



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Saturday, 21st December 2024

Today's News will not be sent on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, or New Year's Day. Prominent media items captured during this period will be reported in the following day's summary. Access to Isentia's Mediportal will be available during this period and any recurring reports set up in the platform will be delivered as normal.

Please contact writing.support@health.gov.au if you have any questions.

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Weekend Australian](#)** (page 1) reports data from Victoria's voluntary assisted dying scheme has revealed over 3800 terminally ill patients have utilised the scheme since being introduced in 2019, with a further 9100 formally requesting the assessment process to begin.
- **[The Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 1) reports 10 staff at SA Health have been sanctioned and another eight facing termination have resigned after they were found to have accessed SA Police Commissioner's son Charlie Stevens' medical records without authorisation.
- **[The Herald Sun](#)** (page 3) reports Johnson & Johnson is facing a class action lawsuit that alleges they knowingly sold ineffective cold and flu medications to Australians. *Also reported by:* [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Hobart Mercury](#), [Geelong Advertiser](#), [ABC Online](#)
- **[The Weekend Australian](#)** (page 3) reports Australian Sports Commission's chair Kate Jenkins says revelations about Olympic coach Alex Parnov's alleged abuse is not surprising, saying

“We allow coaches to have access to children. We need to have protections around that to make sure that happens”. *Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph](#), [Herald Sun](#)*

- **[ABC Online](#)** reports the mother of Rozalia Spadafora has called for a royal commission into the ACT's health system, alleging a coronial inquest into her daughter's death was too narrow and left her “empty handed”.
- **[The Guardian](#)** reports the managing director of Marie Stopes International Australia has said the NSW health system lacks the requisite number of trained staff to be able to provide surgical abortions at all public hospitals and has called for clear referral pathways and financial assistance to ensure women are able to receive subsidised care at non-profit providers where appropriate.
- **[The Herald Sun](#)** (page 11) reports Victoria's chief health officer has issued an alert for the flesh-eating buruli ulcer following more than 340 cases recorded in the state this year.

MINISTER BUTLER

Inside the ADHD boom

AFR Weekend, General News, 21/12/2024, Michael Smith, Page 16

It takes less than 10 minutes for the doctor on the other end of the phone to diagnose me with ADHD. During our brief telehealth consultation, I was asked questions about my childhood, concentration, work stress, anxiety, sleep patterns and whether any family...

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

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\$50.1m T1D gift

South Burnett Today, General News, 19/12/2024, Jessica McGrath, Page 1

Knowing the \$50.1 million funding for Type 1 Diabetes is secured will make for a more peaceful Christmas for Kingaroy mum Jocelyn, compared to the Christmas she had 12 years ago. [...] Highlights of the trip for Sydney was meeting Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and getting a shout out from Llew O'Brien during Parliament.

Also reported by: [Gympie Today \(Gympie\)](#).

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Public health leaders praise national plan for LGBTIQ+ wellbeing

Surf Coast Times, General News, 20/12/2024, Page 54

Australia's peak body for public health has welcomed the federal government's announcement of a 10-year Action Plan to improve the health and wellbeing of Australia's LGBTIQ+ community. [...] "Every Australian deserves the chance to live their best life, with access to health care that meets their individual needs," Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler said.

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

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Health officials remind seniors to get vaxxed before holiday gatherings

The Mandarin, Other, 20/12/2024, Melissa Coade

The Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC) is reminding older Australians and care providers that it's time to get a COVID booster ahead of the festive season. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler warned on Friday that where action was required, health agencies were ready to act against facilities that failed to give residents "timely" access to vaccines as soon as they were eligible.

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SBS, World News Australia, 20/12/2024, Anton Enus

Older Australians are being reminded to consider a booster COVID vaccine before an expected rise in cases during the festive season. Health Minister Mark Butler stressed the importance of regular COVID

vaccinations to anyone living or working in aged care homes.

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FIVEAA, Mornings, 20/12/2024, Matthew Pantelis

Interview with Mark Butler, Federal Health Minister. Compere mentions that older Australians are being encouraged to get a new COVID-19 booster. Butler points out that older Australians are more vulnerable to the effects of COVID than the other members of the population. Butler points out that they could be more vulnerable to hospitalisation and tragically more vulnerable to dying of COVID.

