



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 9th March 2025

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister Wells](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#)
 | [Assistant Minister Kearney](#) | [Assistant Minister Thwaites](#) | [Department](#)
 | [Vaccines](#) | [Ageing and Aged Care](#) | [Population Health](#)
 | [Cancer, Hearing and Chronic Conditions](#) | [Primary Care](#)
 | [Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](#) | [Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office](#)
 | [Health Workforce](#) | [Technology Assessment and Access](#)
 | [Medicare Benefits and Digital Health](#) | [Benefits Integrity](#)
 | [Health Systems Strategies](#) | [Sport](#) | [Health Economics and Research](#) |
[First Nations Health](#) | [Interim Australian CDC](#) | [Therapeutic Goods Administration](#)
 | [Office of Drug Control](#) | [Food Standards](#) | [AICIS](#)

LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [**Sunday Tasmanian**](#) (page 1) reports that shortages of staff and resources have blown out wait times for pathology services in Tasmania's public health system, delaying surgeries and forcing doctors to send samples interstate.
- The [**Sunday Canberra Times**](#) (page 3) reports that ACT's Treasury was first alerted to serious cost overruns in Canberra's public health system one day before the Territory election last October.
- The [**Sunday Mail Brisbane**](#) (page 3) reports that girls as young as seven are suffering social anxiety at the hands of exclusive "Too Cool" cliques, with children's social media use a factor. *Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Adelaide](#), [Sunday Tasmanian](#)*
- The [**Sun Herald**](#) (page 5) reports that women diagnosed with hypertensive disorders in pregnancy are often unaware that they remain at greatly increased risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke for many years after giving birth.
- The [**Sunday Telegraph**](#) (page 5) reports that the crackdown on vapes has led to an explosion in the use of illegal nicotine pouches, or snus, among young people. *Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane](#), [Sunday Tasmanian](#)*

- The [Sunday Herald Sun](#) (page 9) reports that since bans on engineered stone came into effect last July, one third of follow-up inspections by WorkSafe Victoria have resulted in breach notices.
- The [Sunday Mail Brisbane](#) (page 11) reports that comparison site Finder found 18 per cent of Australians with average or higher incomes have chosen to pay the Medicare Levy Surcharge rather than take out private health insurance. *Also reported by:* [Sunday Tasmanian](#), [Sunday Telegraph](#), [Sunday Herald Sun](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide](#), [Sunday Territorian](#)
- The [Sunday Telegraph](#) (page 13) reports that Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme coverage for the acute lymphoblastic leukaemia treatment Blincyto was this week extended to patients at all stages of the disease, just 35 days after approval by the Therapeutic Goods Administration. *Also reported by:* [Sunday Herald Sun](#)

MINISTER BUTLER

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER WELLS

Oly stars lead charge

Sunday Telegraph, Sport, 09/03/2025, Emma Greenwood, Page 92

Our golden girls especially prominent as we round out our list of the nation's most influential women in sport. [...] 9: Anika Wells, Federal Minister for Sport (3) Seems like a sharp drop but with a federal election looming, there are plenty of question marks around the future of Wells, who could end up in opposition.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#)

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4BC, Special Coverage, 08/03/2025, Peter Fegan

Interview with Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells. They discuss the storm situation in her seat of Lilley, and emergency preparedness within aged care facilities in general.

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[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

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[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

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DEPARTMENT

Helping governments design better grant programs in a new era of public scrutiny

The Mandarin, Other, 08/03/2025, Sarah Mullins

Increasing scrutiny of grant programs is prompting governments to strengthen transparency, governance, and proportionality in funding decisions. [...] More recently, an Australian National Audit Office audit found that the Department of Health and Aged Care's administration of the \$2 billion Community Health and Hospitals Program was ineffective and fell short of ethical requirements.

[Read More](#)

Lilydale flagged as potential location for urgent care clinic under re-elected Labor

Upper Yarra Mail, Other, 08/03/2025, Mikayla van Loon

Lilydale has been flagged as a potential location for an urgent care clinic in a more than \$600 million funding pledge from the Labor government if re-elected. [...] Should the new clinics be added, about 80 per cent – or four in five – Australians "will live" within a 20-minute drive of one of 137 facilities, according to the Department of Health and Aged Care.

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South coast transport volunteers needed

WEB Fleurieunews.com.au, Other, 08/03/2025

The Southern Communities Transport Scheme (SCOTS) is a community passenger network that provides door-to-door pre-booked transport for people who need help to get around. [...] SCOTS is an initiative of the City of Victor Harbor and Alexandrina Council with funding from the federal Department of Health and Aged Care, and the state government Department of Human Services.

