



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 1st May 2025

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **The Australian** (page 1) reports the Australian Association of Practice Management has described Labor's Medicare bulk-billing promise as "smoke and mirrors" though Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the policy's modelling was based on the earnings calculator provided by General Practice Registrars Australia and that about three-quarters of practices would be better off after November 1.
- The **Australian Financial Review** (page 36) reports Labor's focus on Medicare this election campaign has resonated with voters, with negative comments the best received, such as when Health Minister Mark Butler said the Coalition will make patients pay to use the government's urgent care clinics after his opponent couldn't confirm a bulk-bill policy at the urgent care clinics wouldn't continue.
- The **Daily Telegraph** (page 14) leads News Corp coverage reporting Australian researchers have developed a chatbot to help chronic-pain sufferers manage their symptoms, with the results of a trial of 60 patients to be released at a major international meeting today.
- The **Daily Telegraph** (Online) reports a spike in flu cases and the emergence of a new COVID-19 variant is causing experts around the country to advise patients to have their booster vaccinations.

- The [Daily Telegraph](#) (Online) reports an anonymous SA Government survey of its doctors highlighting "deep-rooted cultural elements" for the expectation that doctors work while sick or sleep-deprived.
- [9News](#) reports Researchers at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute are undertaking a world-first trial to tailor bowel cancer treatments for patients, with the treatment using 3D-printed "tumour organoids" to assess which treatments work best on each individual.

MINISTER BUTLER

Bulk bill 'smoke and mirrors'

The Australian, General News, 01/05/2025, Natasha Robinson and James Dowling, Page 1

Labor's centrepiece Medicare policy promising most patients will be able to see a doctor for free has been described as "smoke and mirrors" by the national association of general practice management, as Anthony Albanese suggests some doctors have a vested interest in raising questions about his bulk-billing plan. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the modelling was based on the earnings calculator provided by General Practice Registrars Australia and about three-quarters of practices would be better off after November 1.

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

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

Card-carrying PM reopens a Coalition wound

Australian Financial Review, General News, 01/05/2025, Michael Smith, Page 36

Anthony Albanese's Medicare card has been Labor's top prop on the election campaign trail. [...] They are privately annoyed Health Minister Mark Butler has highlighted how much they earn in a bid to sell the policy.

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

What Indigenous policies are the major parties taking to the election?

SBS, Other, 30/04/2025, Cameron Gooley

With First Nations issues not playing a major role in the election campaign, we've taken a look at what mob can expect from the major parties after polling day. With the federal election campaign dominated by voters' concerns over health, energy prices and the cost of living, [...] As part of a promise to invest \$1 billion into mental health services, Health Minister Mark Butler confirmed two new Headspace services would be launched in remote communities.

[Read More](#)

Labor commits to Healthdirect expansion

Ocean Grove Voice, Other, 30/04/2025

Labor has announced it will undertake a \$200-million expansion and rebranding of Australia's national telehealth advice service if re-elected to government. [...] The GP telehealth service is not intended to replace existing primary care, but to provide urgent assistance when a regular GP is not available, Health Minister Mark Butler said.

[Read More](#)

'Free GP visits': win votes, break general practice

The Medical Republic, Other, 30/04/2025

The federal election is fast approaching, and the big political parties are dusting off a familiar promise: "free GP visits" under Medicare. [...] In his recent pre-election speeches, health minister Mark Butler has referenced the civil conscription clause, highlighting its role in shaping Medicare policies.

[Read More](#)

ABC Northern Tasmania, Drive, 30/04/2025, Evan Wallace

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler on Labor's health priorities if re-elected. Butler says

they want more doctors and nurses in the system to meet the needs of a growing, ageing, and slightly sicker population. He says increasing bulk billing, urgent care clinics, and access to cheaper medicines will help people get care when and where they need it. Butler also says he wants to properly establish the 87 urgent care clinics already delivered and add 50 more.

Interview continues on: [ABC Northern Tasmania \(Launceston\)](#).

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4CA AM, Breakfast, 30/04/2025, Murray Jones

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Butler states their whole approach in health has been to make it easier and cheaper to see a doctor or a nurse. He adds they're training more doctors, trying to increase the bulk billing rates, or rolling out new models of care like urgent care clinics. Butler says the latest measure is about making sure that people always have access to the best possible health advice and they know where to go if they need to go somewhere.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Adelaide, Breakfast, 30/04/2025, Sonya Feldhoff and Jules Schiller

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Butler states a majority Labor Government that can continue to do the work that it's been doing over the last three years by strengthening Medicare, delivering targeted cost of living relief, and getting inflation and other economic headwinds under control. He adds he is really proud of what they're doing to strengthen Medicare, to deliver more doctors, more bulk billing, more urgent care clinics and cheaper medicines and they have strong plan to continue that important work.

