



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 15th May 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [Australian Financial Review](#) (page 4) reports Health Minister Mark Butler has ruled out a government bailout of struggling private hospital operator Healthscope as the company aims for a "solvent restructure" where it will be sold in its entirety or on a hospital-by-hospital basis".
- [The Australian](#) (page 7) reports a bill extending abortion access in NSW has brought the state into line with the TGA guidelines, with nurses and endorsed midwives to be able to provide drugs to terminate early-stage pregnancies.
- The [Daily Telegraph](#) (page 9) reports research has found dogs are capable of giving their owners a significant mental boost, with 84 per cent of respondents reporting a boost in mood after exercising with their canine companion.
- The [West Australian](#) (page 9) reports doctors in the state are fearful of signing health assessments required for people to get a firearms licence amid concerns they may be liable if the person they approve subsequently shoots someone. The WA Government insists doctors will not be liable for civil or criminal liability in the event of a firearms-related incident involving someone they assessed as medically fit.
- The [Adelaide Advertiser](#) (page 15) reports that 221 people have been diagnosed with melioidosis in Queensland this year with 31 dying. Heavy rain and flooding across northern

Queensland this year is thought to have led to the surge in people contracting the soil-borne disease.

- The [**Daily Telegraph**](#) (Online) reports the aged care sector is concerned there won't be enough time to implement reforms to the sector due to take effect on July 1, with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing yet to provide final rules and training despite insisting providers will be able to meet to timeframe.

MINISTER BUTLER

Labor rules out Healthscope bailout as closures feared

Australian Financial Review, General News, 15/05/2025, Michael Smith, Page 4

The federal government says it will not bail out struggling private hospital giant Healthscope, which has ceded control of the company to its lenders as it tries to find a new owner, raising fears of hospital closures.

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WIN Hobart, WIN News, 14/05/2025, Bruce Roberts

Tasmanian Minister for Health Jacquie Petrusma welcomes the return of Mark Butler as the Federal Minister for Health, Senator Malarndirri McCarthy as the Minister for Indigenous Australians, and Matt Keogh as the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

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MINISTER WELLS

Ausbiz, The Pulse, 14/05/2025, Andrew Geoghegan

Interview with Eiger Capital co-founder Stephen Wood on Regis Aged Care. Wood highlights Regis Aged Care as a standout in the small-cap space following a recent investment conference. He also says former Aged Care Minister Anika Wells has helped advance bipartisan reforms, allowing quality operators like Regis to reinvest in new developments.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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MINISTER RAE

Aged care challenges to housing crisis: Six key priorities for new minister

The Senior, Other, 14/05/2025, Rowan Cowley

From ensuring the smooth transition to a new aged care system , to the housing affordability crisis , incoming Aged Care and Seniors Minister Sam Rae has his work cut out for him. Mr Rae will take over the portfolio from new Communications Minister Anika Wells, one of a number of key ministry changes announced by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

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ABC NewsRadio, Mornings, 14/05/2025, Chris Mitchell

[...] The Labor Party is also reshuffling, with Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus expected to leave the front bench to make room for second-term MP Sam Rae. The Labor left gains extra seats after electoral success, shifting the factional split to 15-15.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Seven Tasmania, Nightly News, 14/05/2025, Louise Houbaer

Tasmania's highest-ranking federal politicians return home after being sworn into Anthony Albanese's ministry. Julie Collins keeps her agriculture, fisheries and forestry portfolio and brings experience from her time on the front bench since 2013. Rebecca White enters federal politics with new assistant minister roles after leading Labor in Tasmania through three elections.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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DEPARTMENT

July aged care reforms spark concern over staffing, admin load

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 14/05/2025, Judith Kerr

Australia's aged care sector is raising alarms about a July 1 rollout of major federal reforms, with providers warning they are still unprepared due to a lack of final rules and official training. Despite the Aged Care Act 2024 passing in November, aged care operators say critical information needed to implement the sweeping changes remains incomplete, creating uncertainty with just over a month to go.

