



# TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 17th August 2025

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sunday Examiner](#)** (page 3) reports the Federal Government is moving to open three new Medicare-funded Urgent Care facilities in Tasmania, which Health Minister Mark Butler says will help take pressure off local hospitals and emergency departments.
- **[The Sunday Age](#)** (page 1) reports medical professionals, with the support of the AMA, are highlighting the issue of medical misogyny within emergency departments leading to women's symptoms being dismissed and delayed treatment for serious conditions.
- **[WA Today](#)** (online) reports systemic gender bias in healthcare is leading to iron-deficient women being undiagnosed or denied effective treatment. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has asked the Medical Services Advisory Committee to look at a Medicare item for iron infusions in general practice.
- **[The Sun Herald](#)** (page 14) reports the Therapeutic Goods Administration is warning pregnant women against using portable fetal heart monitors after the devices were linked to six stillbirths and newborn deaths since 2022.
- **[9News](#)** (online) reports Food Standards Australia New Zealand and Dietitians Australia are calling for the Health Star Rating system to be made mandatory, as the current voluntary approach has failed to achieve widespread adoption on food labels.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Movement on new urgentcare clinics

Sunday Examiner, General News, 17/08/2025, Lauren Richardson, Page 3

The federal government has started the process to open three new Medicare-funded urgent-care facilities across Tasmania. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the clinics have transformed healthcare delivery in Tasmanian communities, saying they have taken pressure of local hospitals.

Also reported by: [WEB Pulse Tasmania \(Online\)](#)

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### Labor accused of hoarding medical research funds as productivity flatlines

The Australian, Other, 16/08/2025, Stephen Lunn

The Albanese government is being accused of hanging on to hundreds of millions of dollars a year in a \$24bn fund earmarked for health and medical research as national productivity flatlines and medical research institutes say they face closure without an imminent injection of funds. [...] Independent MP Monique Ryan has written to Jim Chalmers calling for the issue to be canvassed at the upcoming productivity roundtable, and to Health Minister Mark Butler urging him to open up the coffers.

[Read More](#)

### Gaslit, dismissed and treated as hypochondriacs: The gender divide in iron deficiency

WA Today, Other, 16/08/2025, Kate Aubusson

Iron-deficient and anaemic women are being gaslit and denied effective treatment, while pathology companies systematically report "normal" blood test results for females who would be diagnosed with iron deficiency if they were male. [...] In response to questions from this masthead, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said he had asked the Medical Services Advisory Committee to look at a Medicare item for iron infusions in general practice.

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## MINISTER MCALLISTER

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

## Tasmania set for three new urgent care clinics

The Advocate (Burnie), Other, 16/08/2025, Lauren Richardson

Federal Labor members Julie Collins and Rebecca White pictured. The Federal Government has started the process to open three new Medicare-funded urgent care facilities across Tasmania.

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## SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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## DEPARTMENT

### New 'candy store' is selling vapes next door to a Geelong high school

Herald Sun, Other, 16/08/2025, Olivia Conder

A new vape shop across the road from a Geelong high school has sparked fears over health and safety, the risk of being caught up in the tobacco wars and the impact on a tight-knit community. [...] According to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, since January 2024, the TGA and Australian Border Force have seized more than 10.7 million illegal vapes, worth \$535m.

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

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### Auditors question future of SA charity responsible for new eating disorder service

ABC Online, Other, 16/08/2025, Kathryn Bermingham

The future of a prominent South Australian mental health charity — responsible for delivering a new eating disorder service that has received millions of dollars in government funding — is in question, after auditors raised concerns about its financial position. [...] In a statement, a spokesperson for the federal Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said "any arrangements between South Australia and Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation are a matter for the South Australian government".

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

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## DISABILITY AND CARERS

### Measure of wellbeing

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/08/2025, Page 31

Monash University has led the creation of a new disability wellbeing index (DWI) to better measure outcomes for people with disability. Supported by the National Disability Insurance Agency, the index aims to help improve services and guide disability policy.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Misogyny at the hospital

Sunday Age, General News, 17/08/2025, Charlotte Grieve, Page 1

Alison Beatty's adult son was in the midst of a 48-hour schizophrenic episode when he threw her against the wall of their family home. [...] The investigation into medical misogyny has previously revealed disturbing cases of this bias right across the healthcare system, including women being incorrectly admitted to mental health wards or cancer diagnoses being missed.

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### Call to action

Sun Herald, General News, 17/08/2025, Page 9

The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age last year launched an investigation into medical misogyny: ingrained, systemic sexism across Australia's healthcare system, medical research and practise. More than 2000 women shared their experiences as part of our crowd-sourced investigative series, which prompted a national outpouring of grief and frustration as women described feeling gaslit, dismissed or being told their pain was "all in their heads".

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### Is it time to put cold plunges on ice?