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ABC Radio Canberra, AM, 30/04/2025, Sabra Lane

Federal Health Health Minister Mark Butler has acknowledged the health system is under pressure and says long specialist wait times and skyrocketing non-GP specialist fees will be a top priority for Labor if it wins Government. Shadow Health Minister Anne Ruston says the Coalition will ensure all Australians have have timely access to healthcare if elected.

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MINISTER WELLS

Ruston and Wells address providers

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 30/04/2025, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Anne Ruston used the Invox National Support at Home conference to try and convince providers the Liberal Party will reduce wait times and be more receptive of sector needs, while Anika Wells reiterated Labor's action on and commitment to aged care.

[Read More](#)

Ageing Australia: new CHSP agreements could still leave older Australians without care

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2025, Caroline Egan

The peak body for aged care providers has welcomed Government assurances that Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) customers will have 12 months to enter into new service agreements, but says the surprise new requirement should be waived for very small providers and simplified for older Australians receiving a small number of services. [...] In response, the Minister for Aged Care Anika Wells said providers will have up to 12 months to enter new service agreements if Labor is returned to power.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

NBN Central Coast, NBN News, 30/04/2025, Gavin Morris and Natasha Beyersdorf

Housing, health care and cost of living relief are key concerns for voters in Dobell ahead of the federal election. Federal Member for Dobell Emma McBride says she is focusing on improving health care access through a new Medicare urgent care clinic in Lake Haven and a mental health centre in Tuggerah.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

Residential eating disorder treatment centre is a Victorian first

Hospital and Healthcare, Other, 30/04/2025

A treatment centre in Armadale is now complete. The 12-bed centre will be operated by Alfred Health and offer a unique 24/7 residential model of care for Victorians aged 18 and over in a therapeutic, home-like environment. [...] "Eating disorders are complex, with a range of risks and physical complications that make recovery difficult — Ngamai Wilam will transform the way care is delivered and the Albanese Labor government is proud to help deliver it," Federal Assistant Minister for Health Ged Kearney said.

[Read More](#)

April 30th, 2025 State's first eating disorder treatment centre opens

The Local Australia, Other, 30/04/2025, Eve Lamb

The state's first public residential eating disorder treatment centre is now complete. The state's first public residential eating disorder treatment centre is now complete. Victorian Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt and Federal Assistant Minister for Health Ged Kearney this week opened the new centre which is named Ngamai Wilam and located at Armadale.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER THWAITES

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Why 1800 Medicare is bigger than many think

The Medical Republic, Other, 30/04/2025, Jeremy Knibbs

An election promise of \$204m for 1800 Medicare might easily have more long-term system impact than the \$8.5bn promised for bulk billing incentives. Here's why. [...] Not the government, which gave pretty scant detail on what the announcement really meant, not the Department of Health and Aged Care, which isn't able to speak in caretaker mode but which would be behind the idea, and surprisingly, not even Healthdirect, which learnt about the new policy the way the rest of us did, in Sunday morning's breaking election media stories.

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Consultants paid nearly \$30K per day to operate My Aged Care

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2025, Caroline Egan

The Department of Health and Aged Care has awarded digital consultants Liquid Interactive a \$2.9 million extension on its contract to "operate and enhance" My Aged Care, the consumer portal for aged care services, making the total contract worth \$26.5 million. Of the extension, \$1.7 million is to support the continued operation, maintenance, and enhancement of My Aged Care from 1 July 2025 for 12 months.

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VACCINES

Aussies urged to get Covid, flu jabs this winter amid fears of new variant

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2025

Experts are urging Australians to get vaccinated before winter to protect themselves and their families, amid fears cases of Covid and other illnesses could spike. Reports of Covid variant LP.8.1, a descendant of the Omicron variant, being on the rise in Australia have emerged in recent weeks, with The Conversation reporting it was behind close to one in five cases in NSW earlier this month.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Protect asthma patients from flu

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 30/04/2025

The National Asthma Council Australia (NAC) and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) are urging health professionals to talk to their asthma patients about why they need to get the flu vaccine without delay. Predictions of a horror flu season for 2025 have made this even more critical, with between 60-70 per cent of asthma attacks due to viral infections such as the common cold or influenza.

