



TODAY'S NEWS

Wednesday, 7th January 2026

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [Daily Telegraph](#) (page 1) and [The Nightly](#) (page 19) report Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has announced a \$213 million grant for 350 Commonwealth-supported cancer nurses, saying the McGrath Cancer Nurses are "lifelines", as the 18th Pink Test raised \$8.1 million towards the McGrath's Foundation's breast cancer support.
- [The Age](#) (page 1) leads coverage reporting that Victoria is facing its most intense heatwave since Black Summer, prompting health warnings, as new research shows bushfires significantly increase emergency department attendances and costs.
- [The Advertiser](#) (page 1) reports the ambulance union has accepted a 13.5 per cent pay rise over four years, as the South Australian Government locks in multiple health union agreements ahead of the March election while nurses remain in dispute.
- [The Australian](#) (online) reports infectious diseases experts have warned the US CDC's cut of recommended childhood vaccines from 17 to 11 diseases risks undermining Australia's National Immunisation Program as local rates already fell from 92.8 per cent to 91.6 per cent at 12 months in 2024.
- The [West Australian](#) (page 1) reports new WA Health data shows rising food insecurity, obesity, smoking and sedentary behaviour amid cost-of-living pressures, with AMA WA

president Kyle Hoath warning these are straining hospitals and called for faster investment in preventive health and tougher tobacco control laws.

- The **West Australian** (page 10) reports the WA Government has launched a \$100 million Low-Interest Loan Scheme offering up to \$20 million per aged-care provider at reduced rates to build and refurbish residential beds, aiming to ease hospital ramping.
- **The Australian** (online) reports thousands of young UK junior doctors are moving to Australia for higher pay and shorter hours, with the system supported by Medicare, Australia's government-funded universal insurance scheme that provides free and subsidised treatment.
- **The Age** (page 17) reports Australian-led research has shown the giardia parasite has both sexual and asexual forms and proposed a new theory for how asexual offshoots in pathogens can help zoonotic infections jump from animals to humans, reshaping understanding of "beaver fever" evolution and drug resistance.

MINISTER BUTLER

Flying the pink flag

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 07/01/2026, John Buckley, Page 4

In place of Albanese and Wells, federal Health Minister Mark Butler showed up on behalf of the government, along with federal Opposition Leader Sussan Ley. They were joined by Governor-General Sam Mostyn and NSW governor Margaret Beazley, and other notables and players' partners.

Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#)

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Tickled pink at the SCG

Daily Telegraph, General News, 07/01/2026, Lachlan McKirdy & Harrison Finlay, Page 1

All 46,161 fans who packed into the Sydney Cricket Ground for day three of the final Ashes Test were in some way tickled pink. [...] Instead, Minister Butler fronted, with a \$213m grant for 350 Commonwealth-supported cancer nurses, the biggest cancer nursing boost to date.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#)

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Jane would be tickled pink with her legacy

The Nightly, General News, 06/01/2026, Clareese Packer & Jasper Bruce, Page 19

Australian cricket great Glenn McGrath says his old mate Shane Warne continues to inspire him as he spoke of his late wife Jane's battle with cancer, which sparked their fundraising journey and the Sydney Pink Test. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the funding would allow more Australians with cancer to get the compassionate and expert care they deserve.

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Under pressure: The reality of Australia's hospital emergency departments

WEB Back Country Bulletin, Other, 06/01/2026, Kimberly Grabham

Walk into Royal Adelaide Hospital's emergency department on any given day and you'll find a chaotic but functioning system. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler counters that urgent care clinics are making a difference and that the government is working towards a comprehensive National Health Reform Agreement.

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From contraception to menopause and IVF: How \$25 scripts will reshape women's health

Women's Agenda, Other, 06/01/2026, Katy Gallagher

On New Year's Day, Australians woke up to cheaper medicines. [...] This year, I'll continue working

closely with the Minister for Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, and Assistant Minister for Women and Health, Rebecca White, to deliver better health outcomes for women.

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Hundreds sign up to bulk billing program

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2026, Page 6

More than one hundred GP clinics in WA have signed up to the federal government's Bulk Billing Incentive Program since it launched in November. [...] Bulk billing was also a hot topic at the 2025 RACGP annual conference (GP25) where Federal Health Minister Mark Butler was grilled on how he expected the program to work.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 06/01/2026, Olivia Caisley & Catherine Murphy

Interview with Health Minister Mark Butler, about announcements in regard to cheaper medicines for PBS-listed medicines at \$25, as well as the new tool 1-800-MEDICARE. Butler points out they've seen thousands of people already utilise the 1-800-MEDICARE tool in the few days that it has been up and running. He adds that those who were supposed to go to the emergency departments didn't have to go due to being made aware of the 1-800-MEDICARE tool.

Continuing on: [ABC News \(Sydney\)](#).

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Channel 10, 10 News, 06/01/2026, Natalie Forrest

The McGrath Foundation is close to achieving its multimillion fundraising target as part of the annual Pink Test at the SCG. A record Commonwealth partnership supporting 350 cancer nurses is announced, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler saying this is "an investment of an additional \$213 million over the five years from next year into this foundation".