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

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VACCINES

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Losing sleep over beds

Ballarat Courier, General News, 15/05/2025, Michelle Smith, Page 1

Finding appropriate aged care for elderly patients who end up in hospital with cognitive impairments, such as dementia, is impacting bed availability at Ballarat Base Hospital. With increasing numbers of elderly patients being admitted with confusion and cognitive issues, Grampians Health chief operating officer Ben Kelly said there were "challenges" in finding appropriate ongoing post-hospital care.

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No place like home unless you need orthotic care

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 14/05/2025, Diana Poole

The Support at Home program is to replace Home Care Packages, aiming to streamline the process and improve access to services. Unfortunately, unless action is taken, the exclusion of orthotists and orthoses from the new program will have the opposite effect for some vulnerable Australians.

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Record 3,230 Australians aged 100+ on Home Care Packages and CHSP

The Weekly Source, Other, 14/05/2025, Ian Horswill

The growing number of centenarians is evident in the record number of people aged 100-plus receiving care at home. HammondCare, a Not For Profit Christian charity offering home care, residential care, palliative care, and dementia support, revealed this data following a request under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act.

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2CC, Canberra Live, 14/05/2025, Leon Delaney

Interview with Save Burrangiri Group convenor Peter Lyons on ACT Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith reversing her decision to shut the Burrangiri Aged Care Respite Centre. Delaney reports that Stephen-Smith announces the centre will remain open for another two years with federal government support. Lyons says the group are surprised and delighted by the decision, which seemed unlikely until yesterday.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Warning over rise in falls

Newcastle Herald, General News, 15/05/2025, Damon Cronshaw, Page 2

Fall-related hospitalisations among women in the Hunter health network have risen from 6,138 to 9,415 in a decade, health data shows. The network, which includes the Central Coast and New England, reflects a rise in falls at state and national levels. An Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report, released today, said unintentional falls were "the leading cause of injury-hospitalisation and death for women".

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Man might contest charges over child's accidental death

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 14/05/2025, By Australian Associated Press

A man charged over a child's unintentional shooting death might fight his firearms offences, a lawyer revealed outside court. Zafer Halwani has been charged with allowing an unauthorised person to possess a firearm and unsafe gun keeping after a nine-year-old boy was accidentally shot in the neck at a property in Windellama, south of the NSW town of Goulburn. [...] The rate of firearm-related injuries and deaths was four to six times higher in remote and very remote areas, according to a 2017 fact sheet from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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Channel 10, 10 News First, 14/05/2025, Sandra Sully

Australian researchers have found that a low FODMAP diet can improve symptoms for women with endometriosis. The diet is usually used for people with irritable bowel syndrome.

Also reported by: [Channel 10 \(Adelaide\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Perth\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Channel 7, Seven News, 14/05/2025, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson

Monash University researchers find that a low FODMAP diet, originally designed for irritable bowel syndrome, can help women with endometriosis. The diet reduces a group of carbohydrates and eases abdominal pain and bloating in sufferers.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Adelaide\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Perth\)](#).

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Channel 9, Nine News, 14/05/2025, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfert

A world-first Monash University medical trial finds that a low FODMAP diet could help ease endometriosis symptoms. The diet, originally developed for IBS, also reduces bloating and abdominal pain in endometriosis sufferers.

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

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4BC, Afternoons, 14/05/2025, Sofie Formica

Regular Segment: Wednesday Wellness with obstetrician and gynaecologist Dr Gino Pecoraro discussing concerns about popular weight loss injectables like Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro, highlighting rising reports of shingles among users. Pecoraro says these drugs can push the body into catabolism, straining the immune system. He explains that this added stress may trigger shingles, especially if a person is already vulnerable.

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

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ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 14/05/2025, Kylie Baxter

Panel discussion with cardiologist Dr Andrew Black and University of Sydney senior research fellow Dr Niamh Chapman on hypertension, blood pressure, and heart health. Black says there is strong research showing lifestyle modifications can reduce the risk of atrial fibrillation returning. He says regular exercise, weight control, cutting back on alcohol and managing blood pressure are all important measures.

Panel discussion continues on: [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#).