[Read More](#)

Flu vax urged for asthma patients ahead of severe winter season

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 30/04/2025

Health professionals are being urged to speak with their asthma patients about getting their influenza vaccine without delay, amid warnings of a potential early and severe flu season. The National Asthma Council Australia (NAC) and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) have issued a joint call to action, highlight the risk that influenza poses to those with asthma.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Retirement villages can be a one-stop continuum-of-care shop

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 30/04/2025, Natasha Egan

Retirement villages are uniquely positioned to transform into a one-stop shop on the continuum of care so older Australians can keep ageing in place and ageing well, says Retirement Living Council executive director Daniel Gannon. "This is crucial as significant demographic changes sweep across Australia – our country is ageing rapidly, and the appropriate systems, facilities and infrastructure must be in place to meet this need."

[Read More](#)

Aged care more than transactions, says Fitzgerald

Mary Patetsos and Robert Fitzgerald delivered a clear message on day one of the Invox National Support at Home conference – the aged care sector needs to properly value its workers. Speaking on the panel for creating a more inclusive aged care system, Age Discrimination Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald urged providers attending the Invox National Support at Home conference to prioritise relationship-centred care as it implements the 1 July reforms and avoid falling into the same trappings the National Disability Insurance Scheme did.

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Struggling to cope with the stress of aged care? Check out our hints, tips

The Senior, Other, 30/04/2025, Tom O Callaghan

So your adult children are badgering you about aged care Here's some tips to get those ungrateful gold diggers off your back before you face your own mortality: How can I ignore them? It's a free country, of course, and putting those conversations off might make you feel like you're not burdening anyone.

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“Cut red tape in aged care,” urges St Basil's NSW/ACT CEO Diana Horvatovic

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2025, Caroline Egan

The CEO of the Sydney-based Not For Profit has called for a significant overhaul in aged care, arguing that reducing "bureaucratic red tape and regulatory burdens" would allow providers to shift focus from administrative and financial obstacles to delivering higher standards of care for older Australians.

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“Bureaucracy over care”: Sasha Andrews urges aged care policy pause

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2025, Lauren Broomham

Sasha Andrews, CEO of NSW Mid North Coast stand-alone provider Woolgoolga & District Retirement Village (WDRV), is calling for a major overhaul in aged care policy, warning that current reforms are prioritising bureaucracy over the actual needs of residents. In her contribution to The Weekly SOURCE's Federal Election wishlist series, Sasha urges whichever party forms Government to delay the new Aged Care Act set to commence on 1 July 2025.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Prem impact in lockdown

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 01/05/2025, Page 5

Australia had fewer pre-term births during Covid lockdowns than before the pandemic, according to UK researchers, who say that was also the case for high-income countries in Europe. Queen Mary University researchers compiled studies from high-income countries looking at outcomes during lockdowns when access to prenatal care was disrupted.

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

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Nearly \$2m in vapes, illicit tobacco seized, two NSW men charged after truck pulled over at Port Augusta

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2025, Agnes Gichuhi

Two men have been arrested after vapes and illegal tobacco worth millions was seized by police in a traffic stop at Port Augusta last week. Police pulled over a refrigerated truck during a drug transit route operation at Port Augusta about 4.30pm on April 25.

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

22-year-old Sydney woman's life 'ruined' by two men on night out

The Courier Mail, Other, 30/04/2025, Rebekah Scanlan

Sexual, domestic and family violence recovery service 'Full Stop Australia' is marking 50 years since its establishment. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare states that the rates of reporting sexual violence, such as sexual assault have historically been impacted by a range of factors including misconceptions about what constitutes sexual assault; mistrust of police and concerns relating to being believed and having to relive the experience.

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Help, I'm in a bot of pain

Daily Telegraph, General News, 01/05/2025, Page 14

A chatbot named Dolores is helping Australians with chronic pain self-manage their symptoms. Developed by Australian researchers, the results of a pilot study investigating its potential will be presented on Friday at a major international scientific meeting.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#).

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Keep eye on the balls

Courier Mail, General News, 01/05/2025, Page 21

With the incidence of testicular cancer on the rise, the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand is urging men to take 60 seconds and self-check themselves, as it could save their life. "Young men, particularly in their 20s to 30s are at a higher risk of being diagnosed with testicular cancer, which is highly treatable if caught early," oncology specialist Weranja Ranasinghe said.

