



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Wednesday, 14th May 2025

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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Herald Sun](#)** (page 1) reports a diet developed by Monash University researchers has been found to reduce the abdominal pain and bloating that women with endometriosis can experience, with 60 per cent of patients in the study reporting significant improvements in their gastrointestinal symptoms after adhering to the "Low FODMAP" diet.
- The **[Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 3) reports users of weight-loss drugs such as Ozempic are being warned to be alert for the drugs to potentially trigger the painful shingles virus, though the TGA has yet to find evidence linking shingles to consumers of Ozempic, Mounjaro and Wegovy.
- The **[Canberra Times](#)** (page 5) reports the Prime Minister's Department has issued an Administrative Arrangements Order confirming that services and policy for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and foundational supports will be the remit of the expanded health department, which will now be known as the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.
- The **[Courier Mail](#)** (page 4) leads News Corp coverage reporting Anika Wells' appointment as Communications and Sports Minister is widely viewed as a promotion in recognition of her work on the aged care reforms.
- **[The Australian](#)** (Online) reports repeated warnings about disability care provider Cocoon SDA Care will leave Health Minister Mark Butler with little choice but to overhaul the NDIS's

safeguards and compliance mechanism, as well as negotiating with state governments to reform the scheme's eligibility requirements.

- The **Courier Mail** (Online) reports Australia has become the first country to release national guidelines for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in the hope of improving diagnosis of the condition amid calls for improved accessibility of FAST testing in at-risk children in Queensland.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Swearing-in comes with a dash of child's play

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 14/05/2025, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 6

Labor's new ministers rolled into Government House fresh from an electoral landslide with their families in tow. [...] Health and Disability Minister Mark Butler, who takes on an expanded role after spending the campaign by Albanese's side, strode in with his son in one arm and a giraffe-patterned backpack in the other.

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### Health Department to be renamed as portfolio confirmed

Canberra Times, General News, 14/05/2025, Connor Pearce, Page 5

The Department of Health and Aged Care will be renamed the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing as the Prime Minister Anthony Albanese reshuffles responsibilities at the beginning of his second term. The change was flagged on Monday when Mr Albanese added Disability to Health Minister Mark Butler's portfolio and was confirmed on Tuesday afternoon in an Administrative Arrangements Order, published by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

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### Repacholi tapped as men's health envoy

Newcastle Herald, General News, 14/05/2025, Simon McCarthy, Page 5

Hunter MP Dan Repacholi will serve as special envoy for men's health in the reshuffled Albanese frontbench. The position, which is mainly considered ambassadorial, will involve Mr Repacholi advocating for men's health issues between sector stakeholders and Health Minister Mark Butler's office.

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### NDIS failed to act on red flags

The Australian, Other, 14/05/2025

Severely disabled, vulnerable clients of the National Disability Insurance Scheme would have been saved disruption and trauma had the Albanese government, the NDIS Commission and other federal authorities acted on the warnings of a former chief executive of disability care provider Cocoon SDA Care in 2023. [...] The matters leave Health Minister Mark Butler, whose portfolio responsibilities were increased in Monday's reshuffle to take in the NDIS, no alternative but to overhaul the scheme's compliance safeguards and administration.

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### Experts warn Trump order demanding cheaper medicines for US could push up Australian prices

The Guardian, Other, 14/05/2025, Luca Ittimani

Donald Trump's pressure on medicine companies could drive up the cost of Australia's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) or see companies withdraw some medicines from Australian shelves, experts have warned. [...] "Our task is crystal clear: to strengthen Medicare, protect the PBS, deliver generational reform to aged care, and secure the future of the NDIS," the Health Minister, Mark Butler, said on Monday.

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## NBN Coffs Harbour, NBN News, 12/05/2025, Gavin Morris and Natasha Beyersdorf

PM Anthony Albanese has made changes to his front bench, reshuffling his cabinet following Labor's election win. Health Minister Mark Butler will take on added responsibility with the NDIS, while Dan Repacholi becomes the first ever Special Envoy for Men's Health.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### Wells, what a big promotion

Courier Mail, General News, 14/05/2025, Page 4

Two prominent Queensland Labor MPs have been made responsible for some of the Albanese government's most important reforms, including overhauling outdated environmental laws and ensuring tech giants pay their fair share for Australian news. Rising star Anika Wells was on Tuesday sworn in as Communications and Sport Minister, in a move seen as a promotion after helping secure significant aged care sector reforms in the previous term.

