



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Friday, 22nd November 2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **The Australian** (page 5) reports that new aged care legislation is set to pass parliament in a \$5.6 billion overhaul of the sector. Peak bodies welcomed the expected passing of the bill, however, the Aged and Community Care Providers Association warned the transition would provide "incredibly hard" administrative challenges for the sector.
- The **Courier Mail** (Page 10) reports that a \$1.37 billion increase to the cost of six major health projects will be mostly paid for by taxpayers. The six projects affected are stage 2 of the Ipswich Hospital and Logan Hospital expansions, the expansions of Princess Alexandra Hospital, QEII Hospital, Hervey Bay Hospital and the Cairns Hospital upgrade.
- The **Courier Mail** (Page 12) reports that life-saving surgery for women who need preventive mastectomies due to an inherited high risk of cancer are waiting up to five years. On Thursday a plea was made to Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and Shadow Minister Senator Anne Ruston for an investigation of the current National Elective Surgery Urgency Categorisation guideline.
- The **Hobart Mercury** (Page 5) reports that a parliamentary inquiry into ambulance ramping in Tasmania has found government responses to it have been inadequate. "The rapid increase in ambulance ramping has resulted in higher risks and more frequent adverse outcomes - including death - for patients," the report read.

- [The Guardian](#) reports that a new study by the Royal Women's hospital in Melbourne has found a lack of CPR mannikins with breast overlays is contributing to women being less likely to receive chest compressions from bystanders. "Our study is the first of its kind to name this as a gender and human rights issue linking this to business human rights and the commercial determinants of health," study lead Dr Rebecca Szabo said.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Breast cancer time bombs

Courier Mail, General News, 22/11/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 12

Women needing preventive mastectomies due to inherited high risk of cancer are ticking time bombs as they wait up to five years for the lifesaving procedures. [...] Breast Surgeons of Australia and New Zealand (BreastSurgANZ) and Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) made a plea to Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and Shadow Minister Senator Anne Ruston on Thursday for an investigation of the current National Elective Surgery Urgency Categorisation guideline established in 2015 that surgeons, state and territories use to prioritise surgeries in the public health system.

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

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### Urgent Care Clinic has 12,500 visits in a year

Local Ipswich News, General News, 21/11/2024, Page 4

In its first year, the Ipswich Medicare Urgent Care Clinic has had more than 12,500 visits, bolstering the region's health services and diverting patients from the Ipswich Hospital Emergency Department. [...] Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler said the Albanese Government was delivering on its promises.

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### Women head to Canberra for more access to preventative care

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/11/2024, Robyn Riley

Many Australian women with a high risk of breast cancer have been forced to wait in limbo for access to risk-reducing surgery. [...] "People with inherited risks of breast cancer often wait more than 12 months for these surgeries," AABRCG said in its position statement delivered to the federal health minister Mark Butler.

*Also reported by:* [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#).

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### Health technology, AI improving patient care and health in general practice: GP24

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 21/11/2024

GPs across Australia are using new technologies including Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve patient care and health outcomes, delegates at Australia's premier GP conference will hear today. [...] Mark Butler and Western Australia's Minister for Health and Mental Health, the Hon.

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### Mark Butler announces new five-year degree that will allow pharmacists to call themselves 'doctor'

Australian Doctor, Other, 21/11/2024, Heather Saxena

Pharmacists who complete a new extended master's degree will have the right to call themselves 'doctor', Mark Butler has announced. The federal Minister for Health and Aged Care was speaking this

week at the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's annual dinner at Parliament House in Canberra.

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## **‘We need more pharmacists’**

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 21/11/2024

Opposition MPs are calling on Mark Butler the Minister for Health and Aged Care to "advance rural generalist pathways in medicine, nursing and allied health" to cater for the unmet healthcare needs to Australians living in regional and remote areas

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## **OA Calls for Reinstatement of Biennial Medicare Eye Exams**

Eyesmart, Other, 21/11/2024

Optometry Australia (OA) has launched its Eyes on Medicare campaign ahead of the 2025 Federal Election, urging the government to reinstate Medicare-subsidised eye exams every two years for Australians under 65. [...] Optometry Australia is engaging with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and Shadow Health Minister Anne Ruston to ensure the issue is prioritised in the upcoming election platforms of major political parties.

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## **Govt appoints nine members to drive health tech reform**

Hospital and Healthcare, Other, 21/11/2024

To be chaired by the renowned cardiologist and Co-director of the Menzies Centre for Health Policy at the University of Sydney, Professor Andrew Wilson, the IAG will help guide critical reforms in response to the findings and recommendations of the HTA Review Report, which was released in September. [...] Minister for Health Mark Butler said, "We are living in a supercharged period of discovery, and the velocity of that change is stress-testing every part of the health sector, from clinical practice to business models, to our systems for health technology assessment.

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## **‘Dr Pharmacist’ gets the green light**

Medical Forum, Other, 21/11/2024

Some pharmacists could soon be able to use the title of doctor, in a move medical professionals have warned will put patient safety at risk. This week Health Minister Mark Butler announced the introduction of a new Masters of Pharmacy qualification under changes to the Australian Qualification Framework.

