



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Friday, 17th January 2025

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports that mental health patients and community leaders are calling on NSW Health Minister Ryan Park to resolve the psychiatry crisis, as disruptions to mental health services within the public hospital system loom.
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports that a months-long police probe into Australian tennis star Bernard Tomic in 2022 following suspicions of match fixing linked to online betting was concluded after insufficient evidence was found to sustain criminal charges. *Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald](#)*
- **[The Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 1) reports that South Australian clinicians have expressed concern about a planned update to SA Health's Ambulance Transport and Handover policy, which they claim would reduce ambulance ramping figures by pressuring emergency departments to admit patients and leave them unattended in corridors.
- **[The Geelong Advertiser](#)** (page 1) reports that a Geelong doctor convicted of sexual assault and suspended by AHPRA has been issued with a personal safety intervention order preventing him from approaching his victim's place of work.
- **[The Toowoomba Chronicle](#)** (page 1) reports that the Queensland Auditor General's latest report into the state's health system has revealed a backlog of maintenance with costs totalling

\$2 billion, with hospitals and health services expected to face "significant challenges" in paying for maintenance and upkeep going forward.

- **The Hobart Mercury** (page 3) reports that despite calls from general practitioners to promote harm reduction amid the rising popularity of music festivals in Tasmania, the state government has no plans to introduce a pill testing pilot program.
- **The Townsville Bulletin** (page 3) reports that Queensland's Cape York and Torres Strait residents are being cautioned to take anti-mosquito measures following confirmation of a case of malaria in Lakeland, north of Cairns.
- **The Australian** (page 6) reports that a pre-election ministerial reshuffle prompted by Minister Bill Shorten's retirement from politics has seen Minister for Aged Care and Sport Anika Wells promoted to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's cabinet, while Minister for Social Services Amanda Rishworth has been granted the NDIS portfolio. *Also reported by: Australian Financial Review, Sydney Morning Herald, Courier Mail, Northern Territory News, The Guardian*
- **The Courier Mail** (page 7) reports that Queensland Health Minister Tim Nicholls has said that he is "happy to look into" publishing paediatric dentistry wait list data after the Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry issued a call for greater transparency around wait times.
- **The Courier Mail** (page 11) reports that Queensland Health Minister Tim Nicholls has vowed to seek extra funding for Queensland's hospital infrastructure following the release of the Queensland Auditor General's latest report into the state's health system, declaring that he will "make sure that every cent in the health budget that is allocated is spent on the right things."
- **9News** reports that Omijara, a treatment in daily pill form for the bone marrow cancer myelofibrosis, has been granted approval for use in Australia. *Also reported by: Channel 10, FIVEAA*
- **ABC Online** reports that medical experts are calling for Australians to check their sunscreen and cosmetic products for labelling to ensure that they meet the regulations enforced by the TGA, amid a proliferation on social media of cosmetic products that do not meet therapeutic standards.
- **The Guardian** reports that following an unsuccessful meeting on Thursday between the NSW government and psychiatrist representatives, the NSW government is exploring the possibility of moving public psychiatry patients into public hospitals as a contingency plan ahead of mass resignations of public system psychiatrists next Tuesday.

MINISTER BUTLER

Sudden clinic closure

Daily Mercury, General News, 17/01/2025, Luke Lay & Fergus Gregg, Page 5

The Moranbah community was left "shocked and disappointed" after hearing their beloved health clinic will be closing its doors. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said his government had provided incentives for practitioners to live, work and train in rural areas.

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

Senator questions GM mozzie release

Ipswich Tribune, General News, 15/01/2025, Rob Mellett, Page 4

Queensland Senator Gerard Rennick has raised alarm over a joint venture between the national science agency and a Bill Gates-funded biotechnology company in which genetically modified mosquitoes will be released across the state. [...] In a letter penned to Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, Mr Rennick wrote last week: "This trial and the potential effects it could have on both our ecosystem and on human health and safety are of great concern."

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Minister rejects proposed increases to private health insurance premiums

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has rejected suggested private health insurance premium increases for the second time, calling on a number of companies to suggest "a more reasonable figure" ahead of the April 1 deadline. The second rejection comes after Mr Butler rejected the first round of increases of up to 6 per cent, nearly double the 2024 increase of 3.03 per cent.

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Putting rural health, mental health and prevention on the Federal Budget agenda

Croakey, Other, 16/01/2025, Melissa Sweet

Election-year budgets bring particular opportunities and challenges for policy and advocacy, especially around health equity. [...] While we await an election date and the official launch of campaigning, the politicking is already in swing, with Health and Aged Care Minister Mark Butler this week reminding listeners of a 2015 survey of doctors, which pronounced Peter Dutton as "the worst health minister in living memory" (no doubt we will be hearing this line again...).

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GPs could be penalised for failing to upload to MHR

The Medical Republic, Other, 16/01/2025, Holly Payne

The same laws that will allow Medicare to withhold rebates if pathology companies don't play ball are expected to eventually encompass general practice too. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler flagged the changes, which are laid out in the Health Legislation Amendment (Modernising My Health Record—Sharing by Default) Bill 2024, in October last year.