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MINISTER WELLS

'Women and girls deserve better'

Weekend Australian, Sport, 21/12/2024, Julian Linden, Page 37

Sex discrimination expert Kate Jenkins on the latest horrors After a lifetime dedicated to trying to end the shameful mistreatment of all Australian women, Kate Jenkins wasn't at all surprised when she read about pole vaulter Nina Kennedy's harrowing claims of abuse within athletics. [...] Sports Minister Anika Wells is in full agreement.

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

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Refurbishment funding for Gorrinn House

Ararat Advocate, General News, 20/12/2024, Page 6

Christmas has come early for Gorrinn House Hostel with the Federal Government confirming a major grant to upgrade facilities. [...] Minister for Aged Care, Anika Wells, said older Australians deserve access to safe and quality aged care services regardless of where they live.

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Brisbane Olympics 2032: Paris 2024 silver medallist Christopher Burton backs Toowoomba Equestrian Centre bid to be part of home games

The Courier Mail, Other, 20/12/2024, Tom Gillespie

He's one of Queensland's greatest equestrian Olympians — now two-time medallist Christopher Burton is back in Australia and ready to fight for his hometown to be part of Brisbane 2032. [...] Burton, who moved back to Australia this week after living and training in the UK for more than a decade, has written to federal sports minister Anika Wells to advocate for the TEC and will appear at showgrounds events in 2025 to further the goal.

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

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2ST, Breakfast, 20/12/2024, Charles 'Max' Maxwell

The Federal Government's contributing \$27.5 million to a new aged care facility at Harbison Burradoo. Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells says the Harbison Burradoo development will deliver appropriate cultural care, create more home like environments and fewer shared rooms.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

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ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

Busy year in Mayo

Fleurieu Sun, Other, 20/12/2024

It's hard to believe it's the end of 2024, the older I get the quicker the years seem to pass! This year has been such a busy year in Mayo with many projects in our community coming to fruition along our South Coast. [...] I was pleased that following a meeting with the Prime Minister, Assistant Minister for Ageing Kate Thwaites MP was appointed, as the policy needs of older Australians are far broader than aged care.

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DEPARTMENT

Inside the ADHD boom

AFR Weekend, General News, 21/12/2024, Michael Smith, Page 16

It takes less than 10 minutes for the doctor on the other end of the phone to diagnose me with ADHD. During our brief telehealth consultation, I was asked questions about my childhood, concentration, work stress, anxiety, sleep patterns and whether any family...

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VACCINES

Covid booster before wave

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 21/12/2024, Page 6

Older Australians and anyone eligible for a booster can benefit from getting the latest Covid-19 vaccine before an expected festive season wave. The new Pfizer JN.1 Covid-19 vaccine is now available.

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Fewer taxpayers to carry load of ageing Australia

AFR Weekend, General News, 21/12/2024, John Kehoe, Page 6

The average age of the Australian population will keep rising, and women will have fewer babies, but the population is forecast to grow by more than 4 million people over the next decade, thanks to strong migration.

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

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\$1.5m for Nav

Shepparton News Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Daniel Briggs

More upgrades are coming for Navorina Nursing Home in 2025, after it was awarded \$1.56 million in government funding. The news was released by Federal Member for Farrer Sussan Ley earlier this week.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Navigating life with a disability or chronic health condition

Ballarat Courier, General News, 21/12/2024, Emily Gibbs, Page 22

With high school now behind you, you're likely excited about the endless opportunities ahead. [...]

Nearly half of all Australians are estimated to have one or more chronic health conditions, and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data from 2018 found 4.4 million of us live with a disability.

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ADHD drug for meth users

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 21/12/2024, Page 4

A prescription medication used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder could be repurposed as the first pharmacotherapy for people with methamphetamine dependence. Results from the National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs trial show that the psychostimulant lisdexamfetamine can drastically reduce the need to use methamphetamine among those who are dependent.

Also reported by: [The West Australian \(Saturday edition\) \(Perth\)](#).