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## **New qualification elevate pharmacy profession**

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 21/11/2024

The Pharmacy Guild has welcomed the establishment of a new Masters of Pharmacy (Extended) qualification to better prepare graduates for the pharmacy of the future. Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler announced the change to the Australian Qualification Framework, at the Guild's Annual Parliamentary Dinner at Parliament House in Canberra last night.

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## **Pharmacists are important, but they’re not ‘doctors’: McMullen**

The Medical Republic, Other, 21/11/2024, Laura Woodrow

The 'Doctor of Pharmacy' title will be available from 2025. [...] On Tuesday night, at the Pharmacy Guild's annual parliamentary dinner in Canberra, federal health minister Mark Butler announced that the government would deliver on its promise to allow some pharmacists to be titled 'Doctor'.

[Read More](#)

## **Channel 9 Gold Coast, Gold Coast News, 21/11/2024, Eva Milic**

The new Southport urgent care clinic that has been opened today. Health Minister Mark Butler says two out of 15 of the urgent care clinics have been seeing kids under 15yos.

## ABC Gold Coast, Breakfast , 21/11/2024, Nicole Dyer

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Compere mentions that there will be officially two urgent care clinics in the Gold Coast. Butler says they've started this about the middle of 2023, as it was an election promise they have made back in 2022. He states that already, 900,000 patients have gone through the urgent care clinics.

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## Hot Tomato, 11:00 News, 21/11/2024

Gold Coasters are set to benefit from a Medicare promise made by the federal government. A new bulk billed urgent care clinic has opened in Southport today to treat patients for non-life-threatening conditions, such as cuts and sprains, the same as one already open in Oxenford. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says it will help ease pressure on the Gold Coast University Hospital.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### Aged care bill clears hurdles in Senate

The Australian, General News, 22/11/2024, Sarah Ison & Rosie Lewis, Page 5

Laws that will lead to wealthy older Australians paying up to \$13,000 more for residential aged care, while adding hundreds of thousands of new home care packages to the system, are set to pass parliament with only minor changes from the Coalition. [...] Aged Care Minister Anika Wells on Thursday described the legislation as offering "once in a generation" reforms that would ensure Australians could spend longer at home as they aged, with a \$4.3bn investment in a support-at-home program.

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

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### Aged Care Bill down to the wire: home care caps scrapped, Transition Taskforce announced

Aged Care Insite, Other, 21/11/2024, Stefanie Schultz

The Albanese government have announced amendments to their Aged Care Bill in a bid to solidify Coalition support and reach a vote by the end of next week. [...] Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells has this week announced that older Australians who opt to age at home will have more freedom to choose the services they use under the government's Support at Home initiative.

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## ABC Radio Darwin , Late Breakfast, 21/11/2024, Adam Steer

The Federal Government has scrapped a proposal to limit cleaning and gardening help for older Australians at home as it moves to progress major aged care reforms through Parliament. The plan was to limit help to one hour of cleaning a week and 18 hours of gardening an entire year, but a parliamentary inquiry heard that was inappropriate and would have left some people living in unsanitary conditions. Aged Care Minister Anika Wells says well, that's now changed.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

### Labor's proposed fee-free TAFE can 'fill in' shortages within industries

Assistant Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Minister Emma McBride has commended the Labor government's proposal of 100,000 fee-free TAFE courses, calling the scheme "important", particularly for those located in outer suburbs and regional areas. "TAFE has always been, particularly for people in the outer suburbs in the regions, a reliable pathway to gain the skills they need and also to filling skills gaps and shortages in our community," Ms McBride told Sky News Australia.

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

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## Federal government commits an extra \$22.2m for free TAFE construction courses

The Courier Mail, Other, 21/11/2024, Amelia Swan

The federal government will commit an extra \$22.2m for more than 5000 new fee-free TAFE places in construction training, in a bid to solve Victoria's crippling housing crisis. Assistant Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Minister Emma McBride has commended the Labor government's proposal of 100,000 fee-free TAFE courses, calling the scheme "important", particularly for those located in outer suburbs and regional areas.

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## Social media ban for under 16s 'important' and 'world-leading' legislation

Gold Coast Bulletin, Other, 21/11/2024

Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride says the Labor government's social media legislative reform for under 16-year-olds is "important" and "world-leading." The new legislation will be tabled in Parliament today and platforms could face fines of up to \$50 million if they breach the new laws.

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

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## Channel 9, Today , 21/11/2024, Karl Stefanovic & Sarah Abo

Panel discussion with Minister for Sport Anika Wells and Chris O'Keefe, 2GB host. Compere says Jim Chalmers is introducing sweeping changes to Australia's \$230b future fund to favour green energy and housing investment. Wells believes that the Future Fund will retain its commercial purpose, and things have to be profitable to be invested in. She states that people want from its Federal Government at the moment something to do with the housing crisis particularly increasing the supply of houses.

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## Sky News Live, First Edition, 21/11/2024, Kenny Heatley

Interview with Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride, about the inclusion of Snapchat for the social media age limit ban for 16yos below. Compere says fines of up to \$50m are expected to hit social media giants who don't cooperate with the age limit ban. McBride says Communications Minister [Michelle Rowland] is looking to introduce this in the Parliament House today. She states that she has heard from parents, teachers, and Principals about their concerns about the social harm caused by social media.

