, Emma Kirk

Police found 200,000 illegal nicotine vapes worth about \$8m after they responded to a break in at a Melbourne warehouse. [...] Possessing a commercial quantity of illegal vapes is a Commonwealth offence, with police handing over the investigation to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Sky News Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Online\)](#).

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

Support for health response to drugs ahead of summit

West Australian, Other, 27/10/2024, Jack Gramenz

NSW trails other states in sensibly responding to drugs as voters prefer health responses over criminal sanctions for people caught with them, advocates say ahead of an inquiry. A survey of voters in five NSW seats found warnings and treatment referrals were preferable to sending people to court.

Also reported by: [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Shepparton News Online \(Online\)](#).

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ABC Radio Darwin , Saturdays, 26/10/2024, Conor Cartwright

Interview with Macquarie University Department of Health Sciences senior lecturer Dr Camila Hoyos about medicinal cannabis. Hoyos says CBD is one of the chemicals in the cannabis plant and is not intoxicating. She says it has been approved in many countries, including Australia, and is used more broadly for epilepsy and anti-anxiety.

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