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I have BPD — and being deafblind made it harder to get help

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Michelle Grattan

When i was around 13, my mum took me to our family GP for an appointment. [...] In the wider disability community, statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare show people living with disability are more likely to report moderate, high or very high psychological distress levels compared to those without disability.

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Booze and ciggies tax down \$12.5b as bootlegging, illegal tobacco boom

Australian Financial Review, Other, 20/12/2024, Phillip Coorey

Expected revenue from spirits and tobacco excise has been downgraded by \$12.5 billion over the next four years as soaring taxes drive a decline in consumption but also a shift towards contraband products.

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Lotterywest reminds families this Christmas that scratchies and lottery games are for adults

West Australian, Other, 20/12/2024, Kellie Balaam

Lotterywest has issued an important festive reminder to not buy scratchies for children as a Christmas gift in a bid to discourage underage gambling. [...] A 2023 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare study found that 30 per cent of Australian adults gamble on lotteries at least once a month and two thirds had gambled on lotteries in the past year.

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Kids risk their skin in pursuit of fashion tan

Adelaide Advertiser, Edition Changes, 21/12/2024, Ruby Stewart, Page 5

Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life is a critical factor in determining someone's skin cancer risk, with teenagers seeking suntans being urged to remember that skin damage caused in their younger years can "follow them for the rest of their life". [...] Data from the Cancer Council revealed one in five young Australians aged 15-24, have tried to get a suntan in the past year.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

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'Irreversible': UV damage to eyes will 'only get worse' if left unchecked

Adelaide Now, Other, 20/12/2024, Ria Pandey

There's much more than meets the eye when it comes to keeping your vision safe and a Sydney optometrist's TikTok reveals the scary reason why. The video, published by Eye Lab Optometry, begins on a slit machine - a microscope tool for the eye - and zooms into a patient's eyeball before a light is switched on and viewers see a brown iris on the verge of being enveloped by spidery blood vessels.

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

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SA woman Jo Scott left in chronic pain from undiagnosed endometriosis

Northern Territory News, Other, 20/12/2024, Evangeline Polymeneas

It took Jo Scott 17 years and 14 doctors to receive a diagnosis for chronic, uncontrollable pain and it wasn't from a lack of trying. She was 13 years old when her period came. "I'd have one week a month where I wasn't in pain," the now-38-year-old said.

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

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6PR, Mornings, 20/12/2024, Gary Adshead

Interview with Kim Tyrrell, Managing Director, Hearing Australia. Compere discusses that over the years, hearing loss had crept up on people slowly and they didn't realise it was a big problem. Tyrrell admits that he, himself wears hearing aids. He mentions that probably around 4 million Australians are suffering with hearing loss issues right now.

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More than 3800 Aussies have died through euthanasia

Weekend Australian, General News, 21/12/2024, Stephen Lunn, Page 1

More than 3800 terminally ill Australians have used voluntary assisted dying to end their lives since it was introduced in Victoria in 2019. An analysis of the latest data from state review boards reveals more than 9100 people have formally begun the VAD assessment process, with 3840 dying after being administered a VAD substance.

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

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Code red for mental health as psychiatrists walk off the job

Weekend Australian, General News, 21/12/2024, Natasha Robinson, Page 15

The showdown this week between desperate and burnt-out psychiatrists and the NSW Ministry of Health is another symptom of the depth of the faultlines affecting public health systems, not only nationwide but also internationally. It isn't only psychiatric wards and clinics but also maternity units, radiology departments and entire regional hospitals that are on the brink.

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

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The women ignored by the system

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 21/12/2024, Carrie Fellner & Emily Kaine, Page 3

They've been dismissed, disbelieved and misdiagnosed. At best, they've been left to suffer in silence. At worst, the outcomes have been catastrophic. And now, they're demanding change.

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

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Liberals vow to tear up new hospital agreement

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 21/12/2024, Jessica Page, Page 3

A signing ceremony and a happy snap with a newborn marked a "significant milestone" for Perth's new \$1.8 billion women's and babies' hospital in Murdoch now an election battleground. It is unclear whether a letter of intent between the Cook Government and joint venture builders Roberts Co and Webuild, who aim to finish the project by 2029, is legally binding.