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Channel 9, Today , 06/01/2026, Alison Piotrowski & Joel Dry

Interview with Health Minister Mark Butler. Butler explains that the 1-800-MEDICARE tool provides Australian all day free advice in support of Medicare. He adds that tens and thousands of Australians are already utilising them where two thirds who were supposed to go to the hospital didn't have to, relieving hospital pressures.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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From contraception to menopause and IVF: How \$25 scripts will reshape women's health

Women's Agenda, Other, 06/01/2026, Katy Gallagher

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DEPARTMENT

All for charity

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 07/01/2026, John Buckley, Page 4

Closer to lunch, an assortment of 490 guests began to file into Allianz Stadium next door for the McGrath Foundation high tea, where chairman John Conde, chief executive Holly Masters and her successor in waiting, Ryan Barlow, played host. NSW Liberal leader Kellie Sloane showed. [...] Labor MP Dan Repacholi and his wife, Alex also made it down, joined by Department of Health Secretary Blair Comley, who rounded out the government entourage.

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Top Australian drugs for government cost, prescription volume

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 06/01/2026, Shane Prenzler

The Department of Health has released its list of the top 50 PBS drugs by highest government cost in 2024-25. Pembrolizumab (brand name Keytruda) was the leading drug, costing the government nearly \$670 million. Pembrolizumab (brand name Keytruda) was the leading drug, costing the government nearly \$670 million.

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The Water Cooler: Comings and goings in the public sector

PS News, Other, 06/01/2026, Andrew McLaughlin

A breakdown of the latest appointments and moves in the Australian Public Service, the wider public sector and across the public services of the states and territories. [...] Band 3 Celia Street has been appointed as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

WA aged-care providers to access cheaper loans to boost beds

West Australian, General News, 07/01/2026, Oliver Lane, Page 10

Aged-care providers will now be able to access low-interest loans to construct more beds as the Cook Government launches its \$100 million scheme. The \$100m fund, dubbed the Low-Interest Loan Scheme, will be available for aged-care providers to refurbish and expand aged-care infrastructure.

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\$40M unlocks 23 new beds in two rural aged care rebuilds

The Weekly Source, Other, 06/01/2026, Lauren Broomham

After getting the green light for new beds in the 2016-17 Aged Care Approvals Round, the Temora expansion first gained Federal backing in 2018. After a decade in planning – and a significant setback when funding was pulled in 2023 – Whiddon's long-awaited redevelopment of its Temora aged care home is finally moving forward.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Spender urges wider net in beefed-up laws on hate speech

Age, General News, 07/01/2026, Matthew Knott, Page 9

The Albanese government is being lobbied to include protections for disabled and LGBTQI Australians in beefed-up hate speech laws as it prepares to circulate draft legislation within days. [...] Peak lobby group People With Disability Australia has also urged the government to go further by outlawing serious vilification against disabled Australians, not just language threatening violence.

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Rehab holiday 'failure'

Herald Sun, Edition Changes, 07/01/2026, Tom Wenn, Page 10

A youth offender who went on a taxpayer funded holiday to Gold Coast theme parks for his rehabilitation, has allegedly been arrested again. [...] The alleged offender is one of two youths, previously convicted of home invasions and carjackings, who went to the Gold Coast as part of a holiday funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#)

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State's disability services do not talk. Now's our chance to fix it

Hobart Mercury, General News, 07/01/2026, Karelle Logan, Page 14

For 19 years, I have been the primary advocate for my son, Spencer Logan, while keeping him alive against the odds. [...] We are often told that this is now an NDIS matter, as if support can simply switch on overnight.

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Why the failed NDIS is a story of preventable harm and institutional negligence

The Australian, Other, 06/01/2026, Claire-Louise McCrackan

The National Disability Insurance Scheme was meant to be one of Australia's great social reforms: practical, humane and safe. It was meant to take people with disability out of neglect, provide meaningful support, and give families confidence that their loved ones would be cared for long after they were gone.

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PRIMARY CARE

New Medicare hotline gives 24/7 support

West Australian, General News, 07/01/2026, Page 11

Australians now have 24/7 access to trusted health advice with 1800MEDICARE offering free nationwide support for those experiencing illness, injury or uncertainty. The service connects callers to a registered nurse who will listen, assess symptoms and guide people to the correct course of care.

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

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As Sydney's 5 million population grows rapidly, how will we live?

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 07/01/2026, Aidan Elwig Pollock, Page 3

Sydney is growing, fast. [...] Growing healthcare costs are straining the primary healthcare system.

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Severe injuries on rise

Courier Mail, General News, 07/01/2026, Andreas Nicola, Page 17

Trauma surgeons across Queensland are seeing an increase in more severe injuries due to car crashes as the state's peak motoring body calls for "urgent action" to bring down the devastating 16-year-high road toll. [...] "Fortunately, with the improvements and training of our doctors, nurses, and all the health professionals, we are able to save more lives and also to have better outcomes, but some of the injuries are still lifelong burden, disabilities."