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World-first trial could revolutionise treatment for second deadliest cancer in Australia

9News, Other, 30/04/2025

A world first trial being held in Melbourne could revolutionise bowel cancer treatment globally. Researchers at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute (WEHI) are leading the landmark study which aims to tailor treatment to patients and improve broader outcomes for multiple cancers within our lifetime.

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People who smoke weed 20 times more likely to die from colon cancer, says shock study

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 30/04/2025

Smoking weed has been linked to colon cancer, one of the fastest-growing cancers, according to a shock new study. Consuming cannabis nearly every day increased the risk of dying from colon cancer by up to 20-fold, the research found.

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Be vigilant: Stealthy heart disease can be treated without major surgery but it's going undetected

The Australian, Other, 30/04/2025, James Dowling

The Australian pioneer of keyhole heart valve surgeries is raising the alarm on an increase in cardiac issues as Heart Valve Disease (HVD) cases avoid scrutiny, while many patients are unaware of its

risks. [...] Heart Foundation chief medical officer Garry Jennings said Australia's ageing population and rising medical vigilance had contributed to an increasing rate of HVD diagnosis.

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PRIMARY CARE

I feared delays would be fatal

Daily Telegraph, General News, 01/05/2025, Shannon Tonkin and Rory Williams, Page 10

A highly decorated NSW paramedic feared patients were dying inside Westfield Bondi Junction while he was forced to wait outside under a direct order from his employer, an inquest has heard. Critical care paramedic Chris Wilkinson was openly critical of NSW Ambulance while giving evidence on Wednesday at the inquest into Joel Cauchi's murderous rampage on April 13, 2024.

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Ambulance Victoria set to reveal new boss amid revelations of second illegal COVID gathering

9News, Other, 30/04/2025, Eleanor Wilson

Ambulance Victoria is set to reveal a new boss, more than eight months after the former chief executive departed the role. 9News understands the current head of Ambulance Tasmania, Jordan Emery, will take on the role of chief executive.

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Australian Medical Association criticises parties for failing to get creative for long-term Medicare reform

West Australian, Other, 01/05/2025, Hannah Cross

The Australian Medical Association has issued a report card to the major parties ahead of the Federal election, chiding them for a lack of creativity to reform an out-of-date Medicare system. The AMA 2025 Federal Election Health Report Card assessed the health policy promises of Labor, the Coalition and The Greens against its own policy wish-list, with clear indications the AMA found the major parties' proposals lacklustre.

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Australia caught napping on sleep policy

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 30/04/2025, Jo Roberts

A new report says Australia has been caught napping on a national sleep health policy. It's been called 'a silent public health crisis' that remains overlooked in national policy. Yet most of us spend a third of our lives doing it – and, for two out of five of us, not well.

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ABC, 7:30, 30/04/2025, Sarah Ferguson

Report by former ABC chief foreign correspondent Philip Williams on the shortage of medical services in remote Far North Qld. Dr Desmond Hill, aged 68, runs the only private medical practice in Cooktown and covers the surrounding areas stretching up to 700km. If he retires without someone to take over his practice, he says the region will be left without a GP.

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ABC News, ABC National News, 30/04/2025, Kathryn Robinson

Critical care paramedic Christopher Wilkinson describes his frustration and uncertainty during the Bondi Junction stabbings. The inquest hears that communication between emergency agencies was delayed and unclear. NSW Ambulance Assistant Commissioner Brett Armitage says better coordination between police and ambulance commands is a key lesson.

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

Channel 10, 10 News First, 30/04/2025, Sandra Sully

Health officials are examining the failure of the REACH program following the death of two-year-old Joe Massa at Northern Beaches Hospital. The program was designed to improve patient safety by listening to concerns before a situation becomes critical.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 30/04/2025, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson

Critical care paramedic Chris Wilkinson says he feels frustrated and inadequate after being forced to wait outside during the Bondi Junction attack. After police confirmed there was no second attacker, NSW Ambulance Assistant Commissioner Brett Armitage still declared the area a hot zone. The inquest hears that the declaration did not affect patient outcomes.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 30/04/2025, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Ambulance Victoria appoints a new CEO after more than eight months without a permanent leader. Jordan Emery, currently leading Tasmania's ambulance service, is stepping in during a challenging period following revelations of staff breaching COVID-19 rules.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 30/04/2025, Peter Overton

Critical care paramedic Christopher Wilkinson expressed his fear that people were dying at Bondi Junction while NSW Ambulance instructed crews to stay outside. The declaration was made due to concerns of a second armed offender, but police had already confirmed that attacker Joel Cauchi acted alone.