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Councillors split on hospital waste handout

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 21/12/2024, John Conroy, Page 7

Mildura Rural City councillors were split on a vote on whether to grant \$20,000 to Mildura Base Hospital to pay for a food dehydrator at their regular meeting for December on Thursday night, with Cr Glenn Milne saying the State Government should pay. The motion was passed 5-2 with councillors Milne and Greg Brown opposing.

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Ex-nurse turned hospital GM talks future

Daily Advertiser, General News, 21/12/2024, Finn Coleman, Page 8

Wagga Base Hospital's new general manager hopes his background as a nurse will ensure compassion is at the forefront of local care. Jamie Spencer has worked for 35 years in health, running hospitals for the last two decades.

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Regional Victoria's busiest emergency departments revealed

Ballarat Courier, General News, 21/12/2024, Ben Silvester, Page 10

Regional Victorian emergency departments have seen a spike in visits caused by family violence, new data reveals. The fresh figures from Victoria's Crime Statistics Agency showed family violence-related

presentations at the biggest regional hospitals had jumped 20 per cent in the past year.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Warrnambool\)](#),

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Hospital to suit funding misses the point

Border Mail, General News, 21/12/2024, Page 12

This month's Albury Wodonga Health annual general meeting was a missed opportunity for accountability. Instead, it was a case of "nothing to see here" from a leadership group accepting of a \$52 million operating deficit, a surgical waiting list totalling 3351 (both the largest of all regional Victorian hospitals) and failures across a range of key performance indicators.

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Sick of all the excuses

Weekend Post, General News, 21/12/2024, Page 28

All eyes will be on the progress of the multimillion-dollar Cairns Hospital expansion project after State Health Minister Tim Nicholls' visit to Cairns on Friday. During his visit, the Minister met with frontline health workers and revealed the project had suffered costs blowouts, which he blamed largely on the former Labor government's mismanagement of the state's health budget.

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A temporary disruption has caused patient results to be delayed as SA Health work urgently to resolve the issue

Northern Territory News, Other, 20/12/2024, Taylor Mason

A temporary disruption to the Health Information Broker (HIB) system has caused delays in the receipt of pathology results across South Australian hospitals. The disruption is also affecting clinical systems such as Sunrise Electronic Medical Record (EMR) and OACIS.

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

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Mother says focus of Rozalia Spadafora coronial inquest too narrow, calls for royal commission into health system

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Harry Frost

The family of Rozalia Spadafora, who died at Canberra Hospital the day after her fifth birthday in 2022, say the coronial inquest into her death had too narrow a focus. Rozalia's mother Katrina Spadafora and her grandmother took her to the hospital's emergency department on the advice of a doctor on July 4, 2022.

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Patients with disability facing barriers to access clinical trials for new drugs and treatments

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Jessica Kidd

Domestic violence counsellor and social worker Leanne Duggan has always navigated life independently with her guide dog Esther by her side. But her world changed when she was diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer in May last year.

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SA government won't spend big until big ticket projects are finished, as mid-year surplus reported

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Harvey Biggs

Don't expect much in the way of big-ticket items promised ahead of South Australia's 2026 state election. There's just not the money for it, unless there is a real change of tune on debt.

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NSW health system 'not capable' of providing abortions at all public hospitals, advocates say

The Guardian, Other, 21/12/2024, Melissa Davey

Even if the New South Wales government were to order all public hospitals to fulfil their obligation to provide abortion, the state's public health system would not be capable of doing so as too many doctors are untrained or opposed, a leading reproductive choice charity says. The managing director of Marie Stopes International (MSI) Australia, Greg Johnson, said some abortion care could be provided by GPs and other health professionals in primary care settings, but a significant proportion was surgical and required day hospital admission.

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Clinics to close, but health help still available

Shepparton News Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Daniel Briggs

All of Deniliquin's GP clinics will be closed over the Christmas and New Year period, but health advocates have assured the community that medical services will still be available. The Deniliquin Local Health Advisory Committee shared GP closure periods with the community earlier this week, but said doctors will remain in the community to tend to patients.

