



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Monday, 17th March 2025

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [Australian Financial Review](#) (page 1) reports leading scientists have urged the government to sign on to the Horizon Europe collaborative research fund amidst fears of a collapse in funding due to inference from the Trump administration.
- [The Age](#) (page 2) reports people suffering from body dysmorphic disorder also struggle with decision making, planning and short-term memory, new research from Swinburne University's Centre for Mental Health has found.
- [The Australian](#) (page 3) reports \$7 million will be invested to upgrade the government's Medical Costs Finder website, Health Minister Mark Butler has announced, in a move designed to give greater transparency on specialist healthcare providers' fees. *Also reported by:* [Australian Financial Review](#), [Daily Telegraph](#), [Canberra Times](#)
- The [Northern Territory News](#) (page 3) reports moves to push the Finocchiaro government to take action on voluntary-assisted dying laws will be delayed until May, with independent Northern Territory MP Justine Davis saying she is still gathering support.
- The [Australian Financial Review](#) (page 6) reports Philip Morris, British American Tobacco and Imperial Brands have called on the government to pause tax rises on their products, warning they are exacerbating the rise of the black market tobacco trade.

- [The Australian](#) (page 7) reports birth control, IVF and endometriosis treatments will be added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme from May following recommendations by Health Minister Mark Butler to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee. *Also reported by: [Canberra Times](#), [West Australian](#), [The Guardian](#)*
- The [Courier Mail](#) (page 9) reports Queenslanders are being urged to be cautious about mosquito bites after Japanese encephalitis was detected in Brisbane for the first time in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Alfred. *Also reported by: [ABC Online](#)*
- The [Canberra Times](#) (online) reports new aged care legislation coming into force from July will give Australian seniors more rights about how they access care, how it's delivered, the financial cost of care and who advocates for their standard of care, Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells says.

MINISTER BUTLER

Specialists made to reveal fees in doctor site refit

Australian Financial Review, General News, 17/03/2025, Michael Smith, Page 3

The average fees charged by 11,000 medical specialists, and patients' outof-pocket costs, will be made public under a proposed upgrade by Labor to the federal government's medical comparison costs website. Health Minister Mark Butler will announce an upgr...

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

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Big tobacco wants tax freeze to fight black market

Australian Financial Review, General News, 17/03/2025, Michael Read, Page 6

Australia's three largest tobacco wholesalers are urging the federal government to hit pause on further tax rises, warning the high cost of legally purchased cigarettes is causing smokers to turn to the black market and fuelling a crime wave. With Treasur...

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

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Website has answers on what doctors charge

The Australian, General News, 17/03/2025, James Dowling, Page 3

Australians will be able to find accurate and transparent specialist prices under a \$7m investment intended to create a fit-for-purpose online health costs tracker. The website Medical Costs Finder was intended to provide information on the going rate for procedures and medical services, but was hamstrung by its voluntary opt-in system. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler will announce the review of Health Costs Finder as an election commitment in Perth on Monday.

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Women's health treatment costs slashed on PBS

The Australian, General News, 17/03/2025, James Dowling, Page 7

Women will have access to cheaper birth control, IVF and endometriosis treatments by May, with new entries to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to save up to thousands of dollars per patient. [...] The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee sits independent of government and determines which treatments should be recommended for subsidy, though in both recent women's health announcements Health Minister Mark Butler said he had pushed for the PBAC to consider rubberstamping relevant medications.

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

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Cash boost for colon doctor cost-checker

Daily Telegraph, General News, 17/03/2025, Lachlan Leeming, Page 4

A website aimed at showing how much patients can expect to pay for specialist care will be given a

\$7m overhaul, after just 70 of 11,000 eligible doctors in Australia registered their information on the service. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the overhaul would add more transparency to how much patients should pay.

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

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Power of the butterfly to create change

Border Mail, General News, 17/03/2025, Madilyn McKinley, Page 5

When she first walked through headspace Albury-Wodonga's doors, Asha Romeril felt safe. Greeted by a familiar wet nose each time from the centre's therapy dog Hendrix, or Heni, she found support in her clinician. [...] The grassroots campaign saw more than 2000 signatures and 4000 signed butterflies presented to the then-federal health minister Mark Butler during a trip to Canberra.