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Aged Care Minister Anika Wells promoted to Cabinet for role in “most significant reforms in aged care this century”

The Weekly Source, Other, 16/01/2025, Caroline Egan

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has promoted Anika Wells, the Minister for Aged Care and Sport, to cabinet as part of a pre-election reshuffle brought on by the departure of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Government Services Minister Bill Shorten. [...] Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler is already a member of the Cabinet.

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3AW, Mornings, 16/01/2025, Tony Jones

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has told private health insurers the premium increases that they're planning are too big and they need to find a small number and bring it back to him.

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ABC North and West SA, Regional Statewide Mornings, 16/01/2025, Tom Mann

Interview with Natassia Chrysanthos, journalist, the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age. Compere mentions a story from the Sydney Morning Herald discussing about private health insurers and the potential increase in premiums, as Health Minister Mark Butler is preparing for a fight with private health insurers over the coming weeks and months over this. Chrysanthos says he managed to fight it off last year and it has been a very drawn process, as she mentions that every year, private health insurers and the health department negotiate the annual increase to people's premiums.

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MINISTER WELLS

Cabinet spot for Wells, Rishworth gets NDIS

Social Services Minister Amanda Rishworth will take on responsibility for the National Disability Insurance Scheme when Bill Shorten quits politics next week, and Aged Care Minister Anika Wells will take his spot in cabinet.

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PM out to make it even on gender

The Australian, General News, 17/01/2025, Rhiannon Down & Greg Brown, Page 6

Anthony Albanese has bolstered the female representation in his cabinet by elevating Aged Care and Sport Minister Anika Wells in a ministerial reshuffle, which also saw Social Services Minister Amanda Rishworth handed the pivotal National Disability Insurance Scheme portfolio. The promotion of the second-term MP to the cabinet has lifted the gender balance closer to an even split, with 11 male and female members, excluding the Prime Minister, in a boost to Labor's gender equality credentials.

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Women take key jobs in PM's pre-election cabinet reshuffle

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 17/01/2025, David Crowe, Page 17

Three federal ministers will gain expanded roles to manage the National Disability Insurance Scheme and run government services in a limited cabinet reshuffle to replace former Labor leader Bill Shorten when he leaves parliament. In addition, Aged Care and Sports Minister Anika Wells is the biggest winner from the reshuffle and will move into federal cabinet in her current portfolio, replacing Shorten with a Queenslander and a rising star of the Labor Right faction.

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Brisbane minister PM's pick

Courier Mail, Edition Changes - Metro, 17/01/2025, Page 9

Brisbane-based minister Anika Wells is the biggest winner from Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's reshuffle, being elevated to cabinet. Women will make up 11 of the 23 ministers in cabinet after the new appointments, announced on Thursday.

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Albo cabinet shakeup

Northern Territory News, General News, 17/01/2025, Joseph Olbrycht-Palmer, Page 18

Women will make up 11 of the 23 ministers in Anthony Albanese's federal cabinet once new appointments get the rubber stamp from the King's representative. [...] But Aged Care Minister Anika Wells came out as a clear winner, with Mr Albanese promoting her to cabinet.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#).

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More women in cabinet but representation worries build

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Kat Wong, Page 12

Female candidates will take centre stage at the Federal Election, but Australia remains a laggard on women's representation in parliamentary democracies. [...] Aged Care and Sport Minister Anika Wells has also been promoted to the cabinet, with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese highlighting her work throughout the Olympics and aged care reforms.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Blue Mountains Gazette \(Online\)](#), [Wellington Times \(Online\)](#) and widely syndicated across regional outlets.

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Anthony Albanese promotes four female frontbenchers in cabinet reshuffle as Bill Shorten retires

The Guardian, Other, 16/01/2025, Krishani Dhanji & Dan Jervis-Bardy

Prime minister promotes Amanda Rishworth, Anne Aly, Katy Gallagher and Anika Wells, as Peter

Dutton also prepares reshuffle before election. Anthony Albanese has promoted or handed new roles to four female Labor frontbenchers in a pre-election reshuffle triggered by the retirement of the NDIS minister, Bill Shorten.

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ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 16/01/2025, Yvonne Yong

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has confirmed his cabinet line up ahead of this year's election. As the ABC revealed yesterday, Amanda Rishworth will be responsible for the NDIS and Katy Gallagher will add government services to her finance portfolio. Queensland MP and Minister for Aged Care and Sport Anika Wells has also been promoted to cabinet, meaning there is now an equal number of men and women.

