



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 16th March 2025

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| [Assistant Minister Kearney](#) | [Assistant Minister Thwaites](#) | [Department](#)  
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| [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](#)  
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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [\*\*Sun Herald\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that SafeWork NSW has been investigating construction firm CPB Contractors over unsafe dust levels on Sydney's M6 Stage 1 road tunnel project, with 13 cases of silicosis uncovered in tunnel workers.
- The [\*\*Sun Herald\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that a Sydney GP who wrongly administered an adult vaccine to an infant was also recently investigated for a breach of vaccine storage protocol. 138 vaccination errors have been reported to the Therapeutic Goods Administration this year.
- The [\*\*Sunday Telegraph\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that shadow finance minister Jane Hume has demanded the Albanese government explain "wasteful" Commonwealth grants such as the \$1.07 million awarded by the Health Department for a Sax Institute project to support breastfeeding among First Nations women. *Also reported by:* [Sunday Mail Brisbane](#), [Sunday Herald Sun](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide](#), [Sunday Tasmanian](#)
- The [\*\*Sunday Territorian\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that a woman is suing NT Health for negligence over the death of her daughter by chroming in a ward at Royal Darwin Hospital.
- The [\*\*Sunday Times\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that WA health minister Amber-Jade Sanderson has been granted a different portfolio in Premier Roger Cook's new cabinet, with her replacement yet to be announced.

- The [\*\*Sunday Mail Adelaide\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that South Australia's 20-year State Infrastructure Strategy calls for 1500 new hospital beds – the equivalent of almost two Royal Adelaide Hospitals – to accommodate a population of over two million in Greater Adelaide by 2015.
- The [\*\*Sunday Mail Brisbane\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that an impromptu "relay of heroes" collaborated to transport a lifesaving stem cell delivery to Brisbane after its flight from the USA was diverted to Sydney by Cyclone Alfred. *Also reported by:* [\*\*Sunday Telegraph\*\*](#), [\*\*Sunday Mail Adelaide\*\*](#)
- The [\*\*Sunday Tasmanian\*\*](#) (page 1) reports that advocates are calling for more support for multiple birth families, a survey revealing 70 per cent experience significant mental health challenges in the first two years after the birth of twins, triplets or more.
- The [\*\*Sunday Times\*\*](#) (page 2) reports that Australia's pharmaceutical exports could be next to be hit by Trump-imposed tariffs, with the United States' own pharmaceutical sector having long complained about policies like the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. *Also reported by:* [\*\*NEWS.com.au\*\*](#)
- The [\*\*Sunday Age\*\*](#) (page 3) reports that Minister for Health Mark Butler has announced new additions to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to benefit women's health, including treatments for endometriosis, contraception and IVF. *Also reported by:* [\*\*Sun Herald\*\*](#), [\*\*Sunday Herald Sun\*\*](#), [\*\*ABC Online\*\*](#)
- The [\*\*Sunday Age\*\*](#) (page 3) reports that Greens leader Adam Bandt has offered Prime Minister Anthony Albanese his party's support on three key measures before the election in return for a tripling of the bulk-billing incentive and immediate student debt relief.
- The [\*\*Sunday Tasmanian\*\*](#) (page 3) reports that the Menzies Institute is undertaking a survey of Tasmanian employers and employees as part of a benchmark study into workplace mental health.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Labor's pledges on IVF, endometriosis

Sun Herald, General News, 16/03/2025, Millie Muroi, Page 9

Thousands of Australian women experiencing endometriosis, undergoing fertility treatment and using contraception will soon save hundreds – and, in some cases, thousands – of dollars a year as the Albanese government boosts its commitment to women's health ahead of the election. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the additional listings to be announced today – covering IVF, endometriosis and contraception – would improve the quality of life of hundreds of thousands of Australian women.

*Also reported by:* [\*\*Sunday Age \(Melbourne\)\*\*](#), [\*\*Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)\*\*](#), [\*\*The Age \(Online\)\*\*](#), [\*\*Brisbane Times \(Online\)\*\*](#), [\*\*WA Today \(Online\)\*\*](#).