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### Federal departmental responsibility for sport moves from health to sit with infrastructure, communications and the arts

Australasian Leisure Management, Other, 13/05/2025

Yesterday's announcement of cabinet positions by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, which saw Anika Wells remain as Minister for Sport while acquiring the Communications portfolio, has been followed by a change in departmental structure in relation to sport.

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### Anika Wells named new Communications Minister as Michelle Rowland replaces Mark Dreyfus as Attorney General

Mi3, Other, 13/05/2025

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has appointed a new Minister for Communications as part of a cabinet reshuffle that sees incumbent Michelle Rowland move into the role of Attorney General, replacing Mark Dreyfus. In her place, Minister for Sport Anika Wells has added the Communications portfolio to her remit, with the shift welcomed by commercial television body Free TV Australia, which represents media entities such as Seven West Media, Nine Entertainment Co, Network 10, Southern Cross Austereo, WIN Network, and Imparja Television.

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### TICKER NEWS, Ticker Now, 13/05/2025, Mike Loder

PM Anthony Albanese announces new ministers in a cabinet reshuffle. Anika Wells takes on communications and sport.

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## MINISTER MCALLISTER

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## MINISTER RAE

## Political influence and powerful allies: how relative unknown Sam Rae catapulted himself into Labor's ministry

The Guardian, Other, 14/05/2025, Henry Belot

Moments after securing a landslide victory at the 2018 state election, a triumphant Daniel Andrews showered praise on his young campaign director, Sam Rae, who has now been fast-tracked to become a federal minister at just 38 years old.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

### NBN Central Coast, NBN News, 13/05/2025, Gavin Morris and Natasha Beyersdorf

Dobell MP Emma McBride has retained her positions as the federal assistant minister for mental health, as well as rural and regional health. McBride has served in these roles since 2022, when the Albanese government first came to power.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

### Tassie duo on Albo's team

Hobart Mercury, General News, 14/05/2025, Duncan Abey, Page 6

Newly minted federal member for Lyons Rebecca White has paid tribute to the guidance and advice of Tasmanian Labor colleague, Minister Julie Collins, as the pair were sworn in as office holders in the Albanese government in Canberra on Tuesday. Ms White, a former state opposition leader who becomes Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Indigenous Health, and Women, said the backing of her Franklin counterpart has been invaluable in learning the ropes of the capital.

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### Rebecca White ready to help deliver Labor's 'ambitious agenda' on health as she's sworn in as assistant minister

ABC Online, Other, 13/05/2025, David-Reilly, Leon Compton and Brooke-Van

Newly elected Labor MP for Lyons, Rebecca White, has been sworn in as Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Indigenous Health and Women. The former Tasmanian Labor leader tells Leon Compton on Tasmania Mornings she is looking forward to helping deliver Labor's 'ambitious agenda' on health.

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### ABC, ABC News, 13/05/2025, Guy Stayner

Newly elected Lyons MP Rebecca White was sworn in as assistant minister for health and aged care, Indigenous health, and women.

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### WIN Hobart, WIN News, 13/05/2025, Bruce Roberts

PM Anthony Albanese's new-look cabinet was sworn in at Government House. Newly elected Rebecca White has officially become the assistant minister for health and aged care, women, and Indigenous health.

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## SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

### Repacholi tapped as men's health envoy

Newcastle Herald, General News, 14/05/2025, Simon McCarthy, Page 5

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### NBN Coffs Harbour, NBN News, 12/05/2025, Gavin Morris and Natasha Beyersdorf

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## DEPARTMENT

### Health Department to be renamed as portfolio confirmed

Canberra Times, General News, 14/05/2025, Connor Pearce, Page 5

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### The ongoing pain of medicine shortages

Medical Forum, Other, 13/05/2025

Medicine shortages in Australia have reached an unprecedented level in recent months, particularly in remote and regional WA. [...] Despite sector representations to the Minister for Health, the TGA and the Department of Health and Aged Care, there has been little progress toward ensuring a stable supply of these life-changing drugs, PCA said in a statement.

