



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 13th March 2025

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 3) leads coverage reporting a man has left hospital 104 days after being implanted with a titanium heart. The federal government's Medical Research Future Fund provided \$17.5 million towards the trial, with Health Minister, Mark Butler, noting last year that the device could halve deaths from heart failure.
- **[The Mandarin](#)** (online) reports Health Minister, Mark Butler, Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus and Home Affairs Minister, Tony Burke, have announced an extra \$156.7 million in funding to the Australian Federal Police and the Office of Illicit Tobacco and E-cigarettes Commissioner to help deal with the illegal tobacco trade.
- **[The Canberra Times](#)** (page 11) reports the Department of Health and Aged Care's \$174.7 million "Support at Home ICT Enablement" IT program has been assessed as having a "low" delivery confidence. The Digital Transformation Agency reports the project is now subject to "escalation protocols" which provide additional resources to help resolve delivery issues.
- **[The Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (online) reports July 1 will see significant changes to aged care, including the abolition of the basic daily fee, fully funded clinical care, means testing of assets and income, a rise in maximum funding to \$78,000 a year and a rise in the lifetime cap on means-tested fees for home and residential aged care services.

- **[The Courier Mail](#)** (online) reports the Women's Health Education Network has released new guidelines relating to how women should exercise during and immediately after pregnancy, with the advice intended to give women information about the potential long-term health implications of different types of movements during pregnancy.
- **[The Australian Pharmacist](#)** (online) reports the Therapeutic Goods Administration has cautioned men who are planning a family over their use of the anticonvulsant sodium valproate. The warning comes as European research found up to 10 per cent of babies exposed to the drug during pregnancy may be born with birth defects.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Somewhere in Australia, a man owes his life to this fake heart

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 13/03/2025, Angus Thomson, Page 3

An Australian patient has become the first in the world to leave hospital with a levitating titanium heart, in a major step towards halving deaths from cardiac failure and establishing a world-leading medical manufacturing industry on Australian soil. [...] Announcing the funding last February, Health Minister Mark Butler said the technology could halve deaths from heart failure and establish Australia as a leading manufacturer of medical devices.

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### Beating heart breakthrough

Age, General News, 13/03/2025, Angus Thomson, Page 21

An Australian patient has become the first in the world to leave hospital with a levitating titanium heart, in a major step towards halving deaths from cardiac failure and establishing a world-leading medical manufacturing industry on Australian soil. [...] Announcing the funding last February, Health Minister Mark Butler said the technology could halve deaths from heart failure and establish Australia as a leading manufacturer of medical devices.

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### Doctors call for general improvement in funding

Broome Advertiser, General News, 13/03/2025, Cain Andrews, Page 4

The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine is calling for greater investment in rural generalist doctors to improve healthcare access in remote communities as part of its 2025-26 Federal Budget submission. With Health Minister Mark Butler signalling formal recognition of rural generalist medicine in 2025, the college says now is the time to fully mobilise the workforce and ensure its success.

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### Health cover faces the axe

Money Magazine, General News, 01/04/2025, Page 16

Millions of Australians are expected to ditch their private health insurance this year as premiums surge, according to new research by the comparison site Finder. [...] Before landing at the latest figure, Health minister Mark Butler pressured insurers to justify their price hikes, forcing them to rework their proposals.

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### 'More to say': Australia not done on US steel and aluminium tariffs

The Australian, Other, 12/03/2025, Joe Kelly and Noah Yim

Australia will not be granted an exemption from US tariffs on aluminium and steel imports when they come into force on Thursday (AEDT), the White House has confirmed. [...] Cabinet minister Mark Butler did not go as far as to criticise the US administration but said the decision was "bad" for the US-Australia relationship and said the government would "continue to press the case" for an exemption.

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## Labor moves on tobacco black market

The Mandarin, Other, 12/03/2025, Melissa Coade

The federal government has made a multi-million commitment to law enforcement agencies to combat illicit tobacco trade. [...] In a joint statement on Wednesday, Health Minister Mark Butler, Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke, and Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus said the funding boost would benefit the Office of the Illicit Tobacco and E-cigarettes Commissioner and the Australian Federal Police (AFP).

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## PM reveals he has tried to call Donald Trump but he's not picking up

The Mercury, Other, 12/03/2025, Samantha Maiden

Anthony Albanese has slammed US President Donald Trump's big call on tariffs as "unjustified" and an act of "self-harm". [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said Australia will "continue to press the case" for an exemption as the Prime Minister prepares to respond to the blow.