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## 3AW, 08:30 News, 21/11/2024

World-leading legislation that will ban children under 16yos from social media will be introduced in Federal Parliament today. Under the proposal, tech companies who failed to enforce the rules could be fined up to \$50m. Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride says it will make a big difference.

Similar content in: [Hope 103.2 \(Sydney\)](#).

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

### Learning CPR on manikins without breasts puts women's lives at risk, study finds

The Guardian, Other, 22/11/2024, Natasha May

Most CPR manikins don't have breasts, which contributes towards women being less likely to receive life-saving first aid from bystanders, a study has found. [...] She said this aligns with the aims of the National Women's Health Advisory Council, chaired by the assistant minister for Health Ged Kearney "to tackle 'medical misogyny'," on a range of key concerns including cardiovascular disease.

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### As temperatures soar, this conference could not be more timely

Croakey, Other, 21/11/2024, Melissa Sweet

The Healthy Environment and Lives (HEAL) Network is hosting its annual conference from 26-28 November with the theme, 'Healing with Country for a Sustainable Future for Everyone'. [...] Associate Professor Veronica Matthews Research gaps A policy session organised with the Department of Health and Aged Care will include an opening address by Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Ged Kearney, via a pre-recorded video.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

No relevant coverage

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## DEPARTMENT

### Bite size news and opportunities

Tarrangower Times, General News, 22/11/2024, Page 4

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) has announced that the Fire Danger Period for Mount Alexander Shire, which is in the North Central Fire District, will run from Monday 11 November 2024 until May 2025. [...] Audit shows disparities in rural healthcare delivery The recently released audit of the Australian health and medical research workforce by the Department of Health and Aged Care throws light on the importance of supporting rural, regional and remote health workforce and researchers, the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) says.

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### Hub gets early present

Geelong Independent, General News, 22/11/2024, Page 11

Christmas arrived early to Bellarine Community Health's new Child, Youth and Family Hub in Ocean Grove thanks to the Ocean Grove & District Men's Shed. [...] Funding for stage one of the project has been provided through the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care and the Anthony Costa Foundation with the land in Kingston Estate Ocean Grove donated by the Corless Family Trust.

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### Latest government data reveals shortfalls in rural healthcare research

Narromine Star, General News, 21/11/2024, Sophia McCaughan, Page 2

A recent report has highlighted the importance of supporting the rural, regional and remote health

workforce through strategic and targeted measures, to ensure rural Australians enjoy the same health benefits as their metropolitan counterparts. According to the latest findings by the Department of Health and Aged Care of Australia's audit report, only 13 per cent of the health and medical workforce is located in regional, rural or remote areas.

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## **OAMS \$4 million hydrotherapy pool gets the go-ahead**

Orange City Life, General News, 21/11/2024, Page 6

Construction of a new \$4 million indoor hydrotherapy pool at the Orange Aboriginal Medical Service (OAMS) in the Gateway Estate is set to begin after plans for the community facility were given the final tick of approval. [...] OAMS received funding for the facility from the Department of Health and Aged Care, along with support from Newmont Cadia.

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## **SafeWork NSW urges farmers to be safe on National Agriculture Day**

Warren Star, General News, 20/11/2024, Sophia McCaughan, Page 11

Friday, November 15, marked National Agriculture Day, with SafeWork NSW urging farmers to ensure their work environment is safe and take proactive steps to minimise psychosocial hazards in the workplace. [...] According to the Department of Health and Aged Care, on average one farmer takes their own life every 10 days.

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## **Gen-Z pizza shop owner rallies community to help former boss fighting cancer**

A Current Affair, Other, 21/11/2024

When Sydney woman Jemma Juckes was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive cancer, she was forced to give up her beloved pizza shop in the city's north-west to pay for treatment. [...] The Department of Health and Aged Care works to finalise arrangements with the pharmaceutical company and proceed to a PBS listing as quickly as possible once the necessary documentation has been submitted by the company.

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## **President's update: more scope meetings, workforce issues and protecting the title of 'doctor'**

Australian Medical Association, Other, 21/11/2024

AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen provides members with an overview of the past week. [...] Scope of practice was a key area of discussion again this week — not just at CDT but also in multiple meetings with the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC).

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## **Information on enhancements to the Australian Immunisation Register**

Australian Medical Association, Other, 21/11/2024

The Department of Health and Aged Care provides members with an update on enhancements to AIR. From 16 November 2024, COVID-19 vaccine names will no longer display the manufacturer name within the AIR. For example, the 'Pfizer Comirnaty XBB.1.5' vaccine will display as 'Comirnaty XBB.1.5'.

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## **Funding released for mental health workforce bottleneck**

Health Services Daily, Other, 21/11/2024, Cate Swannell

The federal government is making another \$14.525 million available to encourage higher education providers to create additional postgraduate psychology places in a bid to address critical mental health workforce shortages. "The Australian government recognises the current bottlenecks in the psychology training pipeline and the impacts on workforce availability and service delivery," said the Department of Health and Aged Care in its grant opportunity guidelines , published today.

## Gov says providers must 'act now' over low COVID-19 vaccination rates

Helloseaders.com.au, Other, 21/11/2024, Alex Jacobs

Residential aged care providers are once again being called upon by the Australian Government to address low COVID-19 vaccination rates ahead of the festive season. The Department of Health and Aged Care recently sent out a signed joint letter to providers to reinforce their responsibility for facilitating timely access to vaccinations for their residents.