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### Women receive further PBS help

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 16/03/2025, Page 12

Contraception, endometriosis, and IVF medications are to become cheaper under a federal government move to lower health care costs for women. Three new medications will be added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme from as early as next month. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the listing of the medications built on existing investments in women's health.

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### New contraceptive pill, endometriosis treatment and IVF drug to become cheaper with women's health funding

ABC Online, Other, 15/03/2025, Isobel Roe

A contraceptive pill, endometriosis treatment and an IVF drug will be made cheaper to access, in the latest round of women's health funding announced by the Albanese government. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler, who will make the announcement in Adelaide on Sunday, said the cheaper medicines would help "catch up on decades of inaction and neglect in areas that are important to Australian women."

## ABC Radio Sydney, 23:00 News (Weekend), 15/03/2025, Andrew Coulloupas

A contraceptive pill, a new endometriosis treatment and an IVF drug will be made cheaper to access in the latest round of women's health funding announced by the federal government. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler says the listings will take hundreds of dollars off the cost of the medicines. [clip: Minister Butler]

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## ABC Radio Perth, 22:00 News (Weekend), 15/03/2025, Andrew Coulloupas

Women with endometriosis will be able to access a new pain treatment after the government agreed to fund an addition to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. [...] The health minister, Mark Butler, says the announcements are on top of a \$5 billion women's health package announced earlier this year. [clip: Minister Butler]

[Play Now](#)

## Push for focus on nutrition

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 16/03/2025, Page 8

Australian doctors who prescribe weight-loss drugs such as Ozempic should be obliged to refer the patient to dieticians at the same time, the nutrition industry's peak body says. [...] The office of Health Minister Mark Butler did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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## Griefline forced to hang up

Sunday Times, General News, 16/03/2025, Hannah Cross, Page 12

Australia's national grief and loss helpline is set to close on Tuesday due to a lack of sustainable funding from the Federal Government. Griefline was forced to make the decision after an 18-month battle to secure funding through several avenues, including the Department of Health and Aged Care as well as philanthropic and corporate partnerships. [...] Senate Estimates last month saw Indigenous Australians Minister Malarndirri McCarthy, representing Health Minister Mark Butler, assure funding support for Griefline would be reinstated despite initially being knocked back by the department's evaluation process for a mental health grant.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)[Back to Top](#)

## MINISTER WELLS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

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No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

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No relevant coverage

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No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## DEPARTMENT

### What a waste

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 16/03/2025, Angira Bharadwaj, Page 1

Millions of dollars of taxpayer cash has been spent on a string of federal government grants awarded under the Albanese government including \$1m for "decolonising breastfeeding", \$898,000 on creating an antiracist dentistry curriculum and \$18,000 for a drag show for scientists. [...] Among them was \$1.07m for a decolonising breastfeeding program given to the Sax Institute. The grant awarded by the Health Department explains the project as supporting "the initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding among First Nations women".

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

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

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### Model for the future of GPs

Emerald Today, General News, 15/03/2025, Di Stanley, Page 1

Graduate doctors saddled with \$400,00 in uni debt are reluctant to commit to a GP pathway, but a national forum in Emerald has heard how a single employer model could provide the financial stability and career aspirations they seek. [...] National Rural Health Commissioner Professor Jenny May said a collaboration between the Emerald Medical Group and Emerald Hospital was already paying dividends.

Also reported by: [CQ Today \(Rockhampton\)](#), [Cap Coast Today \(Rockhampton\)](#), [Emerald Today \(Online\)](#).

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### Aged care in crisis

Ranges Trader Mail, Other, 15/03/2025, Barbara Smedley, Afraa Kori

For elderly residents in the Hills, staying in their homes is becoming increasingly difficult due to a severe shortage of essential aged care services. [...] The Department of Health and Aged Care spokesperson said "the significant challenges facing aged care providers in rural and remote areas are recognised, along with the need to strengthen and support the aged care workforce in these communities".