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## Federal funding boost to tackle illicit tobacco trade in Australia

ABC Online, Other, 12/03/2025

Australian law enforcement agencies tackling the "relentless" illicit tobacco trade are getting a federal funding boost to double down on their efforts. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler announced the funding in Melbourne on Wednesday — the Australian city most heavily hit by the problem.

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## ABC, ABC News, 12/03/2025, Tamara Oudyn

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has announced \$160m for law enforcement agencies to tackle illicit tobacco as it continues to rule out cuts to taxes on cigarettes. Around 1.3 billion illegal cigarettes have been seized by border authorities in the past six months.

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## Channel 10, 10 Late News, 12/03/2025, Ursula Heger

In another major border force blitz, officers have seized more than a billion illicit cigarettes in the past six months. [...] The federal Health minister, Mark Butler, was here in Melbourne today announcing a federal funding boost \$156 million to crack down on the illegal tobacco trade here in Victoria.

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## Channel 10, 10 News First, 12/03/2025, Jennifer Keyte

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has vowed to crack down on the illegal tobacco trade, with more than a billion illicit cigarettes seized by border control in the past six months. State governments will be given a further \$160m in resources to stamp out vape stores and the illicit tobacco trade.

Report continues on: [Channel 10 \(Melbourne\)](#).

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## 3AW, 07:00 News, 12/03/2025

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler will invest \$156m into tackling the illicit tobacco trade, rejecting calls to cut tobacco taxes. The funding will support police efforts to remove illegal cigarettes from the market.

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## ABC Radio Melbourne, Mornings , 12/03/2025, Raf Epstein

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, about extra funding for tobacco enforcement. Butler says a lot of the money will go into Commonwealth policing agencies.

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## ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 12/03/2025, Chris Bath

Interview with Australian Financial Review federal political correspondent Tom McIlroy about Federal Health Minister Mark Butler announcing nearly \$160m in funding to help curb the illegal tobacco trade. McIlroy says black market tobacco such as counterfeit cigarettes are being sold routinely around the country under the counter and avoiding the taxes.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### Sector hastens slowly ahead of new Act

Business News WA, Other, 12/03/2025, Liv DeClerck

Leading WA aged care providers respond to the new national Aged Care Bill, which becomes law in July. Australia will have a new aged care funding arrangement from July 1 when new legislation comes into effect. [...] Announcing the changes last year, Aged Care Minister Anika Wells said the new Support at Home program would address growing demand for in-home services.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

### Labor promises more bulk billing

Coast Community Pelican Post, General News, 13/03/2025, Page 14

The federal government has pledged \$8.5 billion to deliver an additional 18 million bulk-billed GP visits each year if re-elected. Assistant Health Minister and Member for Dobell Emma McBride said Australian patients and families would save hundreds of dollars a year in out-of-pocket costs, with patient savings of \$859m a year by 2030.

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### Triple M Central Coast, Breakfast, 12/03/2025, Paddy Gerrard and Maz Compton

Interview with Emma McBride, Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. McBride says it has been a big opportunity with her role with mental health and suicide prevention to try locally and nationally improve things for people and families.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

### Men the 'missing link' in treatment

Cowra Guardian, General News, 13/03/2025, Page 9

A landmark study reveals that bacterial vaginosis (BV), a condition affecting nearly a third of women worldwide and causing infertility, premature births and newborn deaths, is in fact a sexually transmitted infection (STI), paving the way for a revolution in how it is treated. [...] Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health, Ged Kearney said the Monash study has revealed how a simple change in treatment can make a significant difference for women.

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### Australian government injects over \$10 million into cervical cancer campaign spotlighting self-collect test via health organisations

The Australian Centre for the Prevention of Cervical Cancer (ACPCC), the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), ACON and the Australian Multicultural Health Collaborative have united in a new Australian Government -funded campaign, 'Own It,' to improve cervical screening rates by highlighting Australia's HPV self-collect test. [...] The quick and simple swab is easy, private, and game-changing in getting more women screened," Assistant Minister Ged Kearney MP said.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

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## DEPARTMENT

### Report reveals the major govt IT projects at risk of failure

Canberra Times, General News, 13/03/2025, Connor Pearce, Page 11

A third of the Australian government's digital projects, worth \$3.5 billion are not on track, a new report has found. [...] The two projects that received the lowest rating were being delivered by the Department of Health and Aged Care and the Australian Taxation Office.