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Catholic hospitals won't be allowed to follow Healthscope down the boycott road

The Mercury, Other, 19/12/2024, Cameron England

The competition regulator intends to block Catholic Health Australia's private hospital members from collectively boycotting large private health insurers, should negotiations for increased hospital funding arrangements fail. The decision comes at a trying time for relations between private hospitals and insurers, with Healthscope recently breaking its contracts with Bupa and members of the Australian Health Services Alliance over their refusal to increase payments for hospital stays.

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AMA calls for more STI action

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 20/12/2024

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) has welcomed the development of a national strategy on sexually transmissible infections, but says not enough is being done to tackle rising rates of sexually transmissible infections in vulnerable communities or to help eliminate congenital syphilis. AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen said the strategy will help combat stigma associated with sexually transmissible infections across Australia, but the current rise in congenital syphilis cases, disproportionately affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, was of "grave concern", with stillbirths and infant deaths occurring as a result of infection.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 20/12/2024, Manny Tsigas

Around Australia, people who have a disability can face barriers to accessing potentially life saving clinical trials. Leanne Duggan is blind and has recently been diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer, but her medical team went above and beyond to get her on an early phase clinical trial.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Recognising emotional support animals' crucial role

Newcastle Herald, General News, 21/12/2024, Zoe Wundenberg, Page 36

Must love dogs - the catchcry of the famous movie of the same name - holds particular meaning for a growing portion of our communities across Australia, and yet it is being responded to with a deafening

silence. The increasing prevalence of emotional support animals signifies their importance in the lives of many individuals, particularly those living on the autism spectrum and those grappling with mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety.

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Conduct of social worker 'not satisfactory' during phone call before SA Police shooting death of Kobee Huddy

Northern Territory News, Other, 20/12/2024, Elizabeth Henson

The conduct of a mental health social worker while taking a call from a young man seeking help less than an hour before he was shot dead by police was "not satisfactory", an inquest has found. Deputy State Coroner Ian White handed down his findings on Friday into the death of Kobee Huddy, 20, at Seaton on May 25, 2019.

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

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Deputy SA Coroner finds social worker's advice 'not satisfactory' before 2019 shooting death

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Rachael Merritt

A coronial inquest into the shooting death of a 20-year-old man with a history of mental health struggles has found a call to support services in the hours before his death was "not satisfactory". The inquest examined the death of Kobee Michael David Huddy, who was shot and killed by police in Adelaide's western suburbs in May 2019.

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Call before shooting 'not satisfactory', coroner finds

Newcastle Herald, Other, 20/12/2024, Abe Maddison

A mental health crisis line social worker's response to a plea for help from a suicidal young man killed hours later by police was "not satisfactory", a coroner has found. Kobee Huddy, 20, was brandishing a large knife and advancing on a police officer when he was fatally shot in Seaton, in Adelaide's western suburbs, in May 2019.

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

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ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 20/12/2024, Manny Tsigas

A coronial inquest into the shooting death of a 20 year old man with a history of mental health issues has found a call to support services hours earlier was not satisfactory.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Fight to reinstate courageous doctor

Courier Mail, General News, 21/12/2024, Des Houghton, Page 62

A fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists has called on Queensland Health to reinstate suspended psychiatrist Jillian Spencer, saying she was the target of a political campaign by gender activists. Dr Andrew Amos also described transgender studies in schools as “absolutely terrible” and likely to confuse vulnerable young people.

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

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Mediation in health stoush

Hobart Mercury, General News, 21/12/2024, Simon Mcguire, Page 21

The state's peak nursing union is escalating its dispute with the Tasmanian Health Service (THS). The Tasmanian Industrial Commission will act as a mediator on December 23 for the dispute between the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) and the THS.

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Doctors' mass resignation deepens NSW government's worker woes

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 20/12/2024, Kate Aubusson & Angus Thomson

NSW's public hospital bosses have been flooded with 150 resignation letters after half the staff specialists workforce followed through with their desperate attempt to save the state's failing mental health system. The move is an astonishing escalation in an industrial dispute between public psychiatrists and the Minns government after negotiations collapsed this week.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Pharmacies have skin in game but trial off to a slow start

Newcastle Herald, General News, 21/12/2024, Damon Cronshaw, Page 19

People suffering from skin conditions such as mild eczema and psoriasis can get prescription medicine from numerous Hunter pharmacies without a doctor's script. The move was approved under the NSW government's pharmacy prescribing trial.