[Read More](#)[Back to Top](#)

## VACCINES

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## AGEING AND AGED CARE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## POPULATION HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### New relief fund helping cancer patients

Sunday Examiner, General News, 16/03/2025, Annika Rhoades, Page 3

When Graham Frost was diagnosed with lung cancer, sadly there was more than just his health that he had to worry about. Mr Frost, who lives at Shearwater, had to travel to the Launceston General Hospital for a week of radiation therapy, but accommodation prices were "through the roof" that week. However, a social worker at the LGH referred Mr Frost to the Cancer Council Tasmania where he became one of the early recipients of an accommodation relief fund.

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[Back to Top](#)

## PRIMARY CARE

### 'Pass this now': Greens offer to help Labor 'Dutton-proof' key measures

Sunday Age, General News, 16/03/2025, Millie Muroi, Page 3

The Greens are offering to support Labor on key measures in return for an immediate slashing of student debt and tripling of the bulk-billing incentive in a last-ditch attempt to "Dutton-proof" them beyond the federal election. As the Labor government faces the possibility of a minority government after the upcoming election, Greens leader Adam Bandt wrote to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Friday, offering his party's support for three key measures to ensure they pass before Australians go to the polls.

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

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### Mum sues NT Health over chroming death

Sunday Territorian, General News, 16/03/2025, Zizi Averill, Page 1

A mother who lost her child to chroming while being treated at the Darwin Hospital has sued the health department for negligence. Averly Wakuranhawuy has taken the Northern Territory Government to the Supreme Court following the death in care of her 22-year-old child on January 31, 2022.

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Amber jaded

WA is set to get a new health minister, with Amber-Jade Sanderson poised for a new portfolio in Roger Cook's Cabinet to be announced this week. Health groups warn the new minister will have their work cut out for them because big election promises to fix the State's ailing public system are nowhere near enough.

*Editorial: [Sunday Times \(Perth\)](#).*

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## Build & they will come

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 16/03/2025, Paul Starick, Page 1

The equivalent of almost two new Royal Adelaide Hospitals and 21 new R-12 schools will be needed as metropolitan Adelaide's population grows beyond two million by 2051, a top-level infrastructure blueprint reveals. The 20-year Infrastructure SA plan recommends the investigation of an underground CBD rail link, saying Adelaide Railway Station is at capacity and will reach "a tipping point".

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## Putting off pain

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 16/03/2025, Brad Crouch, Page 31

The future of SA Health's Pain Management Unit is in question again with critics warning a planned move will see the service downgraded, particularly for country patients. Amid pressure to find beds for emergency patients and "fix" ramping, the unit will be moved to a temporary site at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

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## Ramping remains stubbornly high, and a doctor who was silenced has now spoken out

ABC Online, Other, 15/03/2025

If you are unfortunate enough to need an ambulance to take you to the Flinders Medical Centre, the last part of your journey will be up a short ramp, before you are offloaded and taken into the emergency department. According to emergency physician Megan Brooks, that ramp has an unenviable legacy — it has lent its name to what has become a national phenomenon: ambulance ramping.

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[Back to Top](#)

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Double edged sword

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 16/03/2025, Sue Bailey, Page 1

Multiple birth families in Tasmania are pleading for more support after a national survey showed an alarming 70 per cent are experiencing significant mental health challenges in the first two years after their babies are born. More than 87 per cent of parents of multiples reported experiencing extreme exhaustion, and 70 per cent said they experienced significant financial difficulties in the first two years of giving birth to multiples.

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### Call to join health study

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 16/03/2025, Sue Bailey, Page 3

Tasmanians are being urged to take part in the largest ever study of mental health in the workplace. Professor Angela Martin and Dr Larissa Bartlett of the Menzies Institute for Medical Research are conducting a statewide survey of employers and workers as part of Working Well, a new workplace mental health study.