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Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 16/01/2025, Cheng Lei

PM Anthony Albanese has freshened up the team he'll be taking to the next election elevating four women following the retirement former NDIS Minister Bill Shorten. Aged Care and Sports Minister Anika Wells has also been promoted to Cabinet.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

Prescription costs frozen until end of year

Coast Community Pelican Post, General News, 16/01/2025, Page 27

Member for Dobell and Assistant Health Minister Emma McBride has welcomed the news that the cost of PBS prescriptions is to be frozen until the end of the year. Maximum PBS co-payments will remain at their current rate of \$31.60 for general prescriptions until the end of 2025, and at \$7.70 until the end of 2029 for concession cardholders.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

Australia's first-ever national LGBTQIA+ health action plan

Star Observer, General News, 01/01/2025, Chloe Sargeant, Page 12

Last month, the federal government launched Australia's first-ever national action plan for the health and wellbeing challenges and discrepancies faced by the LGBTQIA+ community. [...] It was launched in Melbourne on December 11, by Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler and Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Ged Kearney, along with a host of guests, including many community members who were a part of the Expert Advisory Group that worked on the Action Plan.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 16/01/2025, Dom Knight

Compere is joined by Claudia Long, ABC political reporter. Long mentions Health Minister Mark Butler and Assistant Health Minister Ged Kearney, who's responsible specifically for women's health and she considers the duo an interesting dynamic.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

'No fresh air' in aged care

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 17/01/2025, Zoe De Koning, Page 3

A resident infected in a Covid outbreak at a Wallington aged care home says she has experienced claustrophobia after allegedly not being able to leave her room, even for fresh air. TLC Homestead Estate Residential Aged Care had recorded 14 active Covid cases as of last week, according to the Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC).

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Aged care resident complains of claustrophobia amid covid isolation

HelloCare, Other, 16/01/2025, Jakob Neeland

An aged care resident has expressed feeling claustrophobic after being confined to her room during a recent Covid outbreak, describing the experience as "horrible." [...] According to the Department of Health and Aged Care, the facility had recorded 14 active Covid cases as of last week.

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VACCINES

No relevant coverage

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

'Below par' home will be closed

Border Mail, General News, 17/01/2025, Ted Howes, Page 4

A nursing home at Corowa deemed to "not meet expectations of older people" will close, drawing concerns from health advocates and a state MP. The Murrumbidgee Local Health District said it had "made the difficult decision" to close the Corowa Hospital Nursing Home.

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Qld launches inquiry into elder abuse

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 16/01/2025, Jodie Wolf

The investigating committee is seeking input from people with a lived experience as well as other stakeholders and findings. The Queensland Parliament's Education, Arts and Communities Committee is calling for submissions for an investigation into elder abuse in the state.

[Read More](#)

Aged care provider racks up nine enforceable undertakings over care minutes

Health Services Daily, Other, 16/01/2025, Cate Swannell

TriCare has promised to employ more staff and review its rostering systems in a bid to hit targets. Eleven aged care providers have been slapped with enforceable undertakings by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission for persistently failing to meet mandatory care minutes targets in 27 residential aged care facilities.

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11 aged care providers 'named and shamed' by the regulator for failing care minute targets

The Weekly Source, Other, 16/01/2025, Caroline Egan

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) has issued a statement listing 27 residential aged care homes and 11 providers who have been hit with 'enforceable undertakings' from the regulator for failing to meet the care minute targets. "Failure to deliver mandatory care minutes where there is an absence of tangible effort to achieve these targets could lead to sanctions and financial penalties," said Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner Janet Anderson.

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Department's \$580,000 aged care Star Ratings evaluation reveals what operators already know

The Weekly Source, Other, 16/01/2025, Caroline Egan

There is "scope for enhancement" of the Department of Health and Aged Care's Star Ratings for aged care, according to management consultants Allen + Clarke, who were awarded the 11-month contract to assess the merit of the initiative launched by Aged Care Minister Anika Wells in December 2022.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Teen died in Christmas drinking binge

Age, General News, 17/01/2025, Emily Woods, Page 3

A family Christmas lunch turned deadly when a 16-year-old boy drank himself to death after consuming more than a dozen alcoholic drinks. The teen, who lived in Echuca with his parents, had been permitted to drink sips of alcohol from the age of 15, the Coroners Court of Victoria was told.

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

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Treating unexplained infertility

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 28

New evidence-based guidelines hope to enable health professionals to better inform people affected by unexplained infertility and increase the chances of pregnancy. Up to 30% of infertile heterosexual couples are affected by 'unexplained' infertility, which cannot be assigned a direct cause.

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Should Australia mandate cancer warning labels on alcohol? Expert weighs in

SBS, Other, 16/01/2025, Hannah Kwon & Itee Dewan

Doctors in the United States are advocating for mandatory cancer warning labels on alcohol bottles following a recent advisory from the Surgeon General that highlights the link between alcohol consumption and cancer. This prompts an important question: Should Australia implement a similar cancer warning policy?

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Improving COPD diagnosis, care outcomes

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 10

Each year, more than 7600 Australians lose their lives to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and 53,000 people aged 45 and over are hospitalised. The hospital admissions are a staggering 1.7 times higher than the OECD average.