Similar coverage reported by: [Channel 9 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Perth\)](#).

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SBS, World News Australia, 30/04/2025, Janice Petersen

Specialist paramedic Christopher Wilkinson says he felt frustrated when responders were held back from entering Westfield Bondi Junction after the April stabbing. A coronial inquest hears that confusion followed Joel Cauchi's attack, and that the hot zone declaration would not have impacted clinical outcomes. NSW Ambulance Assistant Commissioner Brett Armitage has suggested emergency services should share a command post for seamless communication.

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Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 30/04/2025, Ashleigh Gillon

An inquest into the Bondi Junction stabbings hears that paramedics were held back because police suspected a second offender. Critical care paramedic Christopher Wilkinson says delays in access could have risked lives. He also calls for changes to the NSW Ambulance approach.

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Sky News Regional, Breakfast, 30/04/2025, Jaynie Seal

Interview with Nationals Leader David Littleproud on their rural health policy and concerns over funding gaps between regional and metropolitan areas. Littleproud says the Nationals want to go further by investing an extra \$100m from the Regional Australia Future Fund to train local health professionals in rural areas. He adds that they want a fairer share of export earnings to fund healthcare training and improve services in the regions.

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Sky News Regional, Breakfast, 30/04/2025, Jaynie Seal

Interview with National Rural Health Alliance CEO Susi Tegen on the ongoing health funding gap faced by regional and rural Australia. Tegen says the findings from the AMA survey are confronting and show the situation is worsening for rural communities and healthcare providers. She says that healthcare workers in regional areas are not being supported to deliver proper care and that rural Australians remain disadvantaged. Tegen adds that bulk billing and other urban-based policies do not work in communities without basic infrastructure or where service delivery costs more.

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Evenings, 30/04/2025, Spence Denny

There have been emotional scenes in Sydney after a roundtable on the REACH system, which helps families raise concerns about medical care in public hospitals. The meeting focuses on improving the program after the deaths of toddler Joe Massa and six-month-old Kyran Day. Joe Massa's mother, Elouise Massa, says strengthening the system is key to preventing similar tragedies.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 30/04/2025, Chris Bath and Dom Knight

Bath is joined by ABC court reporter Jamie McKinnell. McKinnell says paramedic Christopher Wilkinson tells the inquest he feels it took too long to decide if paramedics could enter or exit Bondi Junction, raising concerns about poor inter-agency communication. NSW Ambulance Assistant Commissioner Brett Armitage tells the court the hot zone should have been downgraded, adding that police and ambulance commands should be located together.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

International students in Australia have poorer mental health than many of their domestic peers

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2025, Anastasia Safioleas and Bronwen O'Shea

When Samreen Tanveer left Dhaka, in Bangladesh, for Sydney, nothing had prepared her for life in a foreign country so unlike her own. [...] International students experience several mental health issues, including higher levels of anxiety compared to their domestic counterparts, according to the findings published in the Journal of Mental Health

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Mental health fix 'mad'

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/05/2025, Rob Inglis, Page 16

A move to privatise a state-run mental health facility in Hobart's Northern Suburbs has provoked fury among the workforce, leading staff to a stop-work protest against the Rockliff government's plan. Services at the 12-bed Tolosa Street Adult Mental Health Service, managed by the Department of Health, are to be transferred to a new facility run by not-for-profit mental health carer Richmond Futures.

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Explosive secret SA Health Doctors Wellbeing Report lays bare a culture of stress for doctors

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2025, Brad Crouch

Doctors are expected to work regardless of illness or fatigue, resulting in medical errors, and those who object are labelled "weak" a confidential government report shows. "The explosive official Doctors Wellbeing Report says healthcare workers have "markedly high rates of poor wellbeing" and warns of "deep-rooted cultural elements."