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### Medicare to offer bigger bulk billing rebates to patients in 17 locations across NSW, Qld, Vic, WA and SA

7news.com.au, Other, 12/03/2025, Hayley Taylor

Medicare rebates are getting a boost across 17 Australian communities as the remoteness of each locality is reclassified based on the latest Census data. [...] "The more remote a GP practice is, the larger the incentives," the Department of Health and Aged Care said on Monday.

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### Bird flu: Don't panic, do get the flu vax

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, Other, 12/03/2025, Mariella Attard

If it's a pandemic, we're preparing well, says one immunisation expert. Australia does not yet have the strains of bird flu causing problems in the US and Europe. [...] "Each year, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care seeks advice from CSL Seqirus, the WHO Collaboration Centre and other experts to inform the selection of the antigen strain to be held in bulk, which can be manufactured into a filled and finished vaccine if required."

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### DTA's 'early warning system' flashes for nine govt IT projects

InnovationAus, Other, 12/03/2025, Justin Hendry

As many as nine major digital projects in Canberra are off track and will require significant changes if they are to meet their targets, a new report by the Digital Transformation Agency has revealed. [...] In the case of the Department of Health and Aged Care's Support at Home ICT Enablement, which is one of the two projects reporting Low delivery confidence, "escalation protocols" have been triggered.

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### Less red tape, more compliance education for GPs: RACGP

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 12/03/2025, Jo Roberts

The college says education must be prioritised ahead of 'onerous' tasks and extensive admin, in a

submission to a Senate inquiry into new Medicare legislation[...] A recent example of these measures is the Department of Health and Aged Care's delivery of 'education letters' to more than 1000 doctors on the prescribing criteria for semaglutide.

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## VACCINES

No relevant coverage

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### A mindfield for Aussies

Herald Sun, General News, 13/03/2025, Page 17

Australians are largely unaware common health issues such as hearing loss, depression and high cholesterol are risk factors for dementia. Dementia Australia chief executive Tanya Buchanan said dementia was the second leading cause of death for all Australians and there were 433,300 Australians living with the condition.

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### The five major changes coming to aged care this year

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 12/03/2025, Rachel Lane

Since 2014, aged care in Australia has undergone a radical transformation. In the past decade, home care packages have overtaken residential aged care beds.

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### Helping seniors stay connected one visit at a time

Shepparton News Online, Other, 12/03/2025, Khadija Hadjab

For many older Australians, loneliness isn't just an occasional feeling — it's part of everyday life. The Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme is a free, government-funded program designed to change that by matching volunteers with seniors in need of companionship.

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### Is your aged care service at risk of failing new dining standards?

HelloCare, Other, 12/03/2025, Jakob Neeland

Food and nutrition have always been fundamental to aged care, but they are now coming under greater scrutiny than ever before. With the introduction of strengthened quality standards from July 1, 2025, aged care providers must be prepared to meet higher expectations around food, nutrition, and dining experiences.

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### Is residential care the right choice after hospital?

HelloCare, Other, 12/03/2025, Alex Jacobs

For older people, a trip to the hospital following a fall or because of an unexpected health crisis can often be a catalyst for entering residential aged care. In Queensland alone, roughly 50% of all hospital patients are aged 65 or older.

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## Aussie transplant a world first

The Nightly, General News, 12/03/2025, Rachel Jackson, Page 11

Almost two decades after his father died from heart failure, Daniel Timms has helped to transform treatment for patients across the globe. His invention, the BiVACOR Total Artificial Heart, recently marked an important milestone when an Australian recipient became the first in the world to be discharged from hospital.

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## Back yard heart heroes

Courier Mail, General News, 13/03/2025, Alexandra Feiam and Jodie Munro O'Brien, Page 7

A man has been implanted with a revolutionary titanium heart first designed in a Brisbane back yard in a medical marvel surgeons have labelled an "unmitigated clinical success". Led by St Vincent's cardiothoracic and transplant surgeon, Paul Jansz, the implant took six hours to complete at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney on November 22, 2024.