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## Kids too anxious to go to school

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 16/03/2025, Rob Inglis, Page 9

A counsellor who specialises in helping students with attendance issues says she's been taken aback by the number of Tasmanian kids who are now too anxious to go to school in the wake of the Covid pandemic. The revelation has prompted Sarah Davidson, who is the CEO of Kids and Teens in the Valley, a not-for-profit organisation based in the Derwent Valley, to start a new project called Kids Not Open to School (KNOTS).

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## A vision for happy kids

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 16/03/2025, Dr Peggy Brown, Page 75

The mental health of our children and young people is at a tipping point. As a nation, we face a critical decision: Do we continue to allow financial barriers to block access to essential mental health care, or do we step up and ensure every young Australian gets the support they need to thrive?

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Surgeons quit, contract talks continue

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 16/03/2025, Jasper Lindell, Page 6

Health officials are confident the resignation of four surgeons in the orthopaedic department at Canberra Hospital will have a minimal impact on the hospital's capacity as discussions continue over the future of visiting medical officer contracts. Canberra Health Services is also set to begin consultation on a way for staff to escalate cases to resolve any differences of view about priority and surgeon timing, after medical staff raised concerns about the way cases were being managed.

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### Private maternity alarm

Sunday Times, General News, 16/03/2025, Katie Hampson, Page 12

Three highly skilled obstetricians working out of St John of God Subiaco will quit obstetrics by the end of June, fuelling concerns the future of the private maternity system is "under serious threat". Respected doctors Seonaid Mulroy, Fiona Langdon and John Love will stop delivering babies and caring for pregnant women within months.

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### Unions in GST cuts warning

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 16/03/2025, Taylah Fellows, Page 19

Unions representing Queensland frontline workers have warned the state government against using GST cuts to deny staff proper wages or to slash the state's overwhelmed essential services. It comes after Treasurer David Janetzki said frontline services and infrastructure projects would be at risk if the Albanese government lowers Queensland's GST revenue by \$2.3bn this financial year and \$5bn by 2028.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

### Cheaper pills for women

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 16/03/2025, Page 9

Contraception, endometriosis and IVF medications are set to become cheaper, under a federal government move to lower health care costs for women. Three new medications will be added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme from as early as next month.

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

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### Aussie drug makers fear a Trump tariff

Sunday Times, General News, 16/03/2025, Sam McKeith, Page 2

The nation's booming pharmaceutical exports could be hit if US President Donald Trump foists another round of tariffs on products, an Australian research team has warned. [...] "Things like the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will come in for scrutiny with an overall tariff threat to change our drug bargaining arrangements."

Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), Similar coverage: [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

### Race to save Mia

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 16/03/2025, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 1

Mia Preston, 22, is in the fight of her life against leukaemia. But when a donor match for life-saving stem cells was found in the US, there was hope. What happened next is an extraordinary story of generosity and courage as a group of strangers collectively travelled 13,000km through a one-in-50-year cyclone and floodwaters to get Mia the help she desperately needed.

Also reported by: [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

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## SPORT

### Stadium could fit 5000 in



Suncorp Stadium could be expanded by up to 5000 seats without a drastic and expensive redevelopment according to the famous venue's general manager. While debate continues to rage around what Brisbane's main Olympic stadium will look like, Suncorp Stadium boss Alan Graham said the hallowed cauldron was already in good shape for whatever role it is called upon to play in the 2032 Games, but there was scope for limited expansion if required.

Interview: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#)

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## Brisbane Games 'can be the best'

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 16/03/2025, Julian Linden, Page 9

The man who masterminded the 2012 London Olympics says he wants the Brisbane Games in 2032 to be even more successful as he vies for the top job in international sport. Sebastian Coe, the champion British runner behind the London Games who now heads World Aquatics, is in a three-way battle with ex-swimmer Kirsty Coventry and Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr for the International Olympic Committee presidency.

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## Channel 10, 10 News First (Weekend) , 15/03/2025

Where tennis will be played at the Brisbane Olympics hangs in the balance tonight, with approval still needed for a \$100 million upgrade to Brisbane's Pat Rafter Arena. Tennis Australia says it's not fit for the Olympics, with Melbourne being considered as a backup if the renovations aren't up to standard.

