



TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 21st December 2025

Today's News will not be sent on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, or New Year's Day. Prominent media items captured during this period will be reported in the following day's summary. Access to Isentia's Mediportal will be available during this period and any recurring reports set up in the platform will be delivered as normal. Please contact support@isentia.com if you need to set up any bespoke media monitoring for this period.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sun Herald \(page 14\)](#)** reports that weight loss drug Wegovy has been approved to be subsidised under the PBS to treat obesity in patients who have established heart disease. A Novo Nordisk spokesman said it was "an important first step toward securing more equitable access".
- **[The Sunday Mail Brisbane \(page 3\)](#)** reports that illicit tobacconists in Queensland are shifting sales to public places such as fast-food car parks, using QR codes and WhatsApp to arrange handovers. A Queensland Health spokeswoman said the three-month closure of 159 stores and the seizure of \$16.8 million worth of illegal products had significantly disrupted illicit supply and shifted sales back to compliant businesses.
- **[The Sunday Mail Brisbane \(page 7\)](#)** reports that parents of children using Hummingbird House have called for a meeting with Wesley Mission Queensland to clarify the hospice's future. Families expressed concerns over recent staffing and management changes, cancelled

admissions, and a lack of consultation affecting care and support for children with life-limiting conditions.

- **The Sunday Territorian (page 1)** reports that the NT government has announced a ban on gender-affirming hormones and puberty blockers for patients under 18. NT Health Minister Steve Edgington said "Territory kids deserve to grow up free from these dangerous ideologically driven practices with irreversible consequences".

MINISTER BUTLER

The Year in Review

OUTinPerth, Other, 20/12/2025, Meta Time

So much happened in 2025, here's our look back over all the events of the last 12 months, starting with what happened in January. [...] Soon Health Minister Mark Butler was announcing a review that would take several years to complete.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Adelaide sexologist Niamh Mannion is lifting the taboo on disability and pleasure

Adelaide Now, Other, 20/12/2025, Paul Ashenden

Meet the 27-year-old challenging taboos around sex while helping people with disabilities and neurodivergence understand their bodies, boundaries and pleasure. Niamh Mannion, Adelaide sexologist for the neurodiverse and people with a disability Niamh Mannion, Adelaide sexologist for the neurodiverse and people with a disability.

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

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PRIMARY CARE

Calls for clarity on kids' hospice

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 21/12/2025, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 7

Devastated parents of children who have relied on the beleaguered Hummingbird House have demanded a meeting with operators Wesley Mission Queensland for certainty on the future of the state's only children's hospice. More than 50 Queensland parents, including those caring for babies and children with life-limiting palliative conditions, are speaking out about their "deep concerns" regarding recent management and staffing changes at the facility.

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

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Puberty blues

Sunday Territorian, General News, 21/12/2025, Lottie Hood, Page 1

The NT government has announced a ban on puberty blockers and gender-affirming hormones for under 18s, stating Territorian children should be safe from "dangerous ideologically driven practices". NT Health Minister Steve Edgington said the government was following several other countries and jurisdictions like Queensland and banning the treatment.

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St John NT farewells another senior leader

Sunday Territorian, General News, 21/12/2025, Lottie Hood, Page 14

The St John NT ambulance service has been dealt another blow as a second executive staffer jumps ship. Andrew Thomas, St John NT's director of ambulance services for the past six years, was announced on Thursday as the new executive director for Bushfires NT.

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

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Adelaide hospital Christmas row a stupid reminder of twisted PC

priorities

The Courier Mail, Other, 20/12/2025, David Penberthy

After this dismal week it is hard to imagine a more depressingly appropriate end to the year as we attempt to celebrate Christmas amid the hideousness of recent days. It is a small local story and a completely stupid one at that.

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Cancer centre weeks away from public transition, where does it leave pharmacy?

The Border Mail, Other, 20/12/2025, Chelsea Wilson

Albury Wodonga Health will operate the Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre from January 23, 2026. The Border Mailsighted a letter compiled by a group of senior doctors in October 2025 listing their concerns regarding the transition.