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## Raid nets tonnes of smokes

Daily Telegraph, General News, 13/03/2025, Page 10

A Western Sydney father and son in charge of transporting goods under customs control were allegedly busted using their position to import almost two tonnes of illegal tobacco earlier this year. The duo, aged 52 and 27, were arrested under Operation Bewdley on February 5, after police claim they "took advantage" of their positions in the supply chain to import illegal cigarettes in airfreight containers, by declaring them legitimate goods.

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## Saved by revolutionary device that's all heart

Daily Telegraph, General News, 13/03/2025, Sarah Booth, Page 12

An artificial heart implant has kept an Australian man alive for more than 100 days in a world-first surgical breakthrough at Sydney's St Vincent's hospital. The man, now recovering well, was just the sixth person in the world, and first outside the United States, to receive the mechanical heart implant when he underwent surgery last November in Sydney.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#).

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## Achievement gives us heart in tough times

Sydney Morning Herald, Editorials, 13/03/2025, Page 20

Every year, millions of people die from heart failure one every three hours in Australia but there are only thousands of heart transplants available worldwide. Even then, donor hearts only last about a decade and the immunosuppressant drugs patients take to stop their body from rejecting them also make them sick, sometimes leading to cancer.

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## 27 Rules for Living: small changes that lead to big impact

The Australian, Other, 13/03/2025

Want to keep your body and mind in top form with as little effort as possible? Experts swear by these quick fixes to make a real and lasting difference to our health and wellbeing.

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## The guidelines for exercise during pregnancy have changed: Here's how

The Courier Mail, Other, 12/03/2025, Mia Erickson

Pregnancy is one of the most physically and emotionally gruelling experiences a woman's body, mind and soul can endure. From conception to the end of post-partum recovery (which is considered to last 6 to 8 weeks, with some symptoms such as postpartum depression persisting for years), the female body undergoes significant changes, impacting how we feel, how we think, and how we move.

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

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## **Time zone zonked: How long the average Aussie takes to recover from jet lag**

Ballarat Courier, Other, 12/03/2025, Sarah Falson

Aussies love to travel , but as we're so far away from other countries , our risk of suffering from jet lag is high. A new survey from Money.com.au reveals time zone fatigue takes a serious toll on Aussies' return to routine, with more than one in four taking a week or more to recover after they get home.

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## **Woman whose baby died at a Sydney hospital waited 50 minutes after emergency caesarean was called, staff say**

The Guardian, Other, 13/03/2025, Anne Davies

A woman whose baby died after it was born in distress at Sydney's Northern Beaches hospital had a vaginal birth 50 minutes after doctors called an emergency, according to staff present on the night. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reports the national rate of neonatal death ranged between 2.2 and 2.9 deaths per 1,000 live births between 2010 and 2020.

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## **Record breaking artificial heart implant is a life-saver**

SBS, Other, 12/03/2025, Abbie O'Brien and Edwina Guinan

An Australian man has become the first person in the world to leave hospital with a total artificial heart implant. The patient lived with the device for more than 100 days before receiving a donor heart transplant earlier this month.

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## **Aussie man leaves hospital with totally artificial heart in world first**

9News, Other, 12/03/2025, Josh Hohne

An Australian patient has become the first person in the world to be discharged from hospital with a totally artificial heart. A NSW man in his 40s had the implant put in November during a six-hour operation at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney.

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## **Channel 9, Nine News, 12/03/2025, Michael Thomson**

A study by CSIRO forecasts that in the next five years, highly processed food and sugary drinks will make up close to half the average Australian diet. Research Scientist Dr Gilly Hendrie says this diet places Australians at risk of weight gain and obesity as well as other chronic conditions.

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## **4BC, Afternoons, 12/03/2025, Sofie Formica**

Interview with CSIRO Senior Research Scientist Dr Gilly Hendrie about new research finding Australia is set to fall short of the health targets set for 2030. Hendrie says modelling found a decline in diet quality, noting that a healthy diet helps keep people healthy and prevents chronic diseases. She states they need to work out how to better support people to access and prepare more healthy foods through education.

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## **ABC Radio Sydney, Evenings, 12/03/2025, Renee Krosch**



Interview with CSIRO Nutrition Research Scientist Dr Gilly Hendrie about a study finding that Australia's diet quality is declining. Hendrie says the study consists of data from over 270,000 Australians who have told them their diet over the past nine years. She states that the National Preventive Health Strategy has made clear goals for 2030 but less fruit and more discretionary foods are being eaten.

Also reported by: [ABC Radio Perth \(Perth\)](#).