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## ABC, ABC News (Saturday), 15/03/2025, Nakari Thorpe

As the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games nears closer there are growing concerns about more facilities not being up to scratch, with a major sport at risk of being moved outside the state. Tennis's governing body says if significant work isn't done on local grounds, there'll be no choice but to take matches elsewhere.

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[Back to Top](#)

## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

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[Back to Top](#)

## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### The healing power of chlorinated water, where pools change lives

Sunday Age, General News, 16/03/2025, Julie Power, Page 32

It is a Monday night in Western Australia's largest remote Aboriginal community, Bidyadanga, and pool managers Linda and Scott Kendall are chopping 12 kilos of chicken thighs for a free curry night. This is not your usual pool, and the job of aquatic managers like the Kendalls in eight remote Aboriginal communities managed by Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) in Western Australia goes beyond teaching laps and extends to being generous hosts.

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### First Nations stroke survivors share their stories to help save lives

ABC Online, Other, 15/03/2025, Emma Siossian

As Dunghutti man Joshua Donohue walks through a riverside park in his home town, he feels thankful he's alive and able to care for his four "beautiful children". A year ago, aged 40, his life changed forever

when he suffered a stroke.

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[Back to Top](#)

## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Silicosis triggers probe of M6 firm

Sun Herald, General News, 16/03/2025, Max Maddison, Page 1

A 32-year-old man is among 13 tunnel workers on the M6 Stage 1 roadway to have been diagnosed with silicosis, sparking an investigation into their employer, construction firm CPB Contractors. Revelations contained in thousands of documents released under a parliamentary order have led the Australian Workers' Union to accuse SafeWork NSW of failing to take action and colluding with multibillion-dollar tunnelling companies.

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### Sydney measles alert

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 16/03/2025, Page 6

Health authorities have issued a warning to residents after a traveller with measles was detected in Sydney. NSW Health says a traveller with a confirmed case of the highly infectious disease took an international flight to the city and visited several locations.

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### Alert on five new cases of measles

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 16/03/2025, Georgie Kibel, Page 23

Five more measles cases were reported in Victoria last week with new exposure sites including a Prahran nightclub. Chief health officer Tarun Weeramanthri on Friday afternoon issued an alert asking people who attended Chapel St, Prahran venues including Revolver Upstairs, ONESIXONE Bar and Somewhere Bar at specific times over the Labour Day long weekend to monitor for symptoms.

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### Measles warning in Victoria and NSW as new cases linked to travel from Bali and other Asian destinations

7news.com.au, Other, 15/03/2025

Health authorities in Victoria and New South Wales have issued fresh measles alerts following multiple confirmed cases in both states. The outbreaks are linked to international travel, with several exposure sites identified, including hospitals, nightclubs, shopping centres, and flights.

Similar coverage: [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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### Measles cases rise in US as outbreak spreads

Canberra Times, Other, 15/03/2025

Measles cases in Texas and New Mexico have risen to 294, surpassing all US cases recorded in 2024, as an outbreak that began in late January in West Texas spreads. The US reported 285 total infections last year, based on data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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### Mozzies carrying Japanese encephalitis in Brisbane

Sunday Mail Brisbane, Edition Changes, 16/03/2025, Tayla Couacaud, Page 13

The deadly Japanese encephalitis virus has been detected in Brisbane for the first time. Health authorities are warning Queenslanders to take precautions against mosquito bites after routine surveillance detected the presence of JEV in Hemmant in Brisbane's east on Friday.

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

## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### GP gave wrong vaccine to newborn

Sun Herald, General News, 16/03/2025, Kate Aubusson, Page 1

A Sydney GP administered an adult vaccine to a newborn baby months after health authorities discovered her medical centre had been incorrectly storing vaccines for years, potentially leaving more than 1000 patients without protection against serious infectious diseases. [...] Selim sent Freya a copy of a National Adverse Events Following Immunisation report, to be submitted to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), for the incident, and notified Camperdown Public Health Unit of the error.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

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No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

## AICIS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

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