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### New training program to equip pharmacists with essential palliative care skills

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, Other, 13/05/2025, Aspire Palliative

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) has launched a new national training program to equip pharmacists with the knowledge, skills, and compassion needed to support people receiving palliative and end-of-life care wherever they are. The ASPIRE Palliative Care Foundation Training Program for Pharmacists is a free, CPD-accredited course for pharmacists working in all areas of practice, supported by Palliative Care Australia and developed with support from the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care under the National Palliative Care Grants Program.

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### 'World-first' FASD guidelines revealed for Australia

The Courier Mail, Other, 13/05/2025, Molly Frew

World-first national guidelines for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) have been released in

Australia, with hopes to improve assessment and diagnosis of the condition. [...] The four-year-long project to develop the guidelines was led by Dr Reid's team at the University of Queensland's Child Health Research Centre, in collaboration with more than 40 organisations, and with funding from the Department of Health and Aged Care.

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## VACCINES

### Established trust key to pandemic preparedness: Study

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 13/05/2025, Manisha Fernando

As Australians reflect on their life post-COVID, public health experts say building trust and prioritising help for vulnerable communities is key to the country rebuilding and preparing for a future pandemic. In a new Burnet Institute study, researchers explored how Australia can best respond to future pandemics, saying planning should focus on rebuilding trust, social cohesion and the 'social contract between the Government and the people it serves'.

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### ABC Radio Canberra, Mornings, 13/05/2025, Saskia Mabin

Interview with 'Vaccine Nation: Science, reason and the threat to 200 years of progress' author Raina MacIntyre on vaccines. MacIntyre says Australia needs to increase transparency around vaccine policymaking. She says medical practitioners have become one of the agents of disinformation.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### Dementia Australia launches detailed new palliative care course

HelloCare, Other, 13/05/2025, Alex Jacobs

Dementia Australia has launched a new course on palliative care for health, aged and disability care workers to mark National Palliative Care Week (11–17 May). The course has been added to the award-winning Ask Annie app, which provides on-the-go dementia training designed for care workers.

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### Fears of shingles link to Ozempic

Daily Telegraph, General News, 14/05/2025, Danielle Gusmaroli, Page 3

Experts have warned users of popular drugs Ozempic, Mounjaro and Wegovy to "be alert" for it potentially triggering the painful shingles virus. The chairwoman of the Royal College of GPs' obesity management group has reported at least one suspected case of shingles to the government's adverse drug reaction unit against a background of social media complaints of the common skin disease among users.

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

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### Mum and bub BMI link

Northern Territory News, General News, 14/05/2025, Page 9

The greater a woman's body mass index (BMI) in early pregnancy, the more likely her child is to be

overweight or develop obesity. A University of Adelaide and South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute study found that the greater a woman's BMI in pregnancy, the greater her child's weight from birth to the age of 10.

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## New Australian guidelines for miscarriage and early pregnancy loss released

ABC Online, Other, 13/05/2025, Olivia Willis

Australia's first comprehensive national guidelines for the treatment of early pregnancy loss have been welcomed by women's health experts. The clinical guidelines, developed by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (RANZCOG), are designed to provide a benchmark for best practice medical care.

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## Child protection practices in question as former kids in care slam residential group homes

ABC Online, Other, 13/05/2025, Katri Uibu

For \$1 million per child a year, you'd expect unlimited opportunities, stellar care — opulence. Indeed, governments are at pains to convince taxpayers that group homes for children in state care are "therapeutic" trauma-informed facilities.

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## Regions 'bear the brunt' of abortion access barriers

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 13/05/2025

Laws allowing experienced nurses and midwives to prescribe medicine to induce abortion are set to be passed, with conservative politicians dubbing it a "dangerous and divisive" development. The amended bill from Greens MP Amanda Cohn aims to overcome "abortion deserts" in NSW.