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## Calls to target Australia's rural healthcare disparities

Radio 4EB, Other, 21/11/2024

A recent audit from the Department of Health and Aged Care reveals continued disparities in healthcare delivery between rural and metropolitan Australia. With only 13% of the health workforce serving nearly 30% of rural Australians, the report highlights the need for targeted support to address gaps in healthcare access.

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## In Practice: Member forum on governance

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 21/11/2024

The RACGP invites members attending GP24 to join a governance discussion to help shape the future of the college. [...] To support the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the General Practice in Aged Care Incentive (GPACI), the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care has engaged the Nous Group to develop and conduct a survey.

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## DoHAC head writes to home care customers warning of price rises

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

The Deputy Secretary for the Ageing and Aged Care division at the Department of Health and Aged Care, Michael Lye, has all written to all 275,000 recipients of Home Care Packages warning them providers are likely to be increasing prices in the coming months to reflect wage rises coming into effect on 1 January 2024 and 1 October 2025.

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## EY awarded \$620K contract to assess "digital maturity" of aged care sector

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

The Department of Health and Aged Care has contracted consultants EY to assess the "digital maturity" of the residential aged care sector with a view to developing benchmarks and informing future aged care reforms. "The Department of Health and Aged Care is committed to helping aged care providers leverage the benefits available from digital innovation," a spokesperson from the Department told The SOURCE.

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## Govt's rules timeline provides some certainty but little comfort for aged care providers

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

The Department of Health and Aged Care has released a timeline for the release of rules supporting the new aged care legislation, and the periods that the rules will be open for consultation. Penelope Eden Some of the rules won't be published until "early March" 2025, and after four weeks' consultation will only be finalised in early April, assuming the schedule is maintained.

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## KPMG the latest business recruited to help Govt improve its Star Ratings



The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

Consultancy firm KPMG have been awarded a \$390,101 contract to work in collaboration with the Department of Health and Aged Care on "community engagement and consultation" in a redesign of the Star Ratings system for residential aged care. The Department has released proposed changes to the Star Ratings system, and is now seeking feedback as part of the project.

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## **“Outrageous” Govt knew home care wait times would blow out to six months: Anne Ruston**

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

As ACAT approvals for Home Care Packages (HCPs) surged 21% in nine months and the HCP waiting list stood at seven months, the Department of Health and Aged Care chose to release only 24,100 Packages in the 2024-25 Federal Budget, knowing wait times would be six months on average by 30 June 2025 according to new bombshell information.

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The Wire, Other, 21/11/2024

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## **2SER FM, The Wire, 21/11/2024**

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## **VACCINES**

### **Tick for updated COVID vaccine**

Medical Forum, Other, 21/11/2024

A updated Moderna COVID-19 vaccination has been approved for use in Australia. The Therapeutic Goods Administration has authorised the use of the SPINEVAX JN.1 vaccine for people aged over 12.

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## **AGEING AND AGED CARE**

### **Aged care bill clears hurdles in Senate**

The Australian, General News, 22/11/2024, Sarah Ison & Rosie Lewis, Page 5

Laws that will lead to wealthy older Australians paying up to \$13,000 more for residential aged care, while adding hundreds of thousands of new home care packages to the system, are set to pass parliament with only minor changes from the Coalition. [...] Aged Care Minister Anika Wells on Thursday described the legislation as offering "once in a generation" reforms that would ensure Australians could spend longer at home as they aged, with a \$4.3bn investment in a support-at-home program.

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## **Experts to unpick new era of CHSP**

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 21/11/2024, Natasha Egan

Services provided by the Commonwealth Home Support Program are too important to let them fall by the wayside in the focus to establish the Support at Home Program, says Paul Sadler. A mature mixed funding model can keep Commonwealth Home Support Services alive, aged care consultant Paul Sadler tells Australian Ageing Agenda.

[Read More](#)

## **Aged Care Bill 2024 passes Senate with bipartisan support after amendments**

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

In a historic moment for the aged care sector and older Australians, the Aged Care Bill 2024 has been approved in the Senate. The Opposition supported the Aged Care Bill after having four of its proposed amendments passed, including changes to how complaints are handled, having registration conditions set in the rules, having a Senate Committee review the rules, and allowing aged care residents the right to access their designated person.

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## **ACCPA appoint Mark Sewell (NSW/ACT) and Clare Grieveson (WA) as Directors**

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

The appointments were made at the Annual General Meeting of the Aged and Community Care Providers' Association (ACCPA) on Tuesday (19 November). Clare is CEO of Southern Cross Case (WA) Inc and has 30 years' experience in the health and aged care sectors.

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## **Five big unanswered questions from the new Aged Care Bill**

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Lauren Broomham

The aged care sector is (again) on the brink of a historic change with the Aged Care Bill 2024 looking set to pass Parliament within the next few days – but question marks remain over several of the reforms contained within the new Act. The Bill is now set to be voted on in the Senate before heading to the House of Representatives for the final vote – just a week before Parliament wraps up on Thursday, 28 November.

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## **Complaints about resident falls rise: Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission**

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

Falls in residential aged care have not declined in the two years that Quality Indicator data has been collected, according to the most recent figures, while the Sector Performance Report Q4 2023-24 showed complaints about falls increased significantly. Falls rose to 32.