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'Perfect storm' diet for danger

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 17/03/2025, Amy Bissett, Page 23

The "perfect storm" is how an eating disorder expert has described the pandemic in fuelling a rise in "life-threatening" anorexia in young Australian children. [...] In 2023, Health Minister Mark Butler announced that \$70mn would be used to increase services for youth mental illhealth and eating disProfessor Tracey orders.

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IVF, endometriosis and contraceptive drugs to be cheaper

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 17/03/2025, Page 14

A new treatment for a common painful condition and two other drugs will be made cheaper to improve thousands of Australian women's lives. About 8500 Australian women are expected to benefit annually when Ryego is listed on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme on May 1. [...] The listings would improve the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of Australian women, Health Minister Mark Butler said.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Michael West Media \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Aged care, NDIS headache for hospitals

Newcastle Herald, General News, 17/03/2025, Damon Cronshaw, Page 3

More than 85 people are stuck in Hunter hospitals waiting for an aged care or NDIS placement, raising concerns about isolation, neglect and bed block. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the Albanese government was spending \$197 million "to get people in NSW out of hospital beds and back into aged care".

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Better value for patients in bid to fix transparency

Canberra Times, Other, 17/03/2025, Kat Wong

Voters are being offered a better understanding of their medical bills, with a promise to improve transparency. [...] "The Albanese Labor government will help Australians find the best value when they need specialist medical advice and treatment," Health Minister Mark Butler said.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Women to save thousands of dollars a year as new fertility and endometriosis drugs listed on PBS

The Guardian, Other, 16/03/2025, Kate Lyons

New medications related to contraception, endometriosis and IVF will be subsidised on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) from 1 May, with some women expected to save thousands of

dollars each year. [...] "These listings covering IVF, endometriosis and contraception will improve the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of Australian women," said the health minister, Mark Butler.

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From a contraceptive to an IVF treatment: These women's health drugs will become cheaper

SBS, Other, 16/03/2025

A new treatment for a common painful condition and two other drugs will be made cheaper to improve access to treatment for Australian women. [...] Changes will 'improve quality of life' The listings would improve the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of Australian women, Health Minister Mark Butler said.

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Albanese government makes IVF and endometriosis treatments cheaper for women ahead of election

Sky News Australia, Other, 16/03/2025, Oscar Godsell

The Albanese government will make treatments for IVF and endometriosis cheaper as the government rolls out further female-focused policy heading into the election. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has announced new PBS listings for IVF and endometriosis treatments as shadow health minister Anne Ruston accuses the government of delaying the rollout for political gain.

[Read More](#)

Government to address new women's health benefits added to PBS

Sky News Australia, Other, 16/03/2025

The plan includes a new treatment for endometriosis as well as an additional contraceptive pill which will be added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. IVF treatment will also be made more affordable. Health Minister Mark Butler is expected to make a formal announcement on Sunday.

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Sky News Live, Danica and James, 16/03/2025, Danica De Giorgio and James Macpherson

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has expressed alarm about declining support for vaccinations. This comes as the number of people now in favour of childhood vaccinations has dropped from 72% in 2017 to just 50% in 2022.

[Play Now](#)

ABC, ABC News (Sunday), 16/03/2025, Jeremy Fernandez

Endometriosis medicine Ryeqo and contraceptive Slinda will be added to the PBS. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says these will benefit around 100,000 women. The announcement is part of Labor's \$573m women's health package. Shadow Health Minister Anne Ruston has commented on the announcement, saying they are keen to continue to prioritise women's health.

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Channel 7, Seven News at 5pm (Sunday), 16/03/2025, Angie Asimus

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has today announced new PBS listings, including contraceptive Slinda, and IVF injection and endometriosis treatment Ryeqo.

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Channel 9, Today on Sunday, 16/03/2025, Clint Stanaway and Alison Piotrowski

IVF medication will cost less under the federal government's bid to lower health care costs for women. Health Minister Mark Butler and Nationals Leader David Littleproud have spoken about the announcement on Weekend Today. The announcement is part of Labor's \$573m commitment towards women's health.

Also reported by: [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#).