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POPULATION HEALTH

How to skip a party season sore head

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 21/12/2025, Sarah Marinos, Page 36

The holiday season is a time for celebration, but it can also be a time for overindulgence. With countless parties, work functions and family gatherings, it's easy to get caught up in the festivities and forget about your health.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Playing with fire to buy tobacco

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 21/12/2025, Andreas Nicola, Page 3

Illicit tobacconists are turning to selling their products in public places like McDonald's car parks to avoid being raided by authorities. Multiple businesses across Queensland are shifting to handing phone numbers out through QR codes on WhatsApp and asking people to meet in various carparks over different periods to try and keep selling their products despite a massive crackdown.

Also reported by: [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

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Tobacco shop owner 'refusing to cooperate with police' after shakedown sign appears

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2025

The owner of a northern Victorian tobacco store is "refusing to cooperate" with investigators, after a threatening sign was stuck to the shop door, police say. The message left on the door of the EZ Mart on Campbell Street, Swan Hill, last Saturday stated, "You have 24 hours to contact the Commission", and included a phone number to contact through the encrypted social messaging app WhatsApp.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

'Sickening': Docs fear teen tanning trends' results

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 21/12/2025, Isabella Pesch and Jackie Sinnerton, Page 21

Young Australians are causing irreversible damage to their skin as they jump on "shocking and sickening" tanning trends being circulated online. Videos and photos encouraging people to make their own tanning oils, avoid sunscreen and applauding prominent tan lines have exploded in popularity, including harmful trends such as showing off "sun tattoos" - where the skin is deliberately branded by using SPF to outline a pattern then being overexposed to harmful sunburn to leave a temporary 'tattoo' of lighter skin underneath.

Also reported by: [Sunday Territorian \(Darwin\)](#), [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Hidden chronic strain

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 21/12/2025, Page 22

Chronic breathlessness, a symptom often overlooked by health-care systems, is associated with longer lengths of hospital stay on already overstretched healthcare resources, says Flinders University research. The study highlights an urgent need for clinicians and policymakers to recognise chronic breathlessness as a major driver of hospital admissions and health-care costs.

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

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Diabetes now being shown in good light

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 21/12/2025, Page 24

People with type 2 diabetes may find it easier to manage their blood sugar if they're working in an office filled with natural light. A Maastricht University Medical Centre team in the Netherlands says daylight plays an important role in our body clocks.

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The smiling little boy who can't be cured in Australia

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 20/12/2025, Claire Sadler, Page 24

Two-year-old Connor Marsh is in the fight of his life as he battles metastatic brain cancer. But the treatment he needs is not accessible in Australia, making the devastating news even harder for his family.

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

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Look after yourselves: stay on top of alcohol-related health risks this festive season

Sunday Examiner, General News, 21/12/2025, Alison Lai, Page 6

Is it a sign of age encroaching when each passing year seems to rocket along even faster? That said, the majority of Tasmanians look forward to the Christmas-new year period and I am one of them.

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Doctor behind notorious Sarco euthanasia pod shows off new 'suicide collar' that kills patients by applying 'pressure' to the neck

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 21/12/2025, Imogen Garfinkel

It's a fresh Monday morning in the quaint city of Amersfoort in the Netherlands , and a group of elderly guests are listening attentively to the words of an Australian physician. Dr Philip Nitschke, the first doctor in the world to administer a legal, lethal voluntary injection, and the inventor of the controversial Sarco pod, is presenting his latest gadget.

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How to make a meal of improving your mental health

Sun Herald, General News, 21/12/2025, Sarah Berry, Page 15

A decade ago, Australian Professor Felice Jacka became the first to show a direct relationship between diet quality and hippocampal volume in humans. People with depression tend to have smaller hippocampal volume.

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How a Queensland family is pushing for change after a devastating loss

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2025, Olivia Nunes

Tyler Pask was a dedicated family man. The father of three often spent his free time playing Minecraft or Pokémon with his children, and to his 10 nieces and nephews, he was the fun uncle.

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Former patients 'left waiting for justice' after damning report into Brisbane's Wolston Park Mental Hospital

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2025

Randall Carrington sits on a park bench at Manly Beach. It's 1977, and he's got a sun-kissed Australian tan and wavy blonde hair.