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Warning over common shower habit that is not only filthy – but also dangerous

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 16/01/2025, Rebekah Scanlan

A warning has been issued to smartphones owners who use their expensive devices while showering. [...] It "commonly appears in damp or water-damaged areas" and can cause a fungal infection and worsen asthma symptoms on those who are exposed.

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PRIMARY CARE

Pull your head in and sort it out, health minister told

The Australian, General News, 17/01/2025, Natasha Robinson, Page 1

They are society's forgotten people, their voices barely heard in public debates, but one man would like to make his views on the NSW psychiatry crisis crystal clear. "I've been in the system for long enough to know what the go is," says 61-year-old Joe Karadjian, who lives with chronic mental illness.

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

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Ramping up the lies

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 17/01/2025, Brad Crouch, Page 1

Ambulance patients would be moved to hospital corridors to await help, in a move that would cut ramping figures without improving care. The new handover policy states hospitals would be responsible for patients.

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New pressure on already-stressed ED clinicians

Adelaide Advertiser, Editorials, 17/01/2025, Page 26

The terrible optics of ambulances queued in car parks has become emblematic of the state government's failure to "fix" ramping the core promise that helped it win the 2022 election. Yet this vision may be about to fade a little, despite patients still facing long delays to be treated.

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Hope for kids in agony

Courier Mail, Edition Changes - Metro, 17/01/2025, Jackie Sinnerton & Madura McCormack, Page 7

The Queensland government is open to reporting transparent pediatric waitlist data for the most serious dental treatment as demand blows out and desperate parents are left clueless as to how long their children need to live in agony. Following a report in Thursday's Courier-Mail where the Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry called on Queensland Health to publish the waitlist data for children needing treatment under anaesthetic, Health Minister Tim Nicholls has revealed he is "happy to look into it".

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Boost for waning hospitals

Courier Mail, General News, 17/01/2025, Madura McCormack & Taylah Fellows, Page 11

Extra funds will be pumped into Queensland's ageing hospitals and every cent allocated to maintenance to be used only for that purpose, Health Minister Tim Nicholls has vowed. And a review of

the state's hospital infrastructure program will now be expanded to include the growing backlog of delayed maintenance, with an independent expert to hand in his report by the end of February.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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Dental data pledge a positive step for kids

Courier Mail, Editorials, 17/01/2025, Page 24

Tim Nicholls's pledge to consider reporting pediatric waitlist data for the most serious dental treatment is a win for the hundreds of concerned dentists across the state who believe our children are suffering because some councils refuse to add fluoride to the water. If we cannot see the true extent of the problem, it will be impossible to fix.

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

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Treat with respect

Herald Sun, Editorials, 17/01/2025, Page 32

The posters in hospital emergency departments, waiting rooms and treatment areas asking people to show respect to nurses, doctors and reception staff are a sad sign of the times. The public should not need any reminder that abuse won't be tolerated and that violence against healthcare staff is illegal.

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Climbing healthcare costs

Northern Territory News, General News, 17/01/2025, Camden Smith, Page 3

Fewer Northern Territory general practitioners are bulk-billing and the average out-of-pocket cost for Territorians visiting a GP have increased in the past 12 months. Released recently, Cleanbill's annual Blue Report a national guide to general practitioner listings, showed NT bulk-billing rates dropped from 19.5 per cent to 9.5 per cent and the average out-of-pocket cost of visiting a GP increased 7 per cent from \$40.98 to \$43.86.

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Health system decay

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 17/01/2025, Madura McCormack , Page 1

Staff and patient safety is at risk amid a \$2bn maintenance backlog at Qld hospitals, with more than a third of healthowned buildings nearing the end of their lifespan. The list of crumbling infrastructure includes World War II-era pand post-operative facilities in Charleville and in the Darling Downs Hospital and Health System where there is failing concrete baselayer which is causing mould and severe deterioration to flooring.

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Psych crisis closes ward

West Australian, General News, 17/01/2025, Hannah Cross, Page 18

Mental health patients are being discharged or sent elsewhere after staffing shortages forced the closure of a Perth mental health ward. Bentley Health Service told staff last Friday it would be closing Ward 2K, a 16-bed voluntary patient ward, after reaching "crisis point" with the dire number of psychiatrists available at both BHS and Royal Perth Hospital.

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Psychiatrist exodus 'will lead to deaths'

Daily Advertiser, General News, 17/01/2025, Taylor Dodge, Page 3

More than half of the psychiatrists working at public hospitals across the state have vowed to resign over work conditions, leaving one Wagga man fearful patients like him will be left with limited access to care. Sam Ryot was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 2004 after suffering from severe symptoms, including visual and audible hallucinations and paranoia.

Moving valuable clinic close

Daily Mercury, General News, 17/01/2025, Krystal Hender, Page 8

After three years of waiting for their daughter to walk, a family from regional North Queensland travelled to the Gold Coast to access the support they desperately needed, and now that support is a little closer to home. At just two years old, Baylee Runnels was diagnosed with agenesis of the corpus callosum, a rare congenital brain defect which falls under the umbrella of cerebral palsy.