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[Back to Top](#)

VACCINES

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[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

POPULATION HEALTH

A better measurement index? Why BMI guidelines may be on way out

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 09/03/2025, Ayisha Siddiqua, Page 14

A slew of new weight-loss drugs are being tested in 2025. They follow blockbuster drug Ozempic, whose maker, the Danish company Novo Nordisk, is now Europe's most valuable company with a market capitalisation worth more than the whole Danish economy.

Also reported by: [Sunday Examiner \(Launceston\)](#).

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How can we turn tide on nation's obesity crisis?

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 09/03/2025, Jessica Kerr, Peter Azzopardi, Susan M. Sawyer, Page 15

Since the 1990s, the proportion of the world's population who are overweight (with a body mass index of 25-30) or obese (with a body mass index of 30 or above) has doubled. If current patterns continue, we estimate that by 2050, 30 per cent of the world's children and adolescents (aged five to 24 years) will be overweight or obese, according to our new research in The Lancet.

Also reported by: [Sunday Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), Similar coverage: [The New Daily \(Online\)](#)

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Obesity epidemic must be addressed

Sunday Canberra Times, Editorials, 09/03/2025, Page 33

We know what the problem is and we know that it is getting worse. In 2023, the ACT's Chief Health Officer said that "nearly two in three Canberran adults and one in three Canberran children reported being overweight or obese".

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75-year-old Canberra woman's tattoos expose 50-year secret

NEWS.com.au, Other, 08/03/2025, Nina Funnell

"I have a voice"; "I will be heard". These are the iconic words boldly tattooed on the tops of the hands of 75-year-old rape survivor Brenda Colbourne. [...] According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, approximately 2.2 million Australian women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.

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[Back to Top](#)

CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Lurking pregnancy risks can be fatal

Sun Herald, General News, 09/03/2025, Emily Kaine, Kate Aubusson, Page 5

Sarah Gulyamov was on her couch, 37 weeks pregnant with an induction booked next day, when her mother mentioned her daughter's feet looked bigger than usual. "I looked over my belly and said, 'Yeah, you're not wrong'," Gulyamov, then 35, said.

Also reported by: [Sunday Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

Cost overrun warning on election eve

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 09/03/2025, Jasper Lindell, Page 3

The first time Treasury became aware that Canberra's public health system was facing significant cost overruns was the day before the 2024 election, an Assembly inquiry has been told. Scott Austin, the acting deputy under treasurer for budget procurement, investments and finance, told the inquiry officials that Treasury was alerted to the cost pressures on Friday, October 18, 2024.

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Health cover a bit crook

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 09/03/2025, Anooska Tucker-Evans, Page 11

Almost one in five Aussies are choosing to go without private health insurance and pay the Medicare Levy Surcharge, with experts torn on whether taking out a policy is really worth it. New research from

comparison site Finder revealed 18 per cent of Australians who earn the national average wage of \$100,000 or more do not have private health insurance.

Also reported by: [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Test of patients

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 09/03/2025, Sue Bailey, Page 1

Tasmanians are waiting up to six weeks for results from urgent biopsies with the state's public pathology service struggling with a backlog of as many as 800 tests. The Australian Medical Association said the "unacceptable" delays meant patients were waiting too long for procedures such as cancer surgery.

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

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How one expert nurse with a pink trailer is bringing vital healthcare to women in regional Victoria

The Guardian, Other, 08/03/2025, Benita Kolovos

The idea of travelling to Victoria's most remote corners, hopping between small towns every few weeks and living out of a suitcase doesn't sound like everyone's dream job. But when Louise Holland heard about the opportunity to run a mobile women's health clinic that involved just that, she jumped at it.

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How to skip the long queue at Wollongong Hospital and get medical help at home

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 08/03/2025, Kate McIlwain

The most recent hospital figures showed patients were less likely than ever to get on-time treatment at Wollongong Hospital, but a new virtual care service means some Illawarra patients will be able to skip the queue. The NSW Government has expanded its Sydney-based virtual care service to the Illawarra Shoalhaven local health district, which means patients who call the HealthDirect phone line can access care from doctors and nurses while remaining at home.