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Channel 9, Today on Sunday, 16/03/2025

Panel discussion with Health Minister Mark Butler and Nationals leader David Littleproud. Butler and Littleproud discuss the Federal Government's announced health measures for women. Butler discusses the announcement, which includes cheaper medicines for endometriosis, and a third new contraceptive pill on the PBS. Littleproud comments on Opposition Leader Peter Dutton's record as former Health Minister.

Continuing panel discussion on: [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#).

[Play Now](#)

Channel 7, Weekend Sunrise, 16/03/2025, Monique Wright and David Woiod

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler about the Federal Government's new health announcement. He says Australia hasn't had a new endometriosis treatment on the PBS for three decades. He adds they hadn't had a new contraceptive pill on the PBS for three decades, or a new menopause treatment for two decades. Butler announces bigger support for women going through IVF.

Continuing interview on: [Channel 7 \(Sydney\)](#).

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Channel 7, Weekend Sunrise, 16/03/2025, Monique Wright and David Woiod

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has today announced the addition of an IVF drug, a contraceptive pill, and a treatment for endometriosis pain, to the PBS.

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Sky News Live, Sunday Edition, 16/03/2025, Tim Gilbert

The Federal Government is announcing several health initiatives, including a new endometriosis treatment and an additional contraceptive pill to be included to the PBS. IVF treatment will also be made more affordable. Health Minister Mark Butler will make a formal announcement today.

Also reported by: [Sky News Live \(Sydney\)](#).

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MINISTER WELLS

'Dignity, respect': How the new Aged Care Act will give mum and dad a voice

Canberra Times, Other, 16/03/2025, Anthony Caggiano and Desiree Savage

Aged care residents wanting to speak up or make a complaint will have more rights under the new Aged Care Act coming into play from July 2025. [...] Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells said the Statement "ensures you will always have the right to make decisions about your own care, including what kind of care you access, how it is delivered, who could advocate for you and financial matters relating to the cost of care."

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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DEPARTMENT

Taxpayers fund drag shows

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 17/03/2025, Angira Bharadwaj, Page 2

Millions of dollars of taxpayer cash has been spent on federal government grants, including \$1m for "decolonising breastfeeding", \$898,000 on creating an anti-racist dentistry curriculum and \$18,000 for a drag show for scientists. [...] 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: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

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VACCINES

ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 16/03/2025, Greg Jennett and Kathryn Robinson

Interview with Anthony Byrne, Head of the Long COVID Respiratory Clinic at Saint Vincent's Hospital. Byrne discusses long COVID, as well as measures taken to monitor Australians suffering from long COVID.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Cost of a comfortable life

West Australian, Business News, 17/03/2025, Daniel Newell, Page 40

Some seniors may still be feeling the financial strain, even as cost-of-living pressures abate, but most can hopefully breathe a sigh of relief now that the worst appears to be over. Those edging closer to retirement and planning to enjoy a so-called comfortable standard of living when they give up the daily grind will also be glad to hear their superannuation savings may stretch a little further.

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Aged care in crisis

Star Community, Other, 16/03/2025, 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. Gembrook resident Linda has spent two years searching for cleaning services for her elderly parents, yet the struggle continues.

[Read More](#)

Could police have overlooked another victim of aged care killer Garry Davis?

ABC Online, Other, 16/03/2025, Anne Connolly, Ninah Kopel, Gina McKeon and Echo Hui

An ABC investigation has revealed that police may have failed to identify another victim of convicted healthcare killer Garry Davis, who was found guilty of murdering two nursing home residents and attempting to kill a third by injecting them with lethal doses of insulin.

[Read More](#)

New aged care financial standards could stifle growth

Inside Ageing, Other, 16/03/2025, Amy Clarke

According to consultancy StewartBrown, a new set of financial and prudential standards proposed by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) could restrict investment and expansion in the aged care sector. In a submission responding to the Aged Care Financial and Prudential Standards 2025, StewartBrown raised concerns about strict new liquidity requirements that could force aged care providers to hold onto significantly more cash, limiting funds available for new developments.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Call to enforce NT pub bans

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 17/03/2025, Chris Burns, Page 7

Cross-border commissioner Ian Leavers would like Northern Territory pub bans enforced in Queensland to combat the scourge of alcohol and domestic violence abuse in Mount Isa. In his first committee briefing since his appointment six months ago, Mr Leavers said he was concerned about restricted Territorian residents gravitating to the remote mining capital to maintain their alcohol access.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#).