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#),

[Read More](#)

Psychiatrists warn new mental health unit at Westmead could be an 'empty shell' as workforce dispute drags on

The Guardian, Other, 30/04/2025, Natasha May

Construction of a new mental health facility set to become the largest in New South Wales began on Wednesday in western Sydney, but psychiatrists say it will be an "empty shell" until the issues within the state's workforce are resolved. The peak body for psychiatrists has said the \$540m Westmead integrated mental health complex is likely to suffer the same fate as several recently opened facilities in western Sydney, which are only able to operate at less than half the available beds due to lack of staff.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

PBS-backed esketamine rolls out for depression with S8 controls

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 30/04/2025, Chloe Hava

From 1 May, Spravato (esketamine) will be subsidised under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) for adults with treatment-resistant depression, intended for use alongside a newly initiated oral antidepressant. Up to 30,000 Australians are anticipated to access esketamine via the PBS, paying only \$7.70 per dose with a pensioner or concession card, or \$31.60 per dose for general patients.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

3AW, Drive, 30/04/2025, Jacqui Felgate

Interview with NBN media and external communications general manager Jane McNamara on the NBN's impact on health outcomes through telehealth. McNamara says 77 per cent of users who access telehealth or online medical information via the NBN report improved health outcomes. She stresses telehealth's lasting impact and explains that metro GPs increasingly offer telehealth as a more efficient and timely option for medical advice.

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4BC, Drive, 30/04/2025, Gary Hardgrave

Interview with NBN media and external communications general manager Jane McNamara on the NBN's impact on health outcomes through telehealth. Hardgrave says new research from NBN shows how the network is changing lives across health, work, education, and social connection. McNamara says 77 per cent of NBN users access telehealth or online medical resources, which has positively impacted health and wellbeing outcomes.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Abuse rap doc bailed

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/05/2025, Duncan Abey, Page 6

A 64-year-old former medical practitioner who was last week extradited from New South Wales to Tasmania on historical sex charges, including child sexual abuse, has been released on bail by a Hobart magistrate. Michael Antony Welch first appeared in court during a special sitting on the Anzac Day public holiday, when he did not apply for bail and was remanded in custody by a Justice of the Peace.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Tribunal suspends Gold Coast dentist Amer Patel for supervision breach

The Courier Mail, Other, 30/04/2025, Judith Kerr

A Gold Coast dentist has been fined \$30,000 and suspended for eight months after Queensland's Civil and Administrative Tribunal found he had engaged in professional misconduct, broke strict registration rules and gave false information to regulators. Dr Amer Patel, 36, was reprimanded and sanctioned after admitting to hundreds of breaches of conditions imposed by the Dental Board of Australia starting in June 2021.

[Read More](#)

Warning letters on the way for overseas MBS claims

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 30/04/2025, Morgan Liotta

More than 5000 GPs are set to receive the letter, after the DoHAC listed overseas claiming as one of its compliance priorities for 2025. The Department of Health and Aged Care says a compliance priority for this year is ensuring providers only claim for MBS services rendered within Australia.

[Read More](#)

DoHAC puts 5800 GPs on its naughty list

The Medical Republic, Other, 30/04/2025, Holly Payne

Medicare will be contacting roughly 5800 GPs that it suspects of having billed to Medicare while not physically in the country, The Medical Republic can confirm. The compliance letters are set to be mailed out in mid-May and will encourage recipients to review their billing practices and return any incorrectly received Medicare benefits.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

4BC, Drive, 30/04/2025, Gary Hardgrave

Interview with University of Queensland Associate Professor in Medicine Paul Griffin on the rise in STIs across Australia. Hardgrave notes that 277 out of 311 locations are reporting increases in syphilis, and health experts link the rise to a belief that STIs are easily curable. Griffin says the consequences of STIs can be severe and stresses the need for better education.

Interview continues on: [4BC \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Brisbane 2032 Olympics: Big names facing axe from Games board

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2025, Taylah Fellows

Some of Queensland's biggest names are set to be axed from the organising committee for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympics. Nine of the coveted positions on the powerful committee will say goodbye under legislative changes to slash the number of directors from 24 to 15 in response to a recommendation in the government's 100-day Olympic review.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Neuroscientist's grave warning about Australia's newest combat sport sweeping the country

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2025, News.com.au

[...] However, in recent months two groups known as 'Run it Straight Official' and 'RUNIT Championship League' have turned the trend into a business, with the latter taking it a step further by holding an inaugural competition on Wednesday with \$4000 going to the winner. But while on the surface it all might seem like all fun and laughs, leading Australian sports neuroscientist Dr Alan Pearce found it almightily troubling, telling news.com.au that participants need to understand they are likely shortening their lives every time they 'run it straight'.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Common household item causing death

The Courier Mail, Other, 30/04/2025, Mia Erickson

A new study has linked 13 per cent of heart disease mortalities that are likely to be caused by this simple item found in every household. Regardless of how many chic glass containers or ceramic dining plates you invest in, there's no escaping the convenience – and prevalence – of plastic. [...] According to a new study published in Lancet eBio Medicine, more than 350,000 deaths in one year alone can be attributed to these chemicals – a worrying finding considering the prevalence of plastic products in modern-day life.