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### Charlatans spruik 'fake' science, but deadly threat is real

The Australian, General News, 13/03/2025, Jack, Page 11

The problem with advocates of pseudo science is that real science will catch up with their lies and distortions sooner or later. In the case of US Health Secretary, Robert Kennedy Jr, it appears to be sooner.

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### Emerging model of AI improves seizure detection in epilepsy patients, could enhance diagnostics elsewhere

West Australian, Other, 12/03/2025, Hannah Cross

An emerging type of artificial intelligence could improve the detection of seizures in epilepsy patients thanks to its accuracy and adaptability. University of Sydney researchers used a Kolmogorov-Arnold Network, a new neural network AI model that's more flexible and interpretable than traditional models, to develop a tailored tool to accurately detect seizures.

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### Australia's long-term pain medication shortage

ABC Online, Other, 12/03/2025

Australia has found itself in the grip on a long-term pain medication shortage. The impact is particularly acute in the palliative care sector, which is warning patients are suffering unnecessarily, all because the medications that typically control their symptoms are either unavailable or prohibitively expensive.

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### 4BC, Afternoons, 12/03/2025, Sofie Formica

Interview with Specsavers senior audiologist Kathryn Launchbury about Hearing Awareness Month. Launchbury warns that people can do damage to their hearing if they listen to loud music or videos with earbuds on.

Continuing interview on: [4BC \(Brisbane\)](#).

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### ABC Radio Adelaide, Evenings, 12/03/2025, Spence Denny

Interview with Charles Darwin University School of Medicine Professor Subash Heraganahally about the development of a new technique to screen obstructive sleep apnoea. Heraganahally says the General Practice Sleep Scale will screen for the risk of sleep apnoea at GPs instead of undergoing a sleep study,

Continuing interview on: [ABC Radio Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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### ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 12/03/2025, Kylie Baxter

Interview with UTAS neuroscientist and senior lecturer Dr Lila Landowski about the links between

dementia and bad sleep. Landowski says beta amyloid, which is a sticky protein that builds up in the brains of people with Alzheimer's disease, gets flushed out during sleep which means that the lack of it leads to an increased risk of dementia.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Dr Megan Brooks gives explosive evidence to parli committee

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 12/03/2025, Brad Crouch

Bombshell evidence at a parliamentary committee hearing alleges Attorney-General Kyam Maher threatened a top doctor with a maladministration and misconduct investigation for "embarrassing the state" after she made contact with a coroner over multiple deaths linked to ramping. Former medical director of the Royal Adelaide Hospital emergency department Dr Megan Brooks — at one stage her voice wavering — said: "even now I remain concerned, such was the tenor of the correspondence from the Attorney-General."

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

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### Staff, safety win as project hits new high

Newcastle Herald, General News, 13/03/2025, Damon Cronshaw, Page 3

The redevelopment of John Hunter Hospital has hit a milestone, with the new seven-storey acute services building reaching its highest point. NSW Health Minister Ryan Park will announce the building's progress, along with two other big decisions, at the hospital today.

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### 'Extreme humidity': Bad weather affects equipment at Women's and Children's Hospital, cancelling multiple surgeries

Adelaide Now, Other, 12/03/2025, Douglas Smith

Medical staff at the Adelaide's Women's and Children's Hospital have had to postpone numerous non-urgent elective surgeries on Wednesday, due to bad weather causing equipment failure. At least 13 non-urgent surgeries were called off after "extreme humidity" affected the sterilisation of equipment in a storage room, with more surgeries likely to be postponed this week until the problem is fixed.

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

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### Channel 10, 10 News First, 12/03/2025, Tiffany Warne

The Women's and Children's Hospital has forced the cancellation of some of today's non-urgent surgeries due to an air conditioning issue at the hospital causing extreme humidity that is affecting the sterilisation of equipment. SA Health has emphasised emergency surgery is not affected.

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### Channel 9, Nine News, 12/03/2025, Brenton Ragless and Kate Collins

Former Royal Adelaide Hospital emergency director Dr Megan Brooks told the Health Services Select Committee that ambulance ramping is a symptom of an overcrowded emergency department. SA Salaried Medical Officers Association's Bernadette Mulholland spoke of the difficult conditions clinicians face.

Report continues on: [Channel 9 \(Adelaide\)](#).