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CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Peter Mac's Cell Therapies powers ASX cancer plays

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 14/05/2025, Nadine McGrath

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre is Australia's only public hospital dedicated to cancer care, research and education. It is home to Australia's only biomedical facility capable of manufacturing CAR T-cells and other cell therapies at commercial scale – operated by Cell Therapies

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

Changing Australia: David Thomas and ramping up treatment access for rare and difficult cancers

ABC Online, Other, 14/05/2025

Cancer affects thousands of Australians each year, and if you are diagnosed with a rare, less common or advanced cancer, your treatment options are often more limited. This is top of mind for Professor David Thomas, who has become a leader in the development of precision oncology in Australia.

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Radio National, Breakfast, 14/05/2025, David Rutledge

Interview with David Thomas, Director, Centre for Molecular Oncology, on providing better links for people to clinical trials for cancer patients. Thomas says about one in five to one in six cancers is rare, which means that collectively, they're paradoxically not rare and they constitute about 180 different histological subtypes. He notes precision oncology is the use of a molecular view of cancer to guide the classification, diagnosis, treatment, and management of cancer.

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PRIMARY CARE

Abortion bill passes despite 'bullying'

The Australian, General News, 15/05/2025, Thomas Sargeant and Alexi Demetriadi, Page 7

A contentious but watered-down bill to expand access to medical abortions in NSW passed the parliament's lower house amid what was called a "brazen bullying" campaign, as advocates backed the move but criticised prohibitive reproductive health costs. Marred by anti-abortion rallies outside parliament, a Greens-propelled bill that would allow nurse practitioners and endorsed midwives to provide drugs to terminate early stage pregnancies passed a conscience vote in NSW's Legislative Assembly on Wednesday.

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Angry GPs hit out at state's new gun laws

West Australian, General News, 15/05/2025, Ben Harvey, Page 9

Doctors are in open revolt against the State Government's new gun laws, refusing to conduct the health assessments people need to get a firearm licence. The 2024 Firearms Act requires gun owners to provide a medical certificate attesting to their physical and mental fitness.

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No drop in wait times

Cairns Post, General News, 15/05/2025, Page 16

Emergency department wait times haven't budged since the introduction of the Queensland government's real-time hospital data website three months ago, reigniting concerns its not an accurate reflection of patients' experiences. Only 70,000 Queenslanders have viewed the Open Hospitals website since its February launch.

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GPs in Western Australia concerned about conducting fitness tests for firearm licences

ABC Online, Other, 14/05/2025, Emma Wynne

West Australian doctors say they're worried about new laws that put the burden on them to assess if someone is fit to hold a firearm licence, their peak body says. The WA government has introduced the sweeping new laws in the wake of the high-profile murders of Jennifer Petelczyc and her 18-year-old daughter Gretl

NT government orders Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee inquiry into voluntary assisted dying

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 14/05/2025, Fia Walsh

The CLP has ordered a parliamentary inquiry into voluntary assisted dying (VAD), including instructions to prepare guidelines for creating laws if the committee recommends adopting the practice in the Northern Territory. Last year a major independent report into VAD recommended that the NT introduce legislation broadly consistent with that of other states and territories, but the Chief Minister has stalled on implementation, previously stating it was "not a priority" for her government.

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

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Free clinic opens at Gympie Hospital to ease wait times

Townsville Bulletin, Other, 14/05/2025, Finn Rice Coleman

After almost a year of waiting, Gympie is finally getting a free nurse-led, walk-in clinic. It will look to funnel less serious medical cases away from the emergency waiting room at Gympie Hospital.

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ABC, ABC News, 14/05/2025, Jeremy Fernandez

SA academic and anti-abortion campaigner Joanna Howe is accused of using bullying tactics and political threats during the debate on expanding abortion access in NSW. Premier Chris Minns and Opposition leaders call out her approach, and the amended bill passes with strong support.

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Channel 10, 10 News First, 14/05/2025, Natalie Forrest

Doctors say they feel unsure about conducting the health assessments required for a firearms licence under the new WA laws. The medical community calls the current framework professionally and ethically challenging, which they believe could compromise their position.

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Channel 10, 10 News First, 14/05/2025, Sandra Sully

A bill to improve access to abortion services passed NSW parliament with 65 votes in favour and 20 against. The bill focuses on expanding access in regional areas by allowing qualified nurse practitioners and endorsed midwives to prescribe oral abortion medication. The final version removes a controversial clause about mandatory referrals, which many MPs say would have stopped them from supporting it.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 14/05/2025, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson

Specialist nurses and midwives are now allowed to prescribe abortion pills in NSW, making access easier. The bill passed with a strong majority despite claims of bullying during the debate.