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Health trend could be causing more harm than good

NEWS.com.au, Other, 16/03/2025, Zac Turner

It's a trend that's taking off on social media and promises health benefits – but an Aussie doctor warns that all is not as it seems. A breakthrough heart surgery carried out in Australia has changed what medical experts now deem possible.

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How to use social media for health communication with young people

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 17/03/2025

With 82% of young people using social media for health information, it's increasingly important for health professionals to cut through online misinformation with reliable and appealing social media health communication for young people. The public's reliance on online sources like social media for health information is increasingly risky in the age of misinformation and misleading health claims from unreliable sources.

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The hidden consequences of car dependency on population health

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 17/03/2025

Australia's growing reliance on larger, heavier vehicles is significantly exacerbating road trauma and

accelerating climate change. Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs) and utes now dominate new car sales, increasing the risk of death per kilometre travelled while emitting four times more CO

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Government needs to give better support

Hobart Mercury, General News, 17/03/2025, Alison Lai, Page 19

With cancer diagnoses on the rise, the Cancer Council is pleading for help. There's no doubt that we're living in a time of uncertainty. Every day there are headlines reporting on a range of issues, particularly around the topic of finances, the cost of living and government budgets.

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'We don't want that for another family'

West Australian, General News, 17/03/2025, Rhianna Mitchell, Page 8

Ten years since the tragic whooping cough death of Riley Hughes his parents say record cases and vaccination distrust make them determined to keep fighting. It has been 10 years since Catherine and Greg Hughes last held their baby boy Riley, as he succumbed to whooping cough just 32 days after he was born.

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Stay up-to-date with your kidney health

Daily Advertiser, General News, 17/03/2025, Finn Coleman, Page 5

It was 30 years ago when Ann Breed was diagnosed with kidney disease, but that hasn't stopped her from living life. With so many risk factors for chronic kidney disease, Ms Breed and Wagga Base Hospital renal unit staff have encouraged the community to be up-to-date with kidney health checks.

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How two Aussie women turned a terrifying experience into a growing business

The Australian, Other, 16/03/2025, Holly Truelove

"How cool would it be if we created a product?" This was the question that began the small business journey for two Adelaide-based best friends. [...] Cancer epidemiologist and Cancer Council National Skin Cancer Committee chair Anne Cust said scalp melanomas were often detected at a later stage due to how hidden they could be, emphasising the importance of bringing attention to your scalp during routine skin checks.

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

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Relay of heroes in race to deliver lifesaving stem cells to Mia Preston in Brisbane

The Courier Mail, Other, 16/03/2025, Jackie Sinnerton

The frantic race to save 22-year-old Mia Preston seemed like a mission impossible, involving an epic 13,000km trek and a one-in-50-year cyclone. Months of preparation and precision timing to deliver stem cells from the US to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital for the leukaemia patient's "one chance at life" transplant were up-ended when Cyclone Alfred prevented the flight landing in Brisbane.

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PRIMARY CARE

Finocchiaro silence on VAD bid

Northern Territory News, General News, 17/03/2025, Fia Walsh and Taylor Mason, Page 3

A Northern Territory politician's plan to force the government into action on voluntary assisted dying has stalled, as the Chief Minister continues to resist pressure to bring the NT in line with the rest of the country. Independent member for Johnston Justine Davis last month gave notice she would call on the CLP to introduce voluntary assisted dying (VAD) laws; a motion originally expected to occur when parliament returns next week.

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Health hub vision

Burnie Advocate, General News, 17/03/2025, Sean Ford, Page 1

Burnie's abandoned utas campus could be set for a \$24 million redevelopment. Plans are afoot to transform the site into the Burnie Health Hub in two stages. The idea is to locate primary care, urgent care, mental health services, community services, pathology, imaging and a pharmacy at the one site.

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Green light

Daily Liberal, General News, 17/03/2025, Ciara Bastow, Page 1

Dubbo nurse Alice Mary Davies will be opening her own medical centre along Jubilee Street in South Dubbo. The development application for a medical centre at 79 Jubilee Street was approved by Dubbo Regional Council on February, 26, 2025.