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### 2CC, Canberra Live, 12/03/2025, Leon Delaney

Orthopaedic surgeon Dr Sindy Vrancic resigned from the Canberra Hospital partly due to the health service's plans for its financial troubles. She was among three other surgeons who resigned, with 15 signing a letter expressing a vote of no confidence in the administration of ACT Health and Canberra Hospital.

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## **2CC, Canberra Live, 12/03/2025, Leon Delaney**

Interview with Canberra Liberals Leader and Shadow Health Minister Leanne Castley about former head of orthopaedic surgery Professor Paul Smith accusing Canberra Hospital's administration of being engaged in a process of disengagement with clinicians. Castley says statistics last week showed that different categories are still far behind clinically recommended timeframes at the hospital.

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## **3AW, Drive, 12/03/2025, Jacqui Felgate**

Interview with Vic Shadow Health Minister Georgie Crozier about the air conditioning working at only 30 per cent capacity at the Alfred Hospital. Crozier says the Vic Government has failed over many years to address the ageing infrastructure of the Alfred Hospital.

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## **6PR, Drive, 12/03/2025, Oliver Peterson**

Interview with Patients Australia spokesman David Clarke about calls on all major parties and the independents to support a shake up of medical billing practises in the lead up to the federal election following a survey finding unfair bills and poor transparency when receiving specialist medical care. Clarke says 60% of patients admitted to private hospitals reported out-of-pocket fees while 70% of them paid in excess due to high specialist fees not covered by private insurance.

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## **ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 12/03/2025, Kylie Baxter**

Interview with Tas Minister for Health Jacquie Petrusma about the planned move of the Mother Baby Unit to St Johns Park following its closure at St Helen's Private Hospital in 2023. Baxter adds that mothers with acute mental health conditions will be admitted to the Royal Hobart Hospital without their newborn babies.

*Continuing interview on: [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#).*

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## **ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 12/03/2025, Chris Bath**

Interview with Saint Vincent's Hospital heart failure and transplant cardiologist Professor Chris Heywood about a Sydney patient using an artificial heart before his human heart transplant. Heywood says he worked with Dr Daniel Timms, the inventor of the heart which was developed through funding in America. He states that the patient had the artificial heart for 104 days before his transplant and was even discharged from the hospital.

*Continuing interview on: [ABC Radio Sydney \(Sydney\)](#).*

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## **ABC Radio Perth, Mornings, 12/03/2025, Geraldine Mellet**

Interview with inventor of the BIVACOR artificial heart Dr Daniel Timms about a Sydney patient using the titanium heart before his human heart transplant at Saint Vincent's Hospital. Timms says there's no mechanical failure mode for this device which provides an alternative to transplant. He states they will undertake more clinical trials and studies in Australia, the US, and Asia.

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## Toll of isolation killed our Bridie

Herald Sun, General News, 13/03/2025, Amy Bissett, Page 10

It was in the name of saving lives but for 15-year-old Bridie Cocks the endless lockdowns in Melbourne are what killed her. The schoolgirl ended her life after facing year-long waitlists for mental health support, with her parents Joan and Richard Cocks saying she would still be here today if she had received adequate care.

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## Men fear judgement over mental health

2GB, Other, 12/03/2025, Phil O Neil

Phil speaks with crisis intervention specialist Gary Fahey about the stigma men face when seeking mental health support. Fahey highlights the intense pressures men experience in work, relationships, and society, often leaving little room for vulnerability.

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## Productivity Commission urges action from governments as gaps worsen

National Indigenous Times, Other, 13/03/2025, David Prestipino

The Productivity Commission has urged governments across Australia to take their commitments to Closing the Gap seriously in a new report which indicates a lack of meaningful action on priority reforms. The Commission's latest Closing the Gap data, published Wednesday evening, revealed progress in some key areas across states and territories, yet critical targets requiring urgent government action - particularly in suicide prevention, incarceration and child removal – had worsened.

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## A few steps forward, big ones back

The Australian, Other, 13/03/2025

Indigenous adults and children, who are still the nation's most disadvantaged citizens, are making encouraging progress on several Closing the Gap benchmarks, according to the Productivity Commission's latest dashboard. Key health indicators are improving in several states, and almost 90 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 and older are using the internet.

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## 6PR, Drive, 12/03/2025, Oliver Peterson

Interview with Curtin University School of Education Dr Saul Karnovsky about the emotional wellbeing of teachers. Karnovsky says school leaders receive a lot of pressure from the Department of Education and they should begin listening to the concerns of teachers to give them agency of how they may be better supported.