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ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 14/05/2025, Liz Trevaskis

Interview with former Independent Member for Goyder Kezia Purick on the CLP ordering an inquiry into Voluntary Assisted Dying. Purick believes the Attorney-General's move is politically timed but ultimately a good step and adds that a committee process allows for broad consultation with stakeholders, religious groups, and the general public. She recalls strong community support for VAD during her time in office, even if not everyone wanted to use it. She says it should be a government priority, as every other Australian jurisdiction already has legislation and systems in place.

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ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 14/05/2025, Liz Trevaskis

Interview with Independent Member for Johnston Justine Davis on the potential legalisation of VAD in the NT. Trevaskis notes that last year's government-commissioned report recommended legalising VAD, but the new Chief Minister, Lia Finocchiaro, made it clear that it was not a priority for the CLP government. Today, the Attorney-General, Marie-Clare Boothby, has requested that the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee conduct an inquiry into the report.

Interview continues on: [ABC Radio Darwin \(Darwin\)](#).

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6PR, Drive, 14/05/2025, Oliver Peterson

Interview with RACGP WA co-deputy chair Dr Mariam Bahemia on the uncertainty doctors feel about conducting the health assessments required for firearms licences under the new WA laws. Bahemia explains that GPs are generally comfortable with health assessments but are concerned about the professional obligations and potential legal implications of the new laws. She also notes that GPs are uncomfortable with the risk prediction involved in assessing fitness for firearms ownership, as they lack forensic training and could face legal consequences in case of violence.

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Mornings, 14/05/2025, Rory McClaren

Interview with Peter Allcroft, Chair, Palliative Care Australia, discusses end-of-life care. Allcroft states it's important to plan end-of-life care, which is the them of National Palliative Care Week. He notes a good death is a death where they have some control, they have information, and they're in a place of their preference.

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ABC Radio Canberra, PM, 14/05/2025, Samantha Donovan

Proposed laws allowing experienced nurses and midwives to prescribe abortion medication have passed the NSW lower house. The bill has sparked protests outside Parliament, with accusations of misinformation from politicians, the Nurses' Union, and academics.

Report continues on: [ABC Radio Canberra \(Canberra\)](#).

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ABC Radio Hobart, Afternoons, 14/05/2025, Joel Rheinberger

Interview with palliative medicine physician Dr Carmen Halton on palliative care. Halton explains that palliative care focuses on improving symptoms, providing practical support, and helping patients set and achieve goals. She also highlights that palliative care is not only delivered by specialists but also by generalist nurses, GPs, and other medical professionals.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Ruff day? Dogs are a mind's best friend

Daily Telegraph, General News, 15/05/2025, Jack Nivison, Page 9

It has long been said that dogs are a man's best friend, but new research shows our cuddly canines are also a mind's best mate, capable of giving owners a significant mental health boost. Researcher Brendon Stubbs said a new study commissioned by sportswear brand ASICS reveals "just how significantly dogs influence our physical activity levels and overall state of mind".

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NT Judge hears children kept in cells 23 hours a day in Holtze Youth Detention Centre

Territory kids with chronic mental health issues are spending up to 23 hours a day alone in a cell, amid short staffing in the children's prison. "I might just kill myself there," a 15-year-old girl told her lawyer moments before her court hearing on Monday.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 14/05/2025, Melissa Downes

QIMR Berghofer researchers have identified around 250 genes linked to obsessive-compulsive disorder in a study involving over 50,000 participants with OCD and two million without. Prof Eske Derks from QIMR Berghofer hopes that combining all the genetic information will allow for more reliable prediction of OCD risk in the future.