Sunday Herald Sun, Body and Soul, 17/08/2025, Alex Davies, Page 1

On a sunny day in North Fremantle, a large group gathers on the beach and prepares for a feat of physical and mental endurance. [...] "The practice has become popular because it speaks to areas that we care about, whether that's resilience, presence, physical optimisation or maybe a reset button in a pretty distracted world," notes the founder of nature-based allied health group, The Green Movement Co, who does cold plunges himself.

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

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### Burnie clinic to fill gap in care

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 17/08/2025, Elise Kaine, Page 6

In times of good health one hour means little, but during an emergency that hour can mean life or death. Dr Julian Koh moved from Singapore to Tasmania to complete his medical degree more than a decade ago, and his first professional posting was as an intern at the North West Regional Hospital. [...] Federal member for Lyons Rebecca White said that more than 100,000 Tasmanians had already used an urgent care clinic, as she announced the Albanese government would open three new urgent care clinics in Tasmania.

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### Hospital cuts after-hours midwife help for mums

Sunday Territorian, General News, 17/08/2025, Lottie Hood, Page 17

On-call support from a midwifery service committed to offering families continuity of care and high risk pregnancies has been temporarily suspended. Families who are supported by the Midwifery Group Practice at Royal Darwin Hospital have been told by NT Health to expect changes to support.

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### Differing opinions on pharmacists making diagnoses

Sunday Examiner, General News, 17/08/2025, Lauren Richardson, Page 6

A peak medical body has said pharmacists being able to diagnose and prescribe could lead to increased misdiagnoses. [...] A local pharmacist said this would improve timely access to treatment, but president of the Australian Medical Association Tasmania Dr Michael Lumsden-Steel said the AMA did not support role or task substitution where pharmacists or other healthcare professionals diagnose or initiate treatment.

## Babies dying or suffering defects as popularity of freebirthing soars

The Courier Mail, Other, 16/08/2025, Suzan Giuliani

A wave of misinformation about "freebirths" has led to a rise in the practice, with medical authorities claiming influencers are "brainwashing" women to give birth without qualified medical professionals present, leading to babies dying or suffering defects. [...] Australian Medical Association NSW president Kathryn Austin warned the practice was "anecdotally on the rise" due to exposure on social media platforms.

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

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### Experts say the voluntary phase of the Health Star Rating system has failed and must be made mandatory

9News, Other, 16/08/2025, Rebecca Masters

More than 10 years after Health Star Ratings were first introduced, experts say the voluntary system has failed because manufacturers have not been obligated to use it. The system, which was launched in 2014, rates the overall nutritional profile of a packaged food product from 0.5 to 5 stars.

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### Alcohol linked to 8 types of cancer: Should you be concerned?

Newcastle Herald, Other, 16/08/2025, Lisa Edser

A popular consumable entrenched in Australian culture may make us feel good at the time, but it's slowly destroying our health, yet the federal government's known for decades. [...] The estimated social cost of alcohol was a whopping \$66.8 billion in 2017 - 2018, which includes healthcare, crime and lost productivity, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### Early test for cancer of ovaries

Sunday Times, General News, 17/08/2025, Page 29

An experimental blood test detects early-stage ovarian cancer in patients with vague symptoms that would likely be misdiagnosed using currently available methods, researchers believe. Ovarian cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women, largely due to delays in diagnosis until after the disease has spread in the body, when it's harder to treat, the researchers said.

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### ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 16/08/2025, Fauziah Ibrahim & Dan Bouchier

Report by ABC's Elizabeth Wright on the World Transplant Games, which provide a unique opportunity for donors and recipients of transplants to celebrate the gift of life. Two siblings born with an autoimmune condition say their transplants have helped them achieve great things, including representing their country on a global scale. The Games will feature 17 sports and 2500 participants from 55 countries, and have been held every two years since 1978 to raise awareness about transplant surgery.

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Experts endorse medication for ADHD

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 17/08/2025, Hayley Goddard, Page 7

ADHD medication for children often comes with mixed feelings, namely from parents and carers who are concerned about the impact they will have. Stimulants such as methylphenidate and amphetamines are frequently prescribed by doctors, as are non-stimulants including atomoxetine and antidepressants.

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

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### Help for parents

Sunday Territorian, General News, 17/08/2025, Lottie Hood, Page 1

A new program supporting soon-to-be and new parents in the NT has been launched in the hopes it can meet the region's unique needs. The Intensive Care and Counselling program is aimed at offering specialist therapeutic support for families experiencing "significant psychological complexity" during pregnancy and the first year of their child's life.

Also reported by: [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#).

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## IMMUNISATION

### Qld not immune to killer viruses

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 17/08/2025, Mikaela Mulveney, Page 19

Queensland is among the worst in the country for vaccinating children against deadly diseases, with experts warning of dangerous outbreaks if numbers don't improve. Rates have fallen even further than last year's shocking low, with infectious disease experts now sounding the alarm bells to state and federal governments to say if vaccination barriers are not addressed, herd immunity could be at risk.