Continuing interview on: [6PR \(Perth\)](#).

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

### Program: Proposed new mother-baby unit at St Johns Park won't have mental health support, potentially separating mothers from their babies

ABC Online, Other, 12/03/2025, Isabel-Howard

The state and federal government have pledged \$6 million for a mother-baby unit to be established at St Johns Park in New Town, but parliament has heard it will not treat new mothers for acute mental health conditions. Emily Shepherd, secretary of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF),

expresses concern that this means the current model will not be able to grant holistic support to mothers when they need it most.

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### More than 100 mental health workers walk off site at Barwon Health in Geelong

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 12/03/2025, Mark Murray

More than 100 mental health workers have walked off the job at Barwon Health demanding action over unfair pay, occupational violence and aggression towards staff. The industrial action took place from 1-3pm on Tuesday and impacted operations across the Geelong hospital's mental health area, including the Swanston Centre.

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### Channel 7, Seven News, 12/03/2025, Rosanna Mangiarelli and Will Goodings

Flinders University Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling says sixty medical students will be the first in SA to complete their entire postgraduate medical degree outside of the city as part of the South Australian Rural Medical Program. It is hoped that these students will help fill the critical shortage of doctors in regional, rural, and remote areas.

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

### Labor fears more tariff shocks

Australian Financial Review, General News, 13/03/2025, Phillip Coorey and Andrew Tillett, Page 1

Donald Trump's refusal to exempt Australian steel and aluminium from his global tariff war might be only the start of the assault on Australia by its longtime ally.

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### Misleader of the free world

The Australian, General News, 13/03/2025, Ben Packham, Joe Kelly and Noah Yim, Page 1

Australia is bracing for a second round of Donald Trump's punishing tariffs as Anthony Albanese and his ministers slammed the "unjustified" duties on steel and aluminium and accused the US President of misleading the government. [...] Australian drug and agricultural sectors are among those likely to be targeted in the looming crackdown on non-tariff barriers following longstanding US grievances over the nation's intellectual property rules, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, quarantine rules, and even the GST.

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### How effective has urgent care clinic been?

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 13/03/2025, Brodie Everist, Page 4

More urgent care clinics are on the cards this federal election, with the government so convinced of their effectiveness they've committed to establishing another 50 of them. The first tranche of clinics were a Labor promise in the 2022 federal election - a bid to reduce emergency department (ED) waiting times by providing an alternative for urgent, but not life-threatening, care.

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### Surgeon cops \$10k fine after sharing photo of swastika tattoo on patient's penis

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 12/03/2025, Vanda Carson

An orthopaedic surgeon who shared a photo of a pipe bomber with a swastika tattooed on the left side of his penis with his doctor mates has been reprimanded for misconduct and fined \$10,000. The surgeon working in regional Queensland, whose name has been suppressed by a tribunal, took the photo of the swastika while the unconscious man was being treated in April 2019 at a hospital in regional Queensland after a homemade pipe bomb exploded as he was holding it.

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

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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## SPORT

### Ex-players win right to \$500k injury payouts

The Australian, Sport, 13/03/2025, Jon Ralph, Page 24

Retired footballers will share in a \$55m injury and hardship fund starting in April in which players with serious life-altering injuries can secure payouts of more than \$500,000. AFL Players Association chief executive Paul Marsh told The Australian that after protracted negotiations with the league, the union would in April reveal details of a fund helping players battling concussion-based issues and spinal injuries who are unable to work.

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### Channel 9, Nine News, 12/03/2025, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

AFL CEO Andrew Dillon denied the league provided the names of 51 athletes which should be drug tested under the Anti-Doping Code to Sports Integrity Australia, in what would have been a breach of confidentiality.

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

No relevant coverage

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### Jail rates threaten to put Closing the Gap out of reach

The Australian, General News, 13/03/2025, Paige Taylor, Page 1

Steep increases in the numbers of Indigenous adults jailed across the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia threaten to derail the refreshed Closing the Gap agreement. New data from the Productivity Commission shows the decade-long agreement is in trouble at the halfway point.

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### New First Nations-led project to help keep East Kimberley families safe

West Australian, Other, 12/03/2025, Cain Andrews

The Wyndham Women's Wellbeing and Empowerment project, delivered by Ngnowar Aerwah Aboriginal Corporation this year, will be funded by more than \$668,000 from the Commonwealth Government. The First Nations-developed and designed project will increase family safety awareness through weekly health-focused learning sessions, yarning circles and art activities with a new case manager to provide individualised support and referrals for women and families.