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

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ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 14/05/2025, Kylie Baxter

Pre-recorded interview with QIMR Berghofer's Prof Eske Derks on obsessive-compulsive disorder. Derks discusses a genetic study that involved over 50,000 patients with OCD and more than two million controls, leading to the discovery of 250 genes linked to the risk of OCD. She also notes that while genetics contributes to 30-40% of OCD risk, environmental factors, like traumatic experiences, also play a significant role.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Rebate won't end the GP payroll tax fight

Australian Financial Review, General News, 15/05/2025, Paul Karp, Page 9

GPs will continue to push for a blanket exemption to payroll tax, despite saving \$4 million in tax under the first eight months of a NSW scheme to boost bulk billing.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

Study offers hope for chronic coeliacs

The Australian, General News, 15/05/2025, James Dowling, Page 3

A subset of coeliac disease patients whose symptoms persist despite cutting gluten from their diet are the subject of a new study that has brought the prospect of treatment onto the horizon. Research led by the Garvan Institute and UNSW has produced a new image of the immune effects of coeliac disease, pinpointing mutated gut cells that cause persistent intestinal inflammation, regardless of how studiously those affected restrict their diet.

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Detecting disorders

Herald Sun, General News, 15/05/2025, Page 11

Flinders University research has identified the most common early warning signs of eating disorders in children to provide a guide for parents about when to seek help. It is estimated that a third (31.6 per cent) of Australian adolescents engage in disordered eating behaviours during any given year.

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

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

Dozens die from tropical disease outbreak

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 15/05/2025, Emma Kirk, Page 15

An outbreak of a soil borne disease linked to heavy rainfall and flooding has resulted in dozens of deaths in northern Queensland this year. Queensland Health confirmed 31 people have died from melioidosis and 221 cases have been reported this year, an increase of 163 cases compared the same period last year.

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

Cairns records local case of dengue amid global surge

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 15/05/2025, Catherine Strohfeldt, Page 8

Cairns has recorded its first locally acquired dengue virus infection since 2018, but the region has dodged a bullet amid a global surge in the illness. Queensland Health reported the case on Monday.

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Medics probe dengue fever bite

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 15/05/2025, Molly Frew, Page 6

A Cairns West man in his 40s is being treated for dengue fever, but health officials say there is a "very low risk" to the public. Dr Jacqueline Murdoch, the director of Tropical Public Health Services at the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service, said an investigation was continuing into how the man was infected.

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Melioidosis death toll hits 31 with latest fatality in Townsville

ABC Online, Other, 14/05/2025, Georgia Loney and Chloe Chomicki

Another person has died from soil-borne disease melioidosis in Queensland, bringing this year's death toll from the disease to 31. The latest Queensland Health figures show one person in Townsville has died from the infection in the past week. There have also been four new melioidosis cases reported in the same period.

[Read More](#)

Measles is emerging in the elderly and vaccine- hesitant in an 'atypical surge'

Canberra Times, Other, 14/05/2025, Carla Mascarenhas

Measles cases are rising across Australia in 2025 and it isn't a typical spike. There have been 72 cases reported in 2025 and that figure already exceeds the total for 2024 which was 57 cases.

Also reported by: [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#)

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2CC, Canberra Live, 14/05/2025, Leon Delaney

Interview with ACT Branch president of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia Simon Blacker on ongoing medication shortages and the uptake of the flu vaccination. Blacker explains that the medication shortage issue has continued since the pandemic, largely because Australia relies heavily on global supply chains for prescription medications. On flu vaccination, Blacker reports that the situation has improved, with higher levels of flu cases encouraging more people to get vaccinated earlier.

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4BC, Afternoons, 14/05/2025, Sofie Formica

Formica reports that Qld has recorded another death from melioidosis, bringing the total for the year to 31. She mentions that the disease has been spreading since the record-breaking floods in North Qld, with 121 cases recorded this year. Health authorities advise protective measures and increased awareness when working outdoors.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Channel 9, Nine News, 14/05/2025, Peter Overton

Weight-loss drugs like Ozempic and Wegovy are under fresh scrutiny due to possible links to health

concerns, including shingles and pancreatitis. The TGA confirms it has seen safety signals in this class of medications but says no direct link to shingles has been found. Over five years, Ozempic has been associated with 640 suspected side effects and 20 deaths, though no causal connection is confirmed.

Also reported by: [Channel 9 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Perth\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Adelaide\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Melbourne\)](#), [NBN Central Coast \(Gosford\)](#), [NBN Tamworth \(Tamworth\)](#).

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