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Repaired building torched in arson attack to house medical centre

Kalgoorlie Miner, General News, 17/03/2025, Neil Watkinson, Page 1

The Royal Flying Doctor Service is planning to operate a \$1.1 million medical centre with two permanent practitioners in Kalgoorlie's central business district. The centre will be on Egan Street in the building across the road from the Coles supermarket complex damaged in an arson attack in December 2022.

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'Life-saving, state-of-the-art ventilator' donated

Western Advocate, General News, 17/03/2025, Alise McIntosh, Page 3

Nineteen years ago, triplets Henry, Jasper and Evan were born extremely preterm at 24 weeks gestation. Despite enormous efforts to save their lives, none of them survived. "Henry lived for one hour, Evan lived for 10 days, and Jasper lived for 58 days," said the boys' mother, Sophie Smith.

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Virtual reality program hopes to turn the tide of violence in hospital EDs

ABC Online, Other, 16/03/2025

A man shouts at hospital staff, his aggression escalating as he waits for treatment. "I've f****n had enough," he rages. "You promised me I'd be out of here f****n ages ago." But it's not real. To be precise, it's virtual reality. This is a new program in Western Australia aiming to reverse rising violence in the health system by teaching trauma-informed care through simulated experiences.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Gaming addiction is a crisis

West Australian, General News, 17/03/2025, Andrew Leech, Page 42

Doctor, i don't know what to do any more." The mother sat across from me, exhaustion written all over her face. "My son just turned 12, and all he cares about is gaming. He doesn't eat properly, doesn't

sleep, and he's failing school. "If I try to take the laptop away, he screams and threatens to hurt himself. I feel like I've lost my child to a screen."

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Desperate bid for control

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 17/03/2025, Amy Bissett, Page 22

Katya Jaski set herself a goal during lockdown. Instead of wasting the long days in isolation, she was going to use the time to get fit and healthy. The first stop was TikTok. After searching through hashtags like #fitspo and #fitness, endless videos surfaced.

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The toll of health anxiety, and how Dr Google fuels 'cyberchondria'

ABC Online, Other, 16/03/2025, Shelby Traynor

When Emma Mannering was struggling with odd symptoms, she was dismissed as a hypochondriac. "I think people assumed I wanted attention. I did not want attention. I wanted the symptoms to go away," the 35-year-old says. Emma was in and out of doctors' offices with back pain, headaches, rashes and mouth ulcers. All tests came back normal.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

Nursing ambition

Courier Mail, General News, 17/03/2025, Jessica Wang, Page 15

Nurses and midwives want regulations changed to allow them to order diagnostic tests, issue referrals to specialists and prescribe certain medications, in a move peak bodies say would reduce waiting times and boost outcomes. The seven pre-election demands issued by the Alliance of the Nine Peaks also call for endorsed midwives to conduct preconception counselling, homebirths and general women's health consults, which would require a new item on the Medicare Benefit Schedule.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#).

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St John of God Subiaco: Retiring obstetricians add pressure to stretched hospital

West Australian, Other, 16/03/2025, Katie Hampson

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 Australia's 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 at Subiaco within months.

[Read More](#)

Mum reunites with premature baby after being separated due to ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred

ABC Online, Other, 16/03/2025, Janelle Miles and Sarah Richards

Mum Peta Blanch spent more than a week separated from her extremely premature baby Savannah amid the destruction left by ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. Ms Blanch and her partner Adrian Bowman, who live in Toowoomba, west of Brisbane, were reunited with their tiny daughter on Friday at the Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH) after floodwaters kept them apart.

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Lifeline counsellor quits with burnout

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 17/03/2025, Heath Forsyth, Page 2

After providing almost seven years of invaluable counselling services to the community both as a face-to-face counsellor and in a managerial capacity, Peter Barton has resigned from Lifeline, leaving the community without a vital face-to-face free counselling service. Until January this year, Mr Barton was the region's only remaining local Lifeline counsellor.

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Big legal play in NSW psychiatrist crisis

The Australian, Other, 17/03/2025, Steve Zemek

The doctor's union will enter mediation with the NSW government on Monday in a bid to end its wage dispute following the mass resignation of hundreds of psychiatrists earlier this year and what it calls a crisis crippling mental health services. The Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation (ASMOF) will on Monday take part in arbitration with the government at the NSW Industrial Relations Commission.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Four orthopaedic surgeons quit Canberra Hospital as contract talks continue

Canberra Times, Other, 16/03/2025, Jasper Lindell

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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Model reform just what the doctor ordered

CQ Today, Other, 16/03/2025

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. The forum, on Thursday 13 March, attracted more than 120 participants in person or online.