Also reported by: [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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## What is the new abortion bill in NSW – and why is Tony Abbott trying to stop it?

The Guardian, Other, 13/05/2025, Natasha May

A proposal to improve access to abortion services could soon become law. So what's in the bill – and why has it caused heated debate?

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### Endo pain relief diet

Herald Sun, General News, 14/05/2025, Sarah Booth, Page 1

A special diet designed by scientists can manage common but often overlooked endometriosis symptoms, a new study has found. Monash University researchers discovered women with the chronic illness can reduce their gastrointestinal symptoms by lowering their intake of a key group of carbohydrates in a world-first trial.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#).

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### Prostate cancer hope

Courier Mail, General News, 14/05/2025, Page 7

University of Queensland researchers are one step closer to getting a treatment for advanced prostate

cancer into clinics, thanks to a \$1.25m investment in its development. Solely developed in Brisbane by the Queensland Emory Drug Discovery Initiative (QEDDI), the treatment, QED-203, has been designed to target the growth of advanced prostate cancers.

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## Show us the sugar hit

Hobart Mercury, General News, 14/05/2025, Page 5

Eighty per cent of Australians support the federal government mandating that sugary drinks display the number of teaspoons of added sugar on the front of the bottle. Health experts behind Rethink Sugary Drink are using the Cancer Council Victoria research to call for worldleading labelling reforms.

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## Channel 10, 10 News First, 13/05/2025, Sharyn Ghidella

A hundred students and two staff members are at Stewart Homes tonight for the Cancer Council Queensland Ponytail Project. Their ponytails will be cut off and made into wigs for Queenslanders receiving cancer treatment.

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## SBS, Insight, 13/05/2025, Kumi Taguchi

Interview with Monash University's Jane Tiller on BRCA genes. Tiller says genes like the BRCA gene lead to a really high risk of breast and ovarian cancer. She says women with this kind of high risk go into high-risk screening programs so they can get MRI or ultrasound mammograms at a much earlier age than the general population, but there are also options like preventive surgeries.

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## 6PR, Drive, 13/05/2025, Oliver Peterson

Interview with Heart Foundation senior dietician Jemma O'Hanlon on cholesterol. O'Hanlon says about 30 per cent of Australians are living with high cholesterol at the moment. She says the Heart Foundation has recently partnered with Uncle Tobys, adding that rolled oats play an important role in lowering cholesterol.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Channel 10, 10 News First, 13/05/2025, Sandra Sully

Next month's state budget will include \$90m to add comprehensive maternity services, such as eight birthing suites and 18 in-patient beds, to the long-awaited Rouse Hill Hospital development. NSW health minister Ryan Park is confident it will be open by 2030, despite a court battle over how much the land is worth.

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### Channel 7, Seven News, 13/05/2025, Rosanna Mangiarelli and Will Goodings

US President Trump has ordered American prescription drugmakers to slash US prices to Australia's level. Federal treasurer Jim Chalmers says the PBS is not up for negotiation, adding that they are making medicines cheaper in Australia, not more expensive. Labor has repeatedly promised to protect the PBS.

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### Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 13/05/2025, Cheng Lei

Interview with La Trobe University doctor Deborah Gleeson on US President Donald Trump signing an



executive order aiming to reduce prescription drug costs in America. Gleeson says this executive order charges the Secretary of Commerce and the US Trade Representative to take action to make sure that foreign countries are not using what he calls discriminatory pricing practises and suppressing prices below market value. She says the US has been targeting Australia's PBS.

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## **2CC, Breakfast, 13/05/2025, Stephen Cenatiempo**

Interview with Emily Rushton, ACT representative, Royal Australian College of GPs. Rushton states nurses in general practice have a really different role to their hospital-based counterparts, but just as vital in the health system. She notes hospital-based nurses are looking after someone who might be bed-bound and require a little bit more help with their personal care, while in general practice, the role of the nurse is about health promotion and teaching patients about their condition and working with them to make sure that their condition is well managed.