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Doc shock

Daily Mercury, General News, 17/01/2025, Page 28

Your postcode shouldn't determine the level of medical care you can receive in the 21st century. And the closing of Sonic Health in Moranbah is not a one-off, rare event but the latest in a worsening trend, a slow-moving train wreck where we can all see exactly how things are going.

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Rotting teeth a crisis among kids

Sunshine Coast Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Page 12

Alarmed dentists say more children than ever are being anaesthetised to remove rotten teeth in some cases, every tooth in their mouth with Queenslanders being hospitalised with preventable dental diseases at a higher rate than the national average. And children are not going to school due to agonising toothaches and oral infections, experts say, as they beg councils to trust science above conspiracy theorists and put fluoride in water supplies - or for the Queensland government to mandate it again.

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Regional children paying price for this political football

Sunshine Coast Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Anna Middleton, Page 12

Recently, in my role as a Cairns councillor, I spoke strongly and voted against a motion that Cairns Regional Council would not add fluoride to its water. I am bewildered that fluoridation has become such a politicised issue when more than 150 major health organisations worldwide endorse the evidence and support supplementing water supplies with fluoride as a safe, efficient and cost-effective public health measure to improve oral health in communities.

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This can help every child

Sunshine Coast Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Samuel Davis, Page 12

Ask Cairns mum Laura Thorpe why her city's water supply should be fluoridated and she will point to the silver cap on five-year-old son Hamish's back molar as evidence. "We call it his Iron Man tooth to try and make it something positive," the Earlville resident says.

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How 'varnish' is now key part of state government's strategy

Sunshine Coast Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 13

Queensland Health is planning to introduce fluoride varnish to those living in areas without water fluoridation as part of the government's strategy to improve oral health. The varnish would be added to the teeth by a dentist or health practitioner and it is suitable for adults and children.

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LNP has a policy cavity on fluoride

Sunshine Coast Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Jackie Sinnerton & Jill Poulsen, Page 13

The Queensland government won't commit to adding fluoride to town water supplies despite Health Minister Tim Nicholls once proclaiming it was "possibly the last single remaining medical initiative in Queensland to ensure good health for all of us". Neither Mr Nicholls nor Premier David Crisafulli

responded directly to questions about whether they still support fluoridation as a vital public health measure, or if they would consider a mandate.

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Paediatric critical care and future demand management

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 34

The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) has deployed a new tool developed by the Sax Institute to simulate patient flows at the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). The tool is designed to assist in prediction and management of future demand for state-level services requiring paediatric critical care admission in NSW, including for cardiac patients.

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NSW government asks private sector to take public hospital patients as hundreds of psychiatrists set to resign

The Guardian, Other, 17/01/2025, Natasha May

The NSW government is considering moving public psychiatry patients into private hospitals in preparation for the mass resignation of the state's psychiatrists next week, but doctors warn the panicked response will not help the "droves of people with significant illness and crises". At least 205 psychiatrists will resign on Tuesday after 16 months of negotiations over the workforce crisis, with the government not agreeing to the psychiatrist's proposed solution – a special levy increasing their pay by 25%, similar to that which emergency doctors received in 2015.

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No quick fix after years of warnings over health system

Canberra Times, Other, 16/01/2025, Emily Verdouw

Queensland's health system is under fire after a scathing audit revealed systemic failures, with the nurses union saying they sounded the alarm for years. The Queensland Audit Office report exposed a \$2 billion maintenance backlog, record ambulance ramping at 44.7 per cent and ballooning elective surgery waitlists, which have grown by 30 per cent over nine years to surpass 64,000 patients.

Also reported by: [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#), and syndicated across regional outlets.

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The NSW government and the planned public psychiatrist exodus, explained

ABC Online, Other, 16/01/2025, Tony Ibrahim

The NSW health system is approaching a crisis point, with more than two-thirds of its staff specialist psychiatrists threatening to resign on January 21. The looming action centres on a pay dispute between the NSW government and the union representing doctors in the state, the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation (ASMOF).

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Western NSW likely to be spared from disruption as 200 psychiatrists resign

Daily Liberal, Other, 16/01/2025, Rachel Chamberlain

Western NSW communities are unlikely to be affected by the mass resignation of 200 psychiatrists across the state. [...] This masthead understands the mass resignations are anticipated to have minimal immediate impact on the Western NSW Local Health District, which spans an area of 247,000 square kilometres and covers locations such as Bathurst, Orange, Dubbo and Mudgee.

Also reported by: [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#).

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Peel Health Campus upgrade step closer, but locals frustrated by delays

A long-awaited upgrade to the problem-plagued Peel Health Campus appears a step closer to fruition, four years after the state government committed to taking the facility out of private hands. It has announced that work on the next phase of the upgrade will start soon, but there is still no start or completion date, or final costings — although the government concedes it is likely to cost more than first anticipated.

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Channel 10, 10 News First, 16/01/2025, Candice Wyatt

An alarming number of medical staff have been verbally or physically abused by patients as often as every 13 hours. Dr Jill Tomlinson, Australian Medical Association, says this is not only influencing the moral of healthcare workers, but also negatively impacting patient care.