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Regional health experts gather in Nowra to improve rural care

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 16/03/2025, Glenn Ellard

How do regional communities receive the health services they need when many face shortages of healthcare professionals? That is one of the questions being addressed as leading healthcare professionals from across regional Australia gather in Nowra for the 2025 UOW Rural Health Research Conference at the Shoalhaven campus.

[Read More](#)

Gary Fahey (The critical need for male counsellors)

2GB, Other, 16/03/2025

Rev Bill Crews talks to leading crisis intervention specialist Gary Fahey, about that not only is there a shortage of counsellors and psychologists in Australia, there is an extreme shortage of high quality male mental health professionals.

[Read More](#)

Pharmacists key to reducing strain

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 16/03/2025, Megan Haggan

The WA government must commit to the statewide rollout of Partnered Pharmacist Medication Charting, say hospital pharmacists. Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has congratulated Western Australia's Cook Labor government, following its landslide re-election earlier this month.

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Concerning lack of cultural safety standards for international medical graduates regarding treating LGBTQI+ patients

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 17/03/2025

Australia and New Zealand's medical schools provide LGBTQI+ specific training in their curriculum, but international medical graduates may not have received such training, leaving LGBTQI+ patients vulnerable to discrimination during medical care. Culturally safe practice has had increasing emphasis in the delivery of health care over the last couple of decades and is a requirement for medical practice in Australia and New Zealand (Aotearoa).

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Paying less now for pills

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 17/03/2025, Page 7

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 as early as next month.

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'First of its kind' contraceptive pill to be subsidised by Australian government

9News, Other, 16/03/2025

The federal government will soon make an on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), saving users around \$50 for each prescription re-fill. Popular birth control choice Slinda will be subsidised by the government from May 1. It will cost \$7.70 for concession card holders or \$31.60 for general patients for a four-month supply, a significant cost reduction from the previous price of \$80 for a three-month prescription, saving women hundreds of dollars.

[Read More](#)

Next gen progestogen-only pill (POP) added to PBS

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 16/03/2025, Michael Post

Around 80,000 Australian women paying privately for the progestogen-only oral contraceptive Slinda (drospirenone 4mg) will be able to access the medicine under the PBS from 1 May.

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Channel 10, 10 News First (Weekend) , 16/03/2025, Chris Bath

A number of drugs aimed at improving women's health have been added to the PBS. The Federal Government denies the timing of the announcement has anything to do with the coming Federal Election.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

Low-income support card you probably don't know about

It's not only wealthy seniors who will benefit from the March 20 increase to Centrelink benefits. Families struggling to make ends meet may now qualify for a special concession card and Australians in receipt of allowance payments such as Jobseeker will also see a slight improvement.

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Greens leader Adam Bandt writes to PM pushing to 'Dutton-proof' key bulk billing, student debt initiatives ahead of election

Sky News Australia, Other, 16/03/2025, Laurence Karacsony

Greens leader Adam Bandt has offered the Labor government a political lifeline by calling for a major increase in spending and immediate legislation for key initiatives in return for the minor party's support on the measures ahead of the election. The Greens leader wrote to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Friday calling on the government to immediately slash student debt and triple the bulk-billing incentive, which Labor has committed \$8.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Bold decisions needed to curb NDIS growth: report

Australian Financial Review, General News, 17/03/2025, Tom McIlroy, Page 11

The federal government will struggle to constrain growth in the \$44 billion National Disability Insurance Scheme at below 8 per cent, with sign-up rates expected to increase and average payment costs surging, according to Grattan Institute research. Warni...

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

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Oh for a breath of fresh air

West Australian, General News, 17/03/2025, Andrew Miller, Page 13

I was stuck at the gate on a sardine plane, wearing an N95 mask to filter the stale expired air of 200 other sweaty, impatient humans. I bring a mask especially for those delays on the ground while the air-conditioning is feeble I don't have time to be sick. "Breathe!" my smartwatch demanded.

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Is it time to retire the label "CALD" in public health research and practice?