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

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### Flu toll rises as vax rate plunges: 78 dead in NSW in first half of 2025

The Courier Mail, Other, 16/08/2025, Madeline Crittenden

More people have died from the flu in NSW than anywhere else in the country so far this year, as the state's vaccination rates drop well behind the national average. In the first six months of this year 78 people in NSW died from the flu; 71 each in Victoria and Queensland, and 58 in the rest of the country.

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

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## PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

### Ramped ambos on triple shifts

Sunday Times, General News, 17/08/2025, Hannah Cross, Page 10

St John WA has authorised triple time for the third time in the space of a week as WA grapples with record ramping. The ambulance service put the call out on Saturday, advising paramedics in the metro area that triple time would be available to plug holes over two shifts.

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

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### Scrooge's legacy

Sunday Times, General News, 17/08/2025, Ben Harvey, Page 25

Crisis is the most overused word in the English language, especially when in the hands of a journalist. [...] It takes a fair bit to shock a population accustomed to ambulance ramping, bed blocking, cancelled surgeries and stretched waiting lists, but the litany of maintenance problems besetting Charlies gave us all pause for thought.

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

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### Gladstone Hospital bedblock forces child in extreme pain back in waiting room

The Courier Mail, Other, 16/08/2025, Jackie Sinnerton

A child in severe pain was placed in the public waiting room at Gladstone Hospital emergency department after being given pain killers and put onto an intravenous drip due to bed block — just weeks after a hospital executive downplayed nurses claims of "corridor medicine". "All patients are triaged appropriately by senior ED staff and are cared for and monitored according to their clinical need," Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service chief executive Lisa Blackler said on July 21.

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### Ambulance ramping continues to spiral as one in 10 patients wait more than 12 hours in emergency department

West Australian, Other, 16/08/2025, Jessica Page

Ambulance ramping continues to spiral further out of control with August on track for a new record as the Cook Government faces increasing pressure over the state of WA's health system. Analysis of St John WA data reveals ramping has averaged 242 hours per day in August, up from 226 hours in July when Health Minister Meredith Hammat vowed she was attacking it "from every angle".

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Millions in bonuses for public doctors

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 17/08/2025, Lanie Tindale, Page 6

Canberra public system doctors, already making hundreds of thousands a year, were given bonus payments while the government sought savings and paused recruitment of other health staff. Canberra Health Services is the only directorate to offer bonuses in the past three years, but says it is used to attract and keep specialist doctors in a competitive labour market.

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## INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Syphilis threat reaches Tassie

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 17/08/2025, Alison Foletta, Page 3

Syphilis has been declared a national health crisis by Australia's chief medical officer due to an increase in cases over the past 10 years. Family Planning Tasmania senior medical officer Dr Catherine Moulton said "alarmingly" the cases of the STI were on the rise in Tasmania as well.

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### Rare 'brain-eating amoeba' detected in Qld water. Can I catch it by drinking tapwater?

The New Daily, Other, 16/08/2025, Ian A. Wright

One of the world's most dangerous water-borne microorganisms, commonly called a "brain-eating amoeba", has recently been detected in two drinking water supplies in south-west Queensland. Both affected towns are about 750 kilometres west of Brisbane: Augathella (population roughly 300) and Charleville (population 3000).

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**Channel 10, 10 News (Weekend), 16/08/2025, Chris Bath**



NSW has had the highest number of influenza deaths this year, with 78, compared to 71 in Queensland and Victoria. There have been 280 flu deaths nationwide in the first half of the year, as well as 783 COVID deaths as of July, with doctors warning that declining vaccination rates are weakening protection.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### At-home fetal monitors linked to stillbirths

Sun Herald, General News, 17/08/2025, Kate Aubusson, Page 14

Australia's medical device watchdog is warning pregnant women against using popular portable fetal heart monitors, after the devices were implicated in six stillbirths and newborn deaths since 2022. The most recent death was reported to the Therapeutic Goods Administration on Tuesday, a spokesperson said.

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### The problem with 'finfluencers'

Sunday Age, Business News, 17/08/2025, Victoria Devine, Page 32

For better or worse, when people go looking for life advice or want to find answers to burning questions they increasingly turn to social media. [...] In 2022, the Therapeutic Goods Administration announced restrictions on how influencers post about products such as vitamins, protein powders, supplements, sunscreen, medical devices and medicines.

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

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### Why Trump's latest veiled threat could spell trouble for the pride of Australia

7news.com.au, Other, 16/08/2025, Tim Lester

It was a telling measure of the value Australians put in the country's 77-year-old Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. [...] "We are now taking an average of 466 days for a new innovative medicine to be listed on the PBS, and that's after it's already been deemed safe and effective by the Therapeutic Goods Administration," according to Liz de Somer.

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## OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

### 'Preventable': Disturbing statistics reveal deadly problem across major state

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 16/08/2025, Alexandra Feiam

Victoria has been rocked by the highest number of fatal overdoses in a decade, with nearly 600 residents dying from drug overdoses last year alone. [...] Monash University Associate Professor Shalini Arunogiri told NewsWire the bleak new figures were a reminder of the lack of treatment available for opioid addictions.

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

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