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## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Hep B midwife still at work amid exposure fears

Daily Telegraph, General News, 13/03/2025, Clementine Cuneo, Page 3

A midwife at the centre of a potential hepatitis B outbreak, which may have exposed hundreds of mothers and children to the virus, is still working at the Sydney hospital. Dozens of mothers who gave birth at Nepean Hospital between 2013 and 2024 have taken up the free testing for the virus, after NSW Health began contacting them this week to inform them of the potential transmission risk.

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### Teen girl lucky after contracting life-threatening illness

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 13/03/2025, Daniel Shirkie and Caitlan Charles, Page 3

A teenage girl is the first confirmed case of respiratory diphtheria in Townsville in decades. Respiratory diphtheria is a bacterial infection that can cause life-threatening illness when it attacks certain parts of the body, usually in the nose or throat.

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### Townsville Public Health Unit responds to diphtheria case, growing dengue fever cluster

ABC Online, Other, 12/03/2025, Chloe Chomicki

Townsville University Hospital has confirmed a case of respiratory diphtheria in a vaccinated teenage girl. The bacterial disease can cause severe swelling of the throat, but vaccines are widely available and infection and fatal cases are rare.

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### Channel 9, Nine News, 12/03/2025, Peter Overton

TerryWhite Chemmart pharmacies will offer flu vaccines from tomorrow after 30,000 cases were reported so far this year. Last flu season was the worst on record, with less than a third of Australians vaccinated.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### Men warned of sodium valproate risk ahead of fatherhood

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 12/03/2025, Chloe Hava

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) issued a caution over the use of sodium valproate in men who are planning a family. Up to 1 in 10 babies (10%) exposed to sodium valproate during pregnancy may be born with birth defects.

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### Biocurious: For Recce, our near neighbour was the obvious place to launch a diabetes-related trial

The Australian, Other, 12/03/2025, Tim Boreham

Superbug-buster Recce has bucked the trend by targeting Indonesia as the host of its planned phase III diabetic foot ulcer trial. [...] The company hopes to submit a formal phase III protocol to the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration "very soon", with a view to enrolling 200 patients with ABSSSIs (including DFIs).

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## OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

### New guidance on driving and medicinal cannabis

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 12/03/2025, Morgan Liotta

In Australia, it is an offence for a person to drive when impaired by a substance, including any detectable amount of THC in their system. But with medicinal cannabis use growing and prescribed for various conditions, and limited guidance for healthcare professionals about patients who drive, how can prescribers ensure these patients understand risk of impairment and road safety rules?

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### Transforming care: Empowering pharmacists in the medical cannabis revolution

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 12/03/2025

Retail Pharmacy spoke with Nicole Le Maistre, General Manager of Leafio – Montu's medical cannabis distribution arm about how Montu and Leafio are empowering pharmacists in the medical cannabis space. [...] Pharmacists play a vital role in guiding patients through the prescribing process. By staying informed about the latest medical cannabis regulations and products, pharmacists can educate patients on what to expect and work closely with prescribers to ensure smooth communication and coordination.

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## FOOD STANDARDS

### Testing of carbon food labels on supermarket products in move towards sustainability

The Australian, Other, 12/03/2025

Carbon food labelling is expected to help consumers make more sustainable food choices as the practice becomes more common around the world. Australia's move towards sustainability is expected to affect greenhouse gas emissions over the next decade.

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## Urgent food recall issued for service station staple over deadly allergen risk

West Australian, Other, 12/03/2025, Nightly Wed, Peta Rasdien

Customers have been warned over a food item often sold at service stations and convenience stores, with the national food safety authority issuing an urgent national recall. The Patties Food Group's On the Menu roast chicken roll has undeclared allergens for peanuts and crustaceans and should be returned to the place of purchase, according to Food Standards Australia and New Zealand.

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## AICIS

### 'Hazard approach' needed to control forever chemicals

Ballarat Courier, Other, 12/03/2025, Ethan James

Australia needs to toughen its approach to managing PFAS, an inquiry examining the impact of the so-called forever chemicals has been told. A Senate committee is investigating the PFAS family of chemicals, which do not naturally break down and have been linked to health problems including cancer.

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