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## **Regional NSW Council losing \$7,700 a week keeping a 16-bed aged care**

## facility open

The Weekly Source, Other, 21/11/2024, Caroline Egan

The Mayor of the Upper Hunter Shire, Maurice Collison, has written to the Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler, asking for "immediate and ongoing" assistance to keep the 16-bed Gumman Place Hostel, in Merriwa, 273km north west of Sydney, open, and to prevent more aged care homes in rural areas from closing.

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### 16 days of domestic violence activism for a 365-day scourge

Australian Financial Review, Other, 21/11/2024, Dorothy Hisgrove

This Monday kicks off the "16 days of activism" campaign against domestic violence in Australia. Its start date, November 25, is International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and it concludes on 10 December, Human Rights Day.

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### Mackenzie's Mission: Emeritus Professor Nigel Laing AO paves way for nationwide genetic carrier screening

West Australian, Other, 21/11/2024, Hannah Cross

A groundbreaking WA study has helped prospective parents discover whether they might pass on a to their children. Mackenzie's Mission is Australia's first genetic carrier screening program, testing 1300 genes associated with 750 severe genetic conditions.

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### Calls for Aboriginal-run child protection programs to receive greater share of funds amid spike in cases

ABC Online, Other, 21/11/2024, Carly Williams

When Mary was pregnant with her fifth baby, she was struggling with drug addiction and living in a violent relationship. [...] According to data from this year's Closing the Gap Productivity Commission report, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Family Matters report, Aboriginal-run family services like Mookai Rosie outperform mainstream health and other non-government organisations when it comes to keeping kids safe.

[Read More](#)

### 'I struggled with pain during sex. It was years before doctors listened to me.'

Mamamia, Other, 21/11/2024, Ailish Delaney

It took Alana Crofts a long time to realise she didn't just have to accept painful sex as her reality. [...] An endometriosis diagnosis takes on average about six to eight years, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare .

[Read More](#)

### Latest health spend figures

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 21/11/2024

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare yesterday released the latest national health expenditure figures, reporting that total health spending has returned to pre-pandemic trends. The 2022-23 spend totalled \$252.5 billion, equivalent to almost \$10,000 per person or 9.9% of GDP.

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### Florence Pugh and her problems with fertility explained

The New Daily, Other, 21/11/2024, John Elder

Oppenheimer actor Florence Pugh, at the age of 27, has decided to freeze her eggs. [...] Last year, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported "that the rate of hospitalisations for the condition has doubled among women aged 20 to 24 over the past decade".

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### How fat may help save diabetic hearts

Daily Telegraph, General News, 22/11/2024, Page 19

Australian drug discovery researchers have found that a natural fat molecule could significantly reduce inflammation and improve function for diabetic hearts. The preclinical study found the molecule called lipoxin A4 (LXA4), which is known for its "calming agent" action in turning off the body's inflammatory response and preventing chronic inflammation, could also serve as a potential new treatment for diabetes-induced heart disease.

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### Breast cancer time bombs

Courier Mail, General News, 22/11/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 12

Women needing preventive mastectomies due to inherited high risk of cancer are ticking time bombs as they wait up to five years for the lifesaving procedures. [...] Breast Surgeons of Australia and New Zealand (BreastSurgANZ) and Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) made a plea to Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and Shadow Minister Senator Anne Ruston on Thursday for an investigation of the current National Elective Surgery Urgency Categorisation guideline established in 2015 that surgeons, state and territories use to prioritise surgeries in the public health system.

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

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### Call to join prostate cancer study

Border Mail, General News, 22/11/2024, Page 51

Around 250,000 men in the Australian community have been impacted by prostate cancer, and many of them are on hormone therapy to keep the cancer at bay. Although it slows disease progression and increases survival, hormone therapy can cause both physical and psychological side effects that severely impact quality of life.

*Also reported by:* [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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### Heart healing fat

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 22/11/2024, Page 19

Monash University drug discovery researchers have found that a natural fat molecule could significantly reduce inflammation and improve function for diabetic hearts. The preclinical study found the molecule called lipoxin A4 (LXA4), which is known for its "calming agent" action in turning off the body's inflammatory response and preventing chronic inflammation, could also serve as a potential new treatment for diabetes-induced heart disease.

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### Algorae taps AI to develop anti-cancer drug combos

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 21/11/2024, James Pearson

Medical technology innovator Algorae Pharmaceuticals has identified 24 different existing drug combinations put together by a "super-computer" using artificial intelligence that it says could

potentially impact some cancers. Algorae's AI model has been fed with a multitude of data from existing known drugs with either expired patents or no patents.

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## Grass pollen count spikes across the state, with most areas reaching 'high' and 'extreme' ranges

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/11/2024, Jack Colantuono

Victorians who suffer with hayfever have been warned to brace for surging pollen counts, with some parts of the state to be hit with "extreme" levels. [...] "(They should) make sure they have an asthma action plan — there's lots of information on the National Asthma Council Australia website."

[Read More](#)

## Women head to Canberra for more access to preventative care

The Courier Mail, Other, 21/11/2024, Robyn Riley

Many Australian women with a high risk of breast cancer have been forced to wait in limbo for access to risk-reducing surgery. Now they are taking their fight to Canberra.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#).