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Channel 9, Today , 16/01/2025, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

Interview with Dr Nick Coatsworth, Today medical expert. Compere says there are fears of a mental health disaster, as around 200 psychiatrists in NSW prepare to walk off the job in less than a week. Compere adds that other specialties are also hurting. Coatsworth explains that after six years of working as a psychiatrist, they max out a take-home pay of about \$350,000.

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Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 16/01/2025, Cheng Lei

Public hospitals in Vic have activated urgent security responses hundreds of times in response to an increase in violence against staff. Victoria's branch of the Australian Medical Association says healthcare systems need better resources to counter the ongoing problems.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Statewide Mornings, 16/01/2025, David Reilly

Compere plays an excerpt of Dr Toby Gardner, Chair, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, discussing about the closure of the Richmond GP clinic. He mentions that this is quite a sad news for the people of Richmond as it has been the only clinic in town, as it adds itself to a long and growing list of GP clinics right across the State that have been closing in recent years.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Autism fix for out of control NDIS

Daily Telegraph, General News, 17/01/2025, Caleb Bond, Page 71

Spare a thought for Amanda Rishworth. [...] Autism diagnoses have exploded since the NDIS was introduced in 2013.

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

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A new approach to living with ADHD

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 17/01/2025, Lanie Tindale, Page 10

Zak Farag said by 15 he was homeless and a school drop-out, sleeping in a Coles car park in Bowral. It was the culmination of a lifetime of undiagnosed attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

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TAFE course on how to deal with death

A unique course offered in the Southern Highlands aims to help locals open up a dialogue around death. It will also help those caring for others at the end-of-life.

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Bail application a 'bleak situation'

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Wade Stephens, Page 5

A Mildura magistrate has lamented limited wrap-around drug rehabilitation and mental health support options available to a repeat offender. Brodie Cameron Pettit, 27, attended the Koori County Court in Mildura on Wednesday for a bail application, after he spent 107 days in pre-sentence custody.

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

'Can't lose more lives'

Sunshine Coast Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Chloe Grimshaw, Page 8

The tragic death of a Sunshine Coast father-of-three on Christmas Day has renewed calls for better regional mental health services. Sam Platt died by suicide on December 25 last year, leaving behind his partner and three young children, Alaina, Kayden and Riley.

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Cancer recurrence anxiety: clinical pathway for health professionals

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 27

Supporting people with fear of cancer recurrence is a critical yet frequently overlooked aspect of cancer care. A new industry-university partnership is set to change that.

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First responders urged to seek support after tragedies in small towns

ABC Online, Other, 16/01/2025, Shannon Schubert

There is one job in particular that first responder Christine Welsh will never forget. It was January 2016, and her team of State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers had been called to help with a leaky roof in the regional town of Seymour, an hour and a half north of Melbourne.

[Read More](#)

Doctors need more ADHD training

Medical Forum, Other, 16/01/2025

Supporting people with ADHD should be a national priority backed by more training for GPs and other health professionals, leading ADHD experts have said. It comes as the Federal Government supported just one recommendation from a recent ADHD senate inquiry.

[Read More](#)

GPs urge govt action on ADHD role

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 16/01/2025

The Royal Australian College of GPs is urging the New South Wales Government to prioritise reforms to improve access to support and treatment for people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) from GPs after the mass resignation of psychiatrists. Around 200 psychiatrists in NSW's public health system have submitted their resignations amid an ongoing pay dispute with the state government, and plan to leave their positions next week.

[Read More](#)

RACGP calls for fast-tracked ADHD reform

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 16/01/2025

Ahead of a mass walk-out of NSW psychiatrists, the RACGP says it is now more important than ever for GPs to be granted ADHD prescribing powers. The Federal Government previously noted that current policy may place 'unnecessary restrictions' on GPs prescribing for ADHD in its Senate inquiry response.

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

Rising healthcare facility demands

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 8

The pandemic and the years since have highlighted Australia's severe nursing shortages, with research indicating we could face a shortfall of 100,000 nurses by 2025, creating a need for more and more modern facilities to house them and support Australian communities. [...] For example, the federal and Victorian governments have partnered and engaged with all states and territories and the nursing profession to develop the nation's first National Nursing Workforce Strategy, which aims to equip, enable and support the delivery of care and aged care that the Australian population needs.

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Providing 'gold standard' midwifery care

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 12

A new report reveals that women in rural Australia highly value the Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) model, highlighting the importance of supporting rural services in providing quality maternity care. Mothers at a small rural hospital in Victoria's Goldfields that adopted this continuity of carer model, called MGP, said they felt "empowered" and "respected" during their labour and birth.

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Feds chip in \$2m to help urgent airport upgrades

Launceston Examiner, General News, 17/01/2025, Duncan Bailey, Page 2

Flinders Island Council has secured \$2.68 million in federal funding to help deliver stage one of a two-stage urgent upgrade to the island's only airport. [...] "It's not just critical for our residents, tourists, and local economy, it is also critical infrastructure for lifesaving services like the Royal Flying Doctors Services and other emergency services such as firefighting and Search and Rescue Services."