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 17/03/2025

In Australian public health research and practice, the label "culturally and linguistically diverse" (CALD) is used to encompass a diversity of birth countries, languages and cultures. This term is routinely used in public health to address diversity, to guide equitable access to health resources, and inform inclusive policies and programs. It influences how health research and services are designed and implemented.

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SPORT

Accursed rain sends Piastrì slip-sliding away

Australian Financial Review, General News, 17/03/2025, Tony Davis, Page 1

It was the moment Australian fans dreaded on a day of high Formula One drama. Melbourne's own Oscar Piastrì was challenging teammate Lando Norris for the lead when, on lap 45, the heavens opened.

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

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

Optus considers bundling sports streaming with mobiles

Australian Financial Review, Companies and Markets, 17/03/2025, Jenny Wiggins, Page 22

New Optus chief executive Stephen Rue says the company is considering bundling mobile phone plans with subscriptions to sports matches as he tries to win back disenchanted customers following the telecoms group's massive data breach and nationwide network...

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

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Team SA to snare Olympic 2032 joy

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 17/03/2025, Andrew Hough, Page 3

South Australia should "think big" and start planning for how the state can harness Olympics fever before the 2032 Brisbane summer games, the opposition says. The Liberal MP for Colton, Paralympian Matt Cowdrey, will today call for a specially formed bipartisan steering committee tasked with developing an Olympic and Paralympic "legacy".

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Cricketer was 'gem' of a bloke

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 17/03/2025, Darcy Fitzgerald and Isabel McMillan, Page 3

A cricketer who died during Saturday's extreme heat has been remembered by friends and teammates as a "devoted father" and "gem of a person". Junaid Zafar Khan collapsed while batting for Old Concordians LO5 against Prince Alfred Old Collegians at Concordia College, in Highgate, about 4pm.

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2032 tennis to stay in Qld

Courier Mail, General News, 17/03/2025, Hayden Johnson, Page 1

Premier David Crisafulli has hinted Olympic tennis will be held in Queensland amid reports a costly upgrade of the Tennyson complex would force the 2032 event to be shifted to Melbourne. The Courier-Mail revealed a \$113m upgrade of the Brisbane facility was needed to achieve a compromise plan with the International Tennis Federation with the Queensland Tennis Centre unable to deliver the traditional Olympic Games requirements of 10,000, 5000 and 3000 seat arenas.

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Race is on for planet, athletes say

Hobart Mercury, General News, 17/03/2025, Page 3

Just days before the International Olympic Committee elects a new president, more than 400 athletes have called on the future leader to strengthen its action for the environment. "To the incoming president, we ask that over the coming years and the course of your presidency one issue be above all others: the care of our planet," Olympic athletes including Australian swimmer Emma McKeon, British sailing great Ben Ainslie and Kenyan sprinter Ferdinand Omanyala said in a statement.

Also reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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Decision made on the future ownership of Dial Park

Launceston Examiner, General News, 17/03/2025, Tess Kelly, Page 3

Penguin's Dial Park will remain in the hands of the Central Coast Council following a decision from the

state government. Mayor Cheryl Fuller confirmed the news on Friday, March 14, and said she welcomed the clarity for the sports oval's ownership. "This is an exciting time for our region, which will benefit from the redevelopment of this important facility," she said.

Also reported by: [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#).

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Study finds teens don't fully understand risks of smoking

Geelong Times, Other, 17/03/2025, James Taylor

A new research paper from the Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer (CBRC) at Cancer Council Victoria has shown gaps in teenagers' understanding of the harms of smoking. Quit and Cancer Council Victoria are particularly concerned about findings in the paper, published this month in peer-reviewed journal Tobacco Control, about how adolescents who are more susceptible to smoking were less likely to understand that smoking causes a range of diseases and that smoking spreads toxic chemicals all around the body.

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EU pivot urged after US' uni edict

Australian Financial Review, General News, 17/03/2025, Julie Hare, Page 1

Australia's leading scientists are urging the Albanese government to sign up to a European collaborative research fund because they fear the Trump administration's attempts to influence what is researched and by whom, and a possible collapse in ...

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

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The debilitating cost of living with body dysmorphia

Age, General News, 17/03/2025, Broede Carmody, Page 2

People with severe body image distress also struggle with decision making, planning and short-term memory, new research has shown, in revelations expected to shake up how the disorder is treated. Researchers at Swinburne University's Centre for Mental Health recently sought to establish the depth of processing difficulties experienced by people living with body dysmorphia.