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Florida to become second state to ban fluoride in water, alarming experts

The Guardian, Other, 30/04/2025, Jessica Glenza

Florida is poised to become the second state to ban fluoride in public drinking water despite concerns of dentists and public health advocates who say the mineral is a safe, effective way to protect people of all ages from developing cavities.

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Exercise can counter side-effects of cancer treatment, biggest review of its kind shows

The Guardian, Other, 30/04/2025, Andrew Gregory

Exercise can counter the detrimental effects of cancer treatment, according to the most comprehensive review of its kind. Several studies have evaluated how physical activity affects the health outcomes of patients with the disease, but significant gaps in the evidence have remained until now.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 30/04/2025, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Researchers at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute in Melbourne are running a world-first trial on bowel cancer. They create miniature versions of patients' tumours from biopsies and test treatments on them. The goal is to offer tailored treatment for bowel cancer within a few years.

Also reported by: [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Adelaide\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Perth\)](#).

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6PR, Drive, 30/04/2025, Oliver Peterson

Interview with ECU senior research fellow Dr Marc Sim on a new machine algorithm that identifies cardiovascular risk. Sim explains they use a bone density machine, normally for osteoporosis screening, to scan the spine. From this scan, they can also assess the abdominal aorta for signs of vascular calcification. This allows early identification of people at risk of cardiovascular disease as part of routine fracture screening.

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6PR, Drive, 30/04/2025, Oliver Peterson

Interview with Flinders University senior research fellow Dr Hannah Scott on a new research highlighting how poor sleep remains overlooked in national health policy. Scott says they are calling on the federal government to prioritise sleep health. She notes that, unlike nutrition and physical activity, sleep does not receive enough attention despite its importance for wellbeing.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Social workers urged to implement Aboriginal cultural practises in First Nations communities

National Indigenous Times, Other, 30/04/2025, Callan Morse

A new study recommends social workers in First Nations communities incorporate Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing at the heart of their supervision practices on Country. Published in Australian Social Work, the University of South Australia (UniSA) study suggests traditional western approaches to supervision often fail to acknowledge the lived experience of Aboriginal workers or the intergenerational trauma stemming from colonisation.

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New program to support healing and recovery from family, domestic and sexual violence in the Big Rivers region

National Indigenous Times, Other, 30/04/2025, Giovanni Torre

Katherine West Health Board, in partnership with Wurli-Wurlinjang Health Service, Sunrise Health Service and NT Health, will soon accept referrals to their pilot program to support women and children across the Big Rivers region to heal and recover from family, domestic and sexual violence.

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New hand-painted state-of-the-art CT scanner unveiled in Kalgoorlie-Boulder

West Australian, Other, 01/05/2025, Jessica Antoniou Kalgoorlie

An imaging service in Kalgoorlie-Boulder has installed the region's first state-of-the-art CT scanner — hand-painted with Aboriginal art — offering a wider range of medical support to regional communities for the first time. Spartan First Imaging is Australia's only Indigenous co-owned medical imaging provider and has recently received a new SOMATOM go.

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INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

4BC, Afternoons, 30/04/2025, Sofie Formica

Regular Segment: Wednesday Wellness with Haan Health co-owner and principal general practitioner Dr Sonu Haikerwal discussing the importance of getting flu and RSV vaccines. Haikerwa says the flu jab remains important because viral illnesses continue to circulate. Formica says the TGA has now expanded RSV vaccine approval for Australians over 50 with chronic health and respiratory issues. Haikerwa says welcomes the news and calls it a positive move, as RSV can lead to severe infections.

Interview continues on: [4BC \(Brisbane\)](#).

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

RSV vaccine approved for use in at-risk over-50s

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 30/04/2025, Jolyon Attwooll

The RSVPreF3 OA vaccine (sold as Arexvy) has been approved for use in adults aged 50–59 at greater risk for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). The move by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) expands on the indication for the protein-based vaccine, which was first approved for at-risk adults aged over 60 in early 2024.

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