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HRT shortages to continue

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 20/12/2024

Shortages of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) patches are set to continue in 2025, PBS warns Pharmacists are being reminded that some, but not all, of the HRT products covered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA's) Serious Scarcity Substitution Instrument (SSSI) are eligible for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) subsidies.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Charlie spies

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 21/12/2024, Kathryn Bermingham, Page 1

Eight staff all of whom were facing termination resigned from SA Health after they were found to have inappropriately accessed the medical records of Charlie Stevens. Another 10 have been hit with sanctions on their employee records.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#),

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Hundreds of complaints

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 21/12/2024, Lucy Crock, Page 15

Geelong residents have made hundreds of complaints to health watchdogs this year, new data reveals, with the most suspensions handed out to nurses. [...] A spokeswoman for the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) said it received 166 notifications about 138 health practitioners in the region in the 2023-24 financial year.

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

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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SPORT

Cricket dumps CBA after 37 years

Weekend Australian, Edition Changes - All-round Metro, 21/12/2024, Bimini Plesser, Page 3

Cricket Australia is to split from sponsor Commonwealth Bank at the end of the financial year, ending a partnership dating back to 1987. CBA was eager to extend its deal, with a spokesman confirming the bank made "a very attractive offer to [CA] but they have decided on commercial grounds to go in a different direction".

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CBA gets stumped by Westpac

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 21/12/2024, Peter Jenkins, Page 5

Westpac has bowled over a major banking rival and brought to an end CBA's longstanding innings as a major sponsor of Australian cricket. The Advertiser has been told Westpac will add to an already significant portfolio of sporting sponsorships by taking over in July as Cricket Australia's exclusive banking partner.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#).

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One of the first women of colour to compete in the Sydney to Hobart hopes to inspire change

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2024, Marnie Vinall

When Melissa Warren sets sail in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race with the boat Dark and Stormy this Boxing Day, she will be one of the first women of colour to do so. Warren, 37, who hails from London with Jamaican heritage and moved to Australia 10 years ago, wants to help challenge the perception sailing was just for older white men.

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Grand vision

Far North sports fans could soon have access to a stadium with enough bells and whistles to rival venues like Brisbane's Gabba for major events. The AFL Cairns board has unveiled an ambitious vision to transform the current Cazalys facility at Westcourt into a world-class precinct.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Heart health violence link

Courier Mail, General News, 21/12/2024, Page 13

Children who witness violence between their parents still feel the effects decades later. Edith Cowan University researchers were involved in a study that found an increased risk of heart disease later in life.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Weekend Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Weekend Post \(Cairns\)](#), [The West Australian \(Saturday edition\) \(Perth\)](#).

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Latest findings on dam fluoride

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 21/12/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 5

As the state's peak medical bodies push for a statewide water fluoridation mandate, new research has busted the biggest argument against the tooth-strengthening mineral entering water systems. A University of Queensland study has found no link between exposure to water fluoridation as a young child and negative cognitive development.

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

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Heart risks of anorexia

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 21/12/2024, Page 17

People with anorexia nervosa face higher risks of heart problems than the general population. A study by Taipei Medical University researchers in Taiwan found 4.8 per cent of anorexia patients had a major heart problem compared with 0.08 per cent of participants without anorexia.

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Study suggests clean water access could curb Pacific Island obesity rates

National Indigenous Times, Other, 20/12/2024, Joseph Guenzler

A new study by the University of Sydney highlights the impact of water insecurity on sugary drink consumption and rising obesity rates in Pacific Island nations, focusing on Kiribati. The research provides insight into how limited access to clean drinking water contributes to the growing public health crisis in the region.