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Artificial heart start-up rattles the tin for \$100m

Australian Financial Review, Companies and Markets, 17/03/2025, Michael Smith, Page 19

The medical technology firm behind the world's first artificial titanium heart is raising \$100 million, which it will use to fund trials that could ultimately see its device implanted into tens of thousands of people within years. BiVACOR's artificial hea...

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

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Improving treatment for those living with anxiety

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 17/03/2025

The Living with Anxiety study aims to identify genes that influence a person's risk of developing anxiety disorders and genes that impact how well treatments for anxiety work. Anxiety disorders are the most common mental problems in Australia, with 1 in 6 adults experiencing an anxiety disorder in any given year.

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Gap still getting wider in key areas

Northern Territory News, General News, 17/03/2025, Fia Walsh, Page 7

New Closing the Gap data that shows key targets continuing to go backwards must be "a wake-up call to all governments", the peak body representing Indigenous children says. The latest update of the Productivity Commission's Closing the Gap Dashboard, which measures progress towards the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, has added a new year of data for eight of the 19 targets and 15 of the supporting indicators.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#).

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How an investigation into one woman's death uncovered five more – and a tragedy on a national scale

Northern Territory News, Other, 16/03/2025, Douglas Smith, Kathryn Bermingham, Emily Olle and Gemma Jones

"If you think it's hard being a white woman in Australia," Courtney Hunter-Hebberman said, "try being a black woman." The clattering of chairs and clinking of glasses stopped, and the marquee fell silent. Hundreds of guests at long tables swung around to see Courtney, up on the stage at the lectern.

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INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

Warning on encephalitis

Courier Mail, General News, 17/03/2025, Ria Pandey, Page 9

The potentially deadly mosquito-borne virus Japanese encephalitis has been detected in Brisbane for the first time. The case was detected at Hemmant in the city's east on Friday. Health authorities are now warning Queenslanders to take extra precautions against mosquito bites, particularly in the wake of flooding following ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#).

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Warning as measles cases rise

Hobart Mercury, General News, 17/03/2025, Page 13

Health authorities have warned residents in Melbourne and Sydney to remain cautious after multiple cases of the same infectious disease were detected in the capital cities. In Victoria, five new measles cases were reported by the state's health authority.

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

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Thirteen workers on tunnelling projects in Sydney diagnosed with deadly silicosis

ABC Online, Other, 16/03/2025, Nick Dole

A 32-year old is among 13 workers on a troubled Sydney tunnelling project who have been diagnosed with silicosis, triggering an investigation by the state's workplace regulator. Documents submitted to NSW parliament show the government was notified of one case in 2023, involving a worker on stage one of the M6 tunnelling project between Arncliffe and Kogarah.

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The tale of the travelling tick

A globe-trotting patient becomes a diagnostic challenge when a tick is discovered during an outback adventure. A Lessons from Practice case study published this week in the Medical Journal of Australia shares an unusual case of tick-borne illness discovered in a patient on vacation in the Northern Territory.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 16/03/2025, Greg Jennett and Kathryn Robinson

Health authorities have confirmed the first case of Japanese encephalitis virus in Brisbane. Queensland Health has warned of increased risk of human exposure following the flooding caused by ex-cyclone Alfred.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Ozempic can cost almost \$2,000 a year. Australia's peak medical body says it should be on the PBS for weight loss

The Guardian, Other, 16/03/2025, Sarah Basford Canales and Natasha May

Jen* recalls her first time taking Ozempic. She says it was like flipping a switch on the food noise inside her head. [...] In December, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) granted approval for Wegovy to be used as a complementary therapy for adults with both cardiovascular disease and high body mass index to reduce the related heart attack, stroke or death risks.

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Dietitians push nutrition as weight loss drugs surge

HealthTimes, Other, 16/03/2025

Australian doctors who prescribe weight-loss drugs such as Ozempic should be obliged to refer the patient to dietitians at the same time, the nutrition industry's peak body says. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration advised that Ozempic supply would be limited in 2025 due to high demand sparked by viral videos about people using it to achieve rapid weight loss.

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