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## 'Invisible' cancer revealed to body in new research

Bathurst Western Advocate, Other, 22/11/2024, Adrian Black

Immune pathways that have been deactivated make tumours invisible to the body's innate defence system, but Hudson Institute researchers have found a way to switch the pathways back on. Melbourne's Hudson Institute of Medical Research investigates and develops preventative treatments, therapies and devices for a wide range of diseases and conditions.

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

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Labor disguised \$1.4bn in hospital blowouts

Courier Mail, Edition Changes - Metro, 22/11/2024, Taylah Fellows & Madura McCormack, Page 10

Labor stealthily disguised staggering cost blowouts on major hospital projects as revised works, the newly minted LNP government has said. Taxpayers will bear the brunt of a \$1.37bn increase on six major health projects originally priced at \$2.34bn a near 50 per cent cost jump.

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### Victims' travel trauma

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 22/11/2024, Lauren Novak, Page 29

Women who have been sexually assaulted in country South Australia are having to travel long distances sometimes by bus and without showering to have forensic evidence collected in Adelaide. Experts have told a royal commission into domestic, family and sexual violence that victims may not wash, change clothes or eat or drink before making the "traumatic" journey.

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### Ramping a systemic fault

Hobart Mercury, General News, 22/11/2024, David Killick, Page 5

Chronic ambulance ramping at Tasmania's hospitals is caused by "whole of health system failures" insufficient hospital capacity, inadequate staffing and inefficient patient flow and discharge, an inquiry has found. An increase in ramping over the past decade has increased adverse outcomes, including patient deaths, the House of Assembly Select Committee on Transfer of Care Delays has reported.

## Abortion care daily duty for pharmacy

Daily Advertiser, General News, 22/11/2024, Tahlia Sinclair, Page 2

Every day a woman in Wagga collects medical termination pills, while those in need of surgical abortions under the public health system are forced to travel to Sydney. Southcity Pharmacy owner Luke Van der Rijt said his business administers 30 doses of Mifepristone and Misoprostol - the medications packaged as MS-2 Step used to terminate pregnancy before nine weeks gestation - a month.

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## Inquiry report demands action on ramping

Launceston Examiner, General News, 22/11/2024, Matt Maloney, Page 3

A parliamentary inquiry report into ambulance ramping in Tasmania has found government responses to it have been inadequate, and a significant expansion to resources and capacity within state hospitals are needed to deal with it. The report was the result of an inquiry established last year after a number of deaths of patients waiting to be cared for in emergency departments, and a growing number of hospital staff leaving the health profession due to burnout.

Also reported by: [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#).

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## Private nurses make grievances public

Newcastle Herald, General News, 22/11/2024, Anna Falkenmire, Page 3

Nurses and midwives at two of Newcastle's private hospitals say they walked off the job for the first time on Thursday because they feel worn down, taken for granted and ignored. Dozens of union members from Newcastle Private Hospital in New Lambton Heights and Hunter Valley Private Hospital in Shortland went on strike for two hours to demand better pay and conditions.

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## New palliative unit will aid patients

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 22/11/2024, Page 6

The new palliative care unit at Tamworth hospital has taken another step forward. Artist's impressions show the existing footprint of the Nioka facility will be extended to the north-eastern corner of the main hospital building, which will double the total number of palliative care beds from six to 12.

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## WRAD plans \$10m healthcare centre

Warrnambool Standard, General News, 22/11/2024, Monique Patterson, Page 5

Practitioners available to treat an extensive range of chronic conditions Infrastructure Warrnambool WRAD Health has plans to build a \$10 million integrated healthcare centre behind its existing site. Mark Powell, chief executive officer of WRAD Health, said the organisation was in the early stages of planning for the centre.

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## Cairns Hospital's rating revealed in AMA Resident Hospital Health Check 2024

The Courier Mail, Other, 21/11/2024, Arun Singh Mann

Retention of doctors is under threat as a survey revealed their employment satisfaction was going backwards, underpinned by a fear of making fatigue-based errors. Long-term retention of junior doctors is under threat, a peak medical body claims, as a survey of practitioners revealed their employment satisfaction was going backwards, primarily underpinned by a fear of making fatigue-based errors.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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## Launceston General Hospital emergency department staff launch industrial action

Cairns Post, Other, 21/11/2024, Rob Inglis

After staffing levels fell to a "dangerous" low earlier this week, workers at a Tasmanian hospital appear to have reached the end of their tether and have launched industrial action. An "untenable" lack of staff in the emergency department at the Launceston General Hospital this week could have led to "catastrophic outcomes", the state's nursing union says.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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## CDU to expand allied health services in Darwin

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 21/11/2024

Territorians will be able to access a greater variety of allied health services with the expansion of the Northern Territory's first and only professionally supervised, student-delivered, multidisciplinary health centre. Charles Darwin University (CDU) has appointed its first clinical Allied Health Services Manager, Fiona Tipping, who will oversee the expansion of CDUs existing allied health services (psychology and exercise sports science) to include occupational therapy, social work, audiology, speech pathology and dietetics.

[Read More](#)

## Specialists accused of fraud

Medical Forum, Other, 21/11/2024

Thousands of patients who had surgery in private hospitals may have been overcharged by specialist doctors, according to allegations of fraud by Private Healthcare Australia. The group claims almost 50 specialist doctors in Victoria systematically defrauded patients, health funds and Medicare for personal financial gain.