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## **FIVEAA, Mornings, 13/05/2025, Graeme Goodings**

Interview with UQ PhD candidate researching Australia's pharmaceutical supply chain resilience Peter Coomber on Australia's pharmaceutical industry. Coomber says the majority of the pharmaceuticals, including raw ingredients for anything they make locally, is imported. He says throughout COVID-19, they saw closure of ports and factories, so there was a significant decline in production. He says all those factors combined have a very significant impact on the supply.

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## **MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION**

### **4BC, Breakfast , 13/05/2025, Peter Fegan**

Interview with Darius Boyd, Ambassador, Mental Awareness Foundation. Boyd discusses mental health affects a lot of people in the community, and everyone has a story in a way. He notes they all need life lessons and support in life and that's okay. Boyd adds that they need to understand that when they need help, they can reach out and get some help.

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

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### **ABC Radio Adelaide, Evenings, 13/05/2025, Spence Denny**

Interview with South Australian Psychologists Association president Deb McLean on mental health. McLean says if a patient does not have the resources to pay for a private sector psychologist, the GP can refer them into a community mental health service. She says the psychology vacancies that sit within community mental health are very significant, up to 50 per cent in some cases. She says SA is lacking in psychologist numbers.

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## **CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE**

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### Queensland Health Ombudsman issues second-ever public safety warning over David Zhen

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 13/05/2025, Judith Kerr

Queensland's Health Ombudsman has issued a rare public warning urging anyone who has received treatment from a Redland-based practitioner to seek immediate medical advice, citing serious safety concerns. The alert centres on Ormiston man David Zhen, also known as Tai Hui Qing and Qing Jong, who operated under the business name H2OMASSAGE.

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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## SPORT

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### New research links mitochondrial health and female reproductive ageing

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 13/05/2025

New research published in the Journal of Translational Medicine highlights the role of mitochondrial function in women's reproductive health, emphasising the connection between mitochondrial decline and reproductive ageing. The review highlights how declining mitochondrial function may contribute to the gradual decline of oocyte quality and ovarian reserve, while also underscoring the mitochondria's significant role in energy production, managing oxidative stress, and regulating intracellular signalling – process vital to reproductive health.

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 13/05/2025, Lara Stimpson

Interview with La Trobe University knowledge translation practitioner and Palawa woman Nicole Hewlett on a world-first Indigenous framework for the new national clinical guidelines for the diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Hewlett says this framework is based on prioritising and privileging Aboriginal voices and culture. She says there is objective, racist-free assessments and diagnosis in those applications.

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## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Channel 7, Sunrise, 13/05/2025, David Woiwod and Natalie Barr

Interview with AMA president Dr Danielle McMullen on flu vaccination rates falling dangerously low. McMullen says it is important that as many Australians as possible be vaccinated, as they are seeing high rates of flu.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

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## OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

### NT needs pill testing and it has to be now

Northern Territory News, General News, 14/05/2025, Thomas McLean, Page 3

The Royal Australian College of GPs has called on the Northern Territory government to implement pill testing "before lives are lost", adding to a long list of credible health groups that have called for the service to be offered. It comes more than two weeks after NT Health issued a warning for the deadly synthetic opioid known as nitazene, considered to be as much as 10 times stronger than the ultra-deadly fentanyl.

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### Kava smuggling to NT Indigenous communities spikes after import controls lifted, leaders say

ABC Online, Other, 13/05/2025, Liam Fox

Kava smuggling into the Northern Territory's remote Indigenous communities is on the rise, with local leaders fearing the black market price of the drink is draining family finances and fuelling social problems. Police and Indigenous leaders say the amount of kava being smuggled into communities has surged in the years since the Morrison government relaxed import restrictions on the beverage. [...] The relaxed restrictions will continue until the federal government makes a decision on future arrangements, according to the Office of Drug Control.

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## FOOD STANDARDS

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### AICIS

#### **ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 13/05/2025, Yvonne Yong**

A warning about the presence of toxic 'forever chemicals' in compost being sold to the public has raised questions about the management of organic waste in WA's south west. It has prompted a call to phase out the use of PFAS chemicals. PFAS chemicals are in thousands of products, including disposable food packaging. Premier Roger Cook says the biggest risk about PFAS is it enters the food chain.

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