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Rural study the best decision Hayley made

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 17/01/2025, Samantha Newsam, Page 5

Before commencing her training placement at the Tamworth Rural Clinical School, Hayley Carlon had never really met anyone who made their living from the land. Now it's a daily occurrence.

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

Grants for GP trainees aim to offset costs

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 17/01/2025, Lewis Nancekivell, Page 8

Nine grants were awarded to medical trainees in Mildura as a part of the Victorian Government's push to development and retain more general practitioners in the state. The \$32 million program handed out 400 grants worth up to \$40,000, with another 400 more to be given later this year.

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Free TAFE a health boost

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 17/01/2025, Cameron Bates & Nikita McGuire, Page 2

More than 100 Townsville residents are undertaking free TAFE courses to combat critical skills shortages in the health sector. Data supplied by the federal government, which launched the Fee-Free

TAFE qualifications initiative in 2023, shows that almost 110,000 Queenslanders are taking advantage of the program, including 23,000 in health-related courses.

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Vertical integration a threat to patient care?

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 25

Are virtual hospitals the answer to our overwhelmed health system? While they sure have a role in the future of healthcare, the road to delivering on the promise of care at home is not without challenges.

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Tweed health students offered financial leg-up to pay for tertiary study

Tweed Daily News, Other, 16/01/2025, Catherine Piltz

Tweed Shire healthcare students are being given a serious shot in the arm by way of a financial boost to help with their studies – but it comes with a catch. Up to \$12,000 is available for a range of healthcare and allied health professions.

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

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

No relevant coverage

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Sex creep doc told to stay away

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 17/01/2025, Mark Murray, Page 1

A Geelong doctor jailed for sex crimes has been hit with a stay-away order by an aggrieved former patient less than six months after his release from prison. [...] Police believe Chirawu ignored advice from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) to avoid the store after it received complaints about him from the woman.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Prostate cancer call to arms

Border Watch, General News, 17/01/2025, Charlotte Varcoe, Page 7

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) has issued a call to arms. The not-for-profit foundation is urging workplaces throughout Australia to unite in the fight against prostate cancer by launching a new online platform to help raise awareness and funds.

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Young mum's devastating ordeal

Newcastle Herald, General News, 17/01/2025, Damon Cronshaw, Page 3

Young mum Maddison Roberts has been through a terrible ordeal that caused her to be paralysed and lose her baby. She's also facing the prospect of a lung transplant, but will first undergo rehabilitation after a life support machine left her paralysed below the chest.

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SPORT

Tomic matches target of police betting probe

Age, General News, 17/01/2025, Nick McKenzie, Page 1

Detectives launched a multiagency strike force focused on Australian tennis star Bernard Tomic to probe possible match fixing after uncovering suspicious wagering on two matches involving the former world No. 17, including one at the 2022 Australian Open. Police strike force Whyman was launched in early 2022 after suspicious bets were made via online bookmakers on an Australian Open qualifying match between Tomic and Russian player Roman Safiullin, and another match the controversial Australian sportsman played in Turkey a few months earlier.

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

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Builders race to make 2032

Courier Mail, General News, 17/01/2025, Hayden Johnson, Page 1

Queensland will be in a race against time to build more than \$100bn worth of infrastructure projects before the 2032 Games, despite the 11-year headstart handed to the city. Queensland Major Contractors Association analysis reveals \$104bn in infrastructure is scheduled over the next five years including money for the Bruce Highway and vital hospital upgrades but labour shortages have raised fears of costly delays.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Healthiest coffees, and ones to avoid

Australian Financial Review, General News, 17/01/2025, Emily Craig, Page 27

The benefits and potential pitfalls swirling around your cup may depend on how it's prepared. Warding off heart problems, type 2 diabetes and dementia are just some of the ways that coffee is thought to strengthen our health.

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

Family's race to find a cure for dementia curse

Australian Financial Review, General News, 17/01/2025, Virginia Hughes, Page 28

Research Linde Jacobs shares the inherited disease that killed her mother. She now wants to save her daughters.

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

'Apple a day' put to test

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 17/01/2025, Page 4

Does an apple a day really keep the doctor away? Australian researchers are putting the proverb to the test to see if the onceforbidden fruit really can protect the heart.

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

Meat a dementia risk

Hobart Mercury, General News, 17/01/2025, Page 3

Swapping bacon with nuts or lentils could cut your risk of dementia as much as 16 per cent, new US research suggests. Scientists from three Massachusetts institutions Mass General Brigham, Harvard and MIT found that eating greater quantities of red meat, especially in processed form, increased the risk for dementia and cardiovascular disease.

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Updates in health care

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 9

A new gene mutation-specific test will help predict the severity of heart arrhythmia that could cause sudden cardiac arrest. Scientists at the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute made the discovery in conjunction with colleagues at the Vanderbilt University Medical Centre.