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Above par

Courier Mail, Business News, 22/11/2024, Chris Herde, Page 71

The construction industry will show its support for mental health and homeless youth on Friday with the return of Villaworld Homes by AVID Property Group's annual Golf Classic charity fundraising day to the Royal Pines Golf Club on the Gold Coast. Now in its 9th year, the annual event will see nearly 200 attendees from over 50 construction industry businesses come together to raise funds for mental health and suicide prevention in the construction industry and providing support to homeless youth.

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## Labor's proposed fee-free TAFE can 'fill in' shortages within industries

The Australian, Other, 21/11/2024

Assistant Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Minister Emma McBride has commended the Labor government's proposal of 100,000 fee-free TAFE courses, calling the scheme "important", particularly for those located in outer suburbs and regional areas. "TAFE has always been, particularly for people in the outer suburbs in the regions, a reliable pathway to gain the skills they need and also to filling skills gaps and shortages in our community," Ms McBride told Sky News Australia.

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

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## Federal government commits an extra \$22.2m for free TAFE construction courses

The Courier Mail, Other, 21/11/2024, Amelia Swan

The federal government will commit an extra \$22.2m for more than 5000 new fee-free TAFE places in construction training, in a bid to solve Victoria's crippling housing crisis. Assistant Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Minister Emma McBride has commended the Labor government's proposal of 100,000 fee-free TAFE courses, calling the scheme "important", particularly for those located in outer suburbs and regional areas.

[Read More](#)

## Social media ban for under 16s 'important' and 'world-leading' legislation

Adelaide Now, Other, 21/11/2024

Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride says the Labor government's social media legislative reform for under 16-year-olds is "important" and "world-leading." The new legislation will be tabled in Parliament today and platforms could face fines of up to \$50 million if they breach the new laws.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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## Talk it out: Kids Helpline's multimillion-dollar boost

The Border Mail, Other, 21/11/2024, Neve Brissenden

Children struggling with mental health problems will have better access to counsellors after a multimillion-dollar boost for the Kids Helpline service. More than 70,000 counselling sessions were carried out nationally involving helpline staff in 2023, with most calls coming from teenagers aged from 15 to 18.

Also reported by: [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

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## Recovering addict calls on WA government to fund a rehab centre in Albany

ABC Online, Other, 21/11/2024, Jamie Thannoo & Paul Cook

Travelling a round trip of more than 600 kilometres to check into a residential rehabilitation centre was the only option for Albany's Samuel Turton. It was Mr Turton's only choice because the Great Southern is the only region in Western Australia without a residential rehabilitation centre.

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

### Health system barriers must be removed so nurse practitioners can fully use their expert skills

Hobart Mercury, General News, 22/11/2024, Kerrie Duggan, Page 18

I became a nurse and midwife because I wanted to be able to help and care for people. When we are ill, we are vulnerable and need to feel listened to and heard. Back in the 1980s, there were two career pathways for experienced nurses management or education.

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Trainee GP numbers increase for first time in seven years, with rural training focus

ABC Online, Other, 21/11/2024, Bridget Herrmann, Abbey Halter & Freya Jetson



Sliding trainee general practitioner numbers are set to end next year, thanks to a national training program receiving a 19.8 per cent increase in applicants. The seven-year decline is set to reverse as 1,504 junior doctors have been accepted into specialist training through the Australian General Practice Training program at the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).

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## Mark Butler announces new five-year degree that will allow pharmacists to call themselves 'doctor'

Australian Doctor, Other, 21/11/2024, Heather Saxena

Pharmacists who complete a new extended master's degree will have the right to call themselves 'doctor', Mark Butler has announced. The federal Minister for Health and Aged Care was speaking this week at the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's annual dinner at Parliament House in Canberra.

[Read More](#)

## 'We need more pharmacists'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 21/11/2024

Opposition MPs are calling on Mark Butler the Minister for Health and Aged Care to "advance rural generalist pathways in medicine, nursing and allied health" to cater for the unmet healthcare needs to Australians living in regional and remote areas

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## 'Dr Pharmacist' gets the green light

Medical Forum, Other, 21/11/2024

Some pharmacists could soon be able to use the title of doctor, in a move medical professionals have warned will put patient safety at risk. This week Health Minister Mark Butler announced the introduction of a new Masters of Pharmacy qualification under changes to the Australian Qualification Framework.

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## New qualification elevate pharmacy profession

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 21/11/2024

The Pharmacy Guild has welcomed the establishment of a new Masters of Pharmacy (Extended) qualification to better prepare graduates for the pharmacy of the future. Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler announced the change to the Australian Qualification Framework, at the Guild's Annual Parliamentary Dinner at Parliament House in Canberra last night.

[Read More](#)

## Pharmacists are important, but they're not 'doctors': McMullen

The Medical Republic, Other, 21/11/2024, Laura Woodrow

The 'Doctor of Pharmacy' title will be available from 2025. [...] On Tuesday night, at the Pharmacy Guild's annual parliamentary dinner in Canberra, federal health minister Mark Butler announced that the government would deliver on its promise to allow some pharmacists to be titled 'Doctor'.