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[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Too Cool cliques getting younger

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 09/03/2025, Rose Innes, Page 3

Children as young as seven are worried about their social status and feel they have to ask permission to sit with certain groups of friends, with peers dubbed the "Too Cool" groups already appointing "queen bees" and followers. Experts have warned TC groups have gotten "a lot worse" in recent years, with Australian Psychological Society CEO Zena Burgess saying social media use among kids was partially to blame.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Kids need the time to be kids

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 09/03/2025, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 63

Over-scheduling kids with high-pressure activities can be just as harmful to their mental health as excessive screen use, a wellbeing expert and former AFL mentor says. "Unchecked" screen use is linked to rising rates of anxiety and depression in young people, resulting in sleep disruption, reduced physical activity and impaired emotional regulation.

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Pain causes depression

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 09/03/2025, Page 22

About 40 per cent of adults with chronic pain have anxiety or depression, according to new research covering more than 50 countries. The research team from Macquarie University and Johns Hopkins University looked at 376 studies involving almost 350,000 people.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

Allied in health, united in voice

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 09/03/2025, Brad Crouch, Page 23

Allied health workers in the public system look likely to be covered under one enterprise agreement with significant pay rises likely for about 6000 workers, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists and social workers. Union officials say some of these workers could earn up to 40 per cent more by moving interstate and are pushing for parity.

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[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Weighing up case for drug subsidies

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 09/03/2025, Jonathan Karnon, Page 14

People with a high body weight living in England can now access subsidised weight-loss drugs to treat their obesity. [...] In Australia, the government subsidises the cost of semaglutide (Ozempic) for people with diabetes. But it is yet to subsidise semaglutide (Wegovy) on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) for weight loss.

Also reported by: [Sunday Examiner \(Launceston\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Organ donor's 'incredible legacy'

Sunday Examiner, General News, 09/03/2025, Annika Rhoades, Page 4

In early 2024, Brian Mansell knew something was wrong with his partner when her headache became so extreme she asked him to call an ambulance. [...] Data from the Australian Donation and Transplantation Activity Report revealed that 2024 was the busiest clinical year on record for DonateLife Tasmania, which resulted in the highest ever state and national rate of 43.5 donors per million people.

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[Back to Top](#)

SPORT

Olympian wants 'uncomfortable talks'

Sunday Canberra Times, Sport, 09/03/2025, Melanie Dinjaski, Page 39

Olympian Chloe Hosking wants to spread the word that the work of elevating, advocating and supporting women does not end after International Women's Day with "uncomfortable conversations" encouraged. On Saturday it was revealed that Hosking had won a World Olympians Association Grant, a collaboration with the International Olympic Committee, allowing her to put \$US1000 towards the Hosking Women in Sport Scholarship cycling program.

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[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

Stone law breaches top 100

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 09/03/2025, Sarah Booth, Page 9

Victoria's engineered stone industry has recorded more than 100 safety breaches less than a year after laws banning the manufacture or supply of the deadly product came into effect. New data shows WorkSafe has carried out 326 inspections since July last year, when engineered stone bench tops, slabs or panels were outlawed.

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[Back to Top](#)

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Kids are nicotine suckers

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 09/03/2025, Elizabeth Pike, Georgia Palgan, Page 5

Teachers and doctors are warning about the dangers of a new drug sweeping Sydney, with scores of young people switching to small nicotine "pouches" to feed their addiction amid the crackdown on vapes. Flavoured nicotine pouches, also known as "snus" have flooded the market in recent months, peddled out of convenience stores and tobacconists across the city in discreet, palm-sized tins.

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

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Drug which saved my life now costs just \$31

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 09/03/2025, Madeline Crittenden, Page 13

A life-changing medication that gave a young Sydney woman with rare blood cancer a second chance has been approved for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listing 10 times faster than average, giving patients greater treatment options in the early stages of their diagnosis. [...] The drug became available for all sufferers of ALL this week – just 35 days after the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approved the drug for extended use.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#)

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'Hungry again': What happens if quitting Ozempic?

Sunday Age, General News, 09/03/2025, Liam Mannix, Page 10

The cravings were gone. The "food noise", once a cacophony inside her head, was silent. And the weight, for so long such a stubborn companion, just seemed to drain away.

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

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'LSD, MDMA': Party drugs may have helped survivors of October 7 attack, study claims

NEWS.com.au, Other, 08/03/2025, Brielle Burns

MDMA and other party drugs may have helped festivalgoers who survived Hamas' horrific October 7 attack, a new study suggests. [...] As of July 1, 2023, authorised psychiatrists in Australia can access MDMA for treating PTSD and psilocybin for treatment-resistant depression (TRD), though under strict controls. According to the TGA, the psychiatrist must be an authorised prescriber and requires permission from a human research ethics committee to prescribe certain medications.

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

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