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IMMUNISATION

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Wearing the 'many hats' of a remote health worker

West Australian, Other, 20/12/2025

Sharon Walker has driven boats in Western Australia and graced the kitchens of a Northern Territory RSL club, but the job she's felt most at home in is health. Born in Sydney, Ms Walker had always been drawn to Darwin, and made the move to the Top End after connecting to her Aboriginal family there in 2017.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Weight-loss drugs subsidised for some

Sun Herald, General News, 21/12/2025, Henrietta Cook and Angus Thomson, Page 14

Weight-loss drugs are set to be subsidised by the federal government for the first time, but only for patients with obesity who have established heart disease. [...] While this class of drugs is currently only subsidised by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) for the treatment of diabetes, thousands of Australians are using them for weight loss, paying up to \$400 a month for private prescriptions.

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Breast cancer drug set to be added to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

9News, Other, 20/12/2025

Patients with an aggressive form of breast cancer could soon save thousands of dollars every month, as the government prepares to cover the cost of crucial medication. [...] Now, five years after it was first made available in Australia, The federal government is stepping in to help lighten the load, with the drug set to be added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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INTERIM AUSTRALIAN CDC

Dengue fever warning system to save lives

Dengue fever is increasingly claiming lives on our doorstep, and Australian outbreaks are often traced to travellers returning from popular holiday spots in our region. Southern Cross University and University of Queensland researchers are rolling out an early-warning system to help in Vietnam.

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Mozzie warning over virus outbreak

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 21/12/2025, Page 27

Australian holidaymakers are being urged to prevent mosquito bites this summer after research found warmer temperatures heighten the risk of Ross River virus outbreaks, especially in riverland and coastal regions. The University of Adelaide researchers found that Ross River virus risk increases when temperatures rise, but there were differences across geographic regions.

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WA researchers find 'alarming number' of children with strep A

ABC Online, Other, 20/12/2025

A team of West Australian researchers has found one in six children living in the Kimberley region are carrying the potentially life-threatening infection strep A, with many cases left undiagnosed. The Kids Research Institute Australia has released its findings from the Missing Piece Surveillance Study, which involved weekly *Streptococcus pyogenes* (strep A) testing of 250 school students from Broome and Derby, about 2,000 kilometres north of Perth.

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

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Worrying 'detection' in quiet coastal town sparks summer warning: 'Debilitating'

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 20/12/2025

With warmer temperatures and more rainfall on the way. Aussies are being urged to cover up when heading outside. A worrying find in a coastal region popular among travellers has prompted an urgent summer warning. The plea comes after authorities in eastern Victoria conducted a routine check on a mosquito trap in Loch Sport, situated on Ninety Mile Beach, last week.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Channel 10, 10 News (Weekend), 20/12/2025, Chris Bath

Medical professionals and users of weight loss drug Wegovy have welcomed a recommendation to make the drug more available at a cheaper price.

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

[Play Now](#)

2GB, Weekends, 20/12/2025, Jason Morrison

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme has recommended weight-loss medication Wegovy to be added to the PBS.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Popular snackballs sold at Coles recalled

Sunday Territorian, General News, 21/12/2025, Emma Kirk, Page 5

A snack sold at Coles supermarkets nationally and online has been recalled over fears it could cause injury. Smartfoods Limited recalled Tom and Luke Low Carb Snackballs in hazelnut and raspberry flavours after plastic was detected inside the packaging. Food Standards Australia and New Zealand warned food products containing plastic may cause illness or injury if consumed.

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Consumers misled by Health Star Rating as government considers mandatory labels

7news.com.au, Other, 20/12/2025, Katharina Loesche

'Is it telling the truth? Can you really trust a product if it has a four-star or five-star rating?' Many Australians say they do not trust or understand the Health Star Rating system on food packaging, even as the federal government weighs up making the labels mandatory.

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'Tis the season for leftovers. Here are the Christmas food safety rules we always forget.

Mamamia, Other, 20/12/2025, Catie Powers

Christmas is a time for presents and food. So much food. But amid the ham, pavlova, and your aunt's insistence on "just one more slice," it's easy to forget one crucial thing: food safety.

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