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

### Navis Capital taps two investment banks for Device Technologies exit

Australian Financial Review, Other, 21/11/2024, Sarah Thompson, Kanika Sood & Emma Rapaport

Navis Capital is headed for the exit at its medical supplies business Device Technologies after six years on the register. Street Talk understands the buyout firm has mandated two investment banks with strong form in the healthcare sector – Jefferies and ...

[Read More](#)

## Channel 9, A Current Affair, 21/11/2024, Allison Langdon

Local Pizza shop owner Jemma Juckes, who's been diagnosed with cancer, are being assisted by the community and her employees. Juckes suffers from a stage four cancer and relies on the groundbreaking drug Rybrevant, which is not covered by the Government's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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## SPORT

No relevant coverage

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Taking tilt at renewables not new but housing a risk to run of good returns

The Australian, General News, 22/11/2024, Glenda Korporaal, Page 4

The Future Fund has outstripped its target returns, delivering an average of 7.7 per cent return a year since it started in 2006, 8.2 per cent over the past 10 years and 11.9 per cent over the past year. [...] "It is a very sophisticated organisation which has been given the mandate by successive governments to manage six other funds including the \$23bn Medical Research Future Fund, the \$10.6bn Housing Australia Future Fund, and the \$4.96bn Future Drought Fund. Its board members are called 'guardians' for a reason."

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

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### 'Invisible' cancer revealed to body in new research

West Australian, Other, 22/11/2024, Adrian Black

Immune pathways that have been deactivated make tumours invisible to the body's innate defence system, but Hudson Institute researchers have found a way to switch the pathways back on. Melbourne's Hudson Institute of Medical Research investigates and develops preventative treatments, therapies and devices for a wide range of diseases and conditions.

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

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## NSW research studying rapid genome sequencing as surveillance tool for faster response to Legionnaires' disease outbreaks

ABC Online, Other, 21/11/2024, Sam Nichols

As Legionnaires' disease outbreaks become more frequent, a team of NSW scientists are exploring whether genome sequencing could help pinpoint the source sooner. Since July, researchers from NSW Health Pathology, Westmead Hospital and the University of Sydney have studied the potential of rapid genomic sequencing, a scientific technique that reveals the entire DNA signature of an organism.

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### Disparity with hip fracture patients

Northern Territory News, General News, 22/11/2024, Page 14

An Australian-first study conducted at Alice Springs hospital has uncovered a "concerning" disparity between hip fracture patients in the Territory, the authors say. The study uncovered Indigenous Australian patients hospitalised with hip fractures faced significantly greater risks than their non-Indigenous Australian counterparts, Alice Springs Hospital head of orthopaedics Dr Kanishka Williams said.

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## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Channel 9, Nine News, 21/11/2024, Alicia Loxley & Tom Steinfort

NSW Police Commissioner Karen Webb says authorities will be present on music festivals this summer to stop a tsunami of drug overdose through pill testing.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### Swoop on 'mystery' shop

Daily Advertiser, General News, 22/11/2024, Taylor Dodge, Page 1

Police attended a shop inside the Neslo Arcade on Baylis Street about 11am before seizing a number of items which were put into cardboard boxes and transferred to police cars. [...] NSW Health partners with the Commonwealth, NSW Police, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, and Australian Border Force on enforcement related to illegal vape and tobacco sales, sharing intelligence, and working on joint operations.

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### Phenergan warning: Why parents should not give it to young children

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 21/11/2024, Holly Truelove & Jack Nivison

An over-the-counter medication popular with young families has come under a new health warning. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has advised that the drug and others that contain promethazine hydrochloride, should not be given to children under the ages of six.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#)

## Chlamydia self-test approved

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 21/11/2024

The TGA has approved Australia's first self-test kit for chlamydia and gonorrhoea. Developed by Touch Biotechnology, the kit will be available from pharmacies, distributors and online across the country in coming weeks.

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## OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

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## FOOD STANDARDS

No relevant coverage

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## AICIS

### Fired up over safety failures

Northern Territory News, General News, 22/11/2024, Darcy Fitzgerald, Page 5

Territory fireys have accused the department of failing to provide critical safety equipment and essential monitoring in contravention of national workplace law, unnecessarily exposing them to hazardous chemicals. The United Workers Union, which represents firefighters in the NT, claimed a lack of monitoring of potentially hazardous air contaminants after structural and car fires has put firefighters at increased risk of developing serious illnesses.

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### New red-hot firefighting capability

Air Force News, General News, 21/11/2024, Luke Bellman, Page 9

Air force firefighters will be able to respond to aircraft incidents with enhanced safety, efficiency and effectiveness following the acquisition of a new type of fire truck that is the first of its kind in Australia. [...] F3 foam is PFAS-free, environmentally safer and complies with modern safety regulations. It also features improved situational awareness tools, enhanced cabin protection and upgraded joystick controls that allow precision handling of the turret.

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### Scientists think they've found a way to break down 'forever chemicals'

9News, Other, 21/11/2024, Lara Pearce

Cancer-linked PFAS are polluting our drinking water, endangering our marine wildlife and causing little-understood health complications - and there's virtually no way to get rid of them. But now, two separate teams of international scientists believe they've found an effective way to break down the so-called "forever chemicals" into harmless products like carbon and salt.

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