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The unintended impacts of antibiotic use

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 18

New research challenges the long-held belief that rifaximin an antibiotic commonly prescribed for patients with liver disease poses a 'low risk' for causing antibiotic resistance. [...] The project, led by researchers from the University of Melbourne at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity (Doherty Institute) and Austin Health highlights the critical need for a deeper understanding of the negative impacts of antibiotic use, according to the researchers.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

How genes impact

Australian Hospital and Healthcare Bulletin, General News, 01/01/2025, Page 20

Researchers have uncovered a unique genetic variation that may influence how the immune system responds to infections. As a part of an eight-year project, co-led by the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity (Doherty Institute) and Monash University, researchers comprehensively mapped a component of natural killer cells in First Nations people.

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'I couldn't get out of my house': Aunty Bev's journey back to good health

The Australian, Other, 16/01/2025, James Dowling

For Gumbaynggirr and Djangadi elder Bev Donovan, the memory of how she "spiralled out of control" in the wake of her mother's death still brings her to tears. A loss for her whole community, the death left Aunty Bev adrift.

[Read More](#)

Indigenous education support program expands in the Kimberley

National Indigenous Times, Other, 16/01/2025, Dechlan Brennan

A federal government initiative helping First Nations children thrive has been expanded to 50 communities across the country. [...] Minister Aly agreed, noting: "It is wonderful to launch the 50th Connected Beginnings site in Kununurra, providing wrap-around education and health support services to 600 local First Nations children."

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Far North warned after malaria alert

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 17/01/2025, Catherine Duffy, Page 3

A case of malaria has been confirmed in Cape York, with medical professionals urging residents to take caution. Cape York and Torres Strait residents have been urged to protect themselves against mosquito bites after a case of malaria was confirmed in Lakeland, 250km north of Cairns.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Three decades of research pioneers medical milestone for Aussies living with rare cancer

9News, Other, 16/01/2025, Eleanor Wilson

A blood cancer drug created by Melbourne researchers over 30 years has been approved for use in Australia, giving hope to people living with a rare form of the disease. The once-daily pill called Omijara treats effects of myelofibrosis, a bone marrow cancer that causes symptoms including spleen enlargement and severe anaemia.

[Read More](#)

Australians urged to know difference between therapeutic and cosmetic sunscreens

ABC Online, Other, 16/01/2025, Olivia Willis

Using sunscreen during summer — and in many parts of the country, all-year round — should be a no-brainer. [...] Australia has strict sunscreen regulations enforced by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), but there are concerns some companies are finding loopholes to sell "sun protection" products through clever packaging and social media marketing.

[Read More](#)

Med cannabis sites flout ad rules

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 16/01/2025

Australians are increasingly using medicinal cannabis to treat long-term health conditions such as chronic pain, anxiety and cancer- despite a lack of evidence for its effectiveness. [...] Research published this week in the Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry revealed that around half of these clinics are in breach of strict TGA advertising rules that apply to prescription-only unapproved medicines.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News First, 16/01/2025, Sharyn Ghidella

Australia's pharmaceutical regulator the TGA has approved a new drug to treat the debilitating side effects of bone marrow cancer. but the next challenge is to make the treatment more affordable for patients. The next step is to get the drug on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Melbourne\)](#).

[Play Now](#)

FIVEAA, Breakfast, 16/01/2025, Lucy Lokan & Casey Treloar

A drug used to treat people with a rare and debilitating blood cancer has secured approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration. One in every 10,000 Australians will be diagnosed with myelofibrosis each year.

[Play Now](#)

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

A bitter pill to swallow

Hobart Mercury, General News, 17/01/2025, Alison Foletta, Page 3

Despite advocacy from general practitioners, the Tasmanian government will not pilot drug testing in the state. A government spokesperson said the Tasmanian government's position remains the same.

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

'Well and truly broken': Big problem with NSW Government's pill testing move

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 16/01/2025, Gino Vumbaca

The decision of the NSW Government to finally introduce pill testing was widely welcomed by many who understand the potential for this program to reduce harm and tragedies. Unfortunately, as details slowly become available, the clear message is that the black box of government decision making is well and truly broken.

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

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FOOD STANDARDS

How long is food in the fridge safe when a power outage hits?

9News, Other, 16/01/2025, Richard Wood

The choice between throwing out what's in the fridge and keeping it when household power goes down is a tricky one. [...] Food Safety Information Council chief executive Lydia Buchtmann says people who experience outage should be wary of keeping potentially hazardous foods, such as meat, poultry, seafood and ready-to-eat perishable meals.

[Read More](#)

Saving food in your fridge and freezer during a power outage

ABC Online, Other, 16/01/2025, Anna Chisholm

If you've lost power in a blackout, it can be difficult to figure out which foods can be preserved. [...] According to the Food Safety Information Council "if the freezer door is kept shut, a full freezer can keep food chilled for up to 48 hours, while a half-full freezer can keep food chilled for 24 hours".

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AICIS

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