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Leading care of period pain

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 20/12/2024

With new research finding that menstrual issues are often normalised or trivialised and undermanaged in young people, the study's lead author says pharmacists are ideally placed to advise on pain management. The research team from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Melbourne worked directly with adolescents and their parents to better measure the impact of menstruation and identify ways to reduce stigma and ignorance among medical professionals and the wider public.

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INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

Alarm over flesh-eating ulcer

Herald Sun, General News, 21/12/2024, Sarah Booth, Page 11

A flesh-eating bacteria is spreading throughout Victoria, health authorities have warned, after cases in an innercity suburb spiked. The chief health officer issued an alert on Friday, flagging that the buruli ulcer was spreading throughout the state, with Ascot Vale recording a spike in cases.

Also reported by: [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#)

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DR Congo hemorrhagic fever death raises new questions

Newcastle Herald, Other, 20/12/2024

A man in western Democratic Republic of Congo has died with hemorrhagic fever symptoms, leading officials to suspect that a still-unidentified virus may be involved alongside malaria in a mysterious outbreak that has killed dozens of people, health authorities say.

Also reported by: [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#)

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Premier's party pills backflip: Health officials set to test illicit drugs

The Mercury, Other, 19/12/2024, James O'Doherty

Health officials will start testing illicit drugs at music festivals from February next year under a 12-month pill-testing trial called for by the co-chairs of the government's Drug Summit. The trial marks a reversal in position for Premier Chris Minns who has been sceptical of pill-testing as a way to reduce harm.

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Urgent measles alert for millions of Aussies after infected tourist visited a string of CBD locations

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 20/12/2024, Zak Wheeler

A tourist infected with measles has put an entire city on high alert after travelling to multiple locations across Sydney's CBD and its surrounding suburbs. The European traveller arrived on Flight JQ62 from Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam to Sydney at 11.45am on December 11.

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Health alert issued after traveller with measles visits multiple Sydney locations

9News, Other, 20/12/2024, Emily Bennett

A measles alert has been issued after a tourist visited multiple locations around inner Sydney while infectious. The European traveller arrived in Australia from Vietnam where there is an ongoing outbreak of measles.

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Sky News Live, The Bolt Report, 20/12/2024, Andrew Bolt

Interview with Tim Blair, author, The Daily Telegraph. Compere discusses that Vic Labor's is introducing

a scare campaign against nuclear. He plays an excerpt of Dr Margaret Beavis, Melbourne GP, explaining that there is a definite increase in cancer strokes and heart attacks when using nuclear power. Blair believes that things have gotten worst when it comes to conversations regarding nuclear power particular post COVID.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Big class action over dud medicine

Herald Sun, General News, 21/12/2024, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 3

One of the biggest class actions in Australia has been filed in the Federal Court against pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson, with explosive claims they have knowingly been selling trusted medicines to Australians that do not work. And the cold and flu products are so common in households that tens of millions of people across the country could be eligible for compensation which would make it the biggest class action in the country in terms of class members.

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

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Pharma giant faces class action

Hobart Mercury, General News, 21/12/2024, Emma Kirk, Page 3

Pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson is facing a class action over claims it knowingly sold Australians ineffective cold and flu medication. The class action was filed in the Federal Court on Friday by Brisbane-based lawyers JGA Saddler, who allege the company marketed and sold products containing phenylephrine as a decongestant for a number of years.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

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FOOD STANDARDS

Food regulation changes threaten small NSW farmers, markets

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2024, James Tugwell

Every week for the last six months, Pat Carmody has taken vegetables freshly picked from his one-tenth-of-a-hectare farm to the SAGE Farmers' Markets at Moruya on the New South Wales far south coast. But the 32-year-old fears his business, and the markets themselves, could disappear under proposed new food regulations.

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Microplastics linked to lung and colon cancer, study says

9News, Other, 20/12/2024, Mikala Theocharous

Microplastics, found in everything from our drink bottles to clothes, have been linked to colon and lung cancer, an international study has shown. Microplastics are plastics smaller than five millimetres, which are small enough to make their way to the bloodstream or be ingested unknowingly.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 20/12/2024, Tracy Vo

The lead author of new research into microplastics, says governments need to act now to avoid any long term risks to our health. Others are more cautious, saying there's no need to be alarmed.

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