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2CC, Canberra Live, 06/01/2026, Rod Henshaw

Interview with AMA ACT president Dr. Kerrie Aust about penicillin allergies. Aust discusses research showing that nine out of ten Australians who report a penicillin allergy are not actually allergic, and explains the different risk categories for reactions, from low-risk inherited labels to high-risk severe responses. She recommends that patients with a penicillin allergy label review their history with a GP to determine if further testing is needed.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Vape laws delay defended

West Australian, Edition Changes, 07/01/2026, Oliver Lane & Yousuf Shameel, Page 17

The Cook Government has defended the time it is taking to introduce new laws to crack down on the illicit tobacco and vape trade, despite a rise of violence and arson incidents in Perth. Senior Government minister Amber-Jade Sanderson said the process of addressing the illegal trade in WA was being done correctly.

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

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No excuse for lag on vapes

West Australian, General News, 07/01/2026, Jessica Page, Page 13

The law of unintended consequences is a legislator's worst nightmare and the rise of the illicit vape trade in WA is a prime example. But it's no excuse to go slow now. There were warnings three years ago that kids were getting lured in by flavours, names and colours that were an obvious, and vile, attempt to use a legal loophole for therapeutic nicotine to target a new generation.

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Price hikes fuel WA's unhealthy habits

West Australian, General News, 07/01/2026, Jessica Page, Page 1

The rising cost of living is being blamed for WA's unhealthy habits with new figures confirming smoking rates are growing, screen-time is up, physical activity down and more families cannot afford fresh food. [...] "Of all the numbers that struck me, that was staggering," Australian Medical Association WA President Kyle Hoath said.

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

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Worst heat wave since Black Summer looms

Age, General News, 07/01/2026, Daniella White & Alexander Darling, Page 1

Victoria is bracing for its most intense heatwave since the Black Summer bushfires, with temperatures forecast to soar to 45 degrees in parts of the state over a threeday burst of extreme heat. [...] Meanwhile, a six-year study by Monash researchers and published in the Environmental Research journal has found bushfires across Victoria significantly increase attendance at emergency departments, costing the state's health budget an extra \$145 million.

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Bub milk donor a bit too chilled

Courier Mail, General News, 07/01/2026, Jackie Sinnerton & Isabella Pesch, Page 5

A Queensland human milk donation group has come under fire for allowing a mother to obtain breast milk for her baby that was provided by a cannabis user. Lactation experts warn the levels of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in breast milk can be eight times more than traces in the blood.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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Keep cool + carry on

Herald Sun, General News, 07/01/2026, Robyn Riley, Page 1

As we head into the "most significant" heatwave south-eastern parts of the country have seen in six years, health experts say key to surviving the summer scorcher is to keep hydrated, and that starts with good old-fashioned tap water. And whether that is straight from the tap, made into ice cubes or flavoured with natural fruit like lemon or pineapple, drinking water often throughout the day is crucial for all ages this week.

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Sniffing out the risks

Hobart Mercury, General News, 07/01/2026, Nathan Schmidt, Page 10

More than 40,000 high-risk items were seized after detection by biosecurity detector dogs at Australia's airports, sea ports, and mail centres in 2025, including more than 9600 by international mail alone. [...] Almost 64 tonnes of meat products were confiscated by biosecurity authorities in 2025.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#).

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Keep cool, Geelong, as mercury heads for 42C

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 07/01/2026, Amelie Blanc, Page 7

Geelong residents have been urged to prepare for extreme heat today, with temperatures forecast to soar to 42C. [...] Ambulance Victoria state health commander Ross Salathiel said heat-related illnesses, including heatstroke, posed a significant risk during extreme conditions.

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Prepare for the worst conditions since Black Summer fires

Border Mail, General News, 07/01/2026, Blair Thomson, Page 3

Emergency service personnel are bracing for some of the worst weather conditions since the Black Summer fires, with 40-plus degree days forecast from Wednesday to Friday. [...] Ambulance Victoria state health commander Ross Salathiel said people should also be aware of the risks of heat stroke.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

Heatwave health risk: The facts you need to know

The Australian, Other, 06/01/2026, Stephen Lunn

With temperatures set to hit the 40s in Melbourne and Adelaide this week, reach 39 in Sydney and Canberra, and exceed 45C in some regions, understanding how to navigate a prolonged heatwave is a vital health priority. Extreme heat causes more hospitalisations in Australia than any other extreme weather event, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, accounting for more than 7000 hospitalisations and 293 deaths in the 10 years to 2022.

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Walk while you work: Are the extra steps using an under-desk treadmill worth the cost?

ABC Online, Other, 06/01/2026, Christian Brakenridge

Recent surveys estimate more than 6.7 million Australians — almost half of all workers, and the majority in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra — work from home at least some of the time in paid or unpaid roles. With that increase in working from home, it's easy to spend too long sitting, which is now recognised as bad for our health .

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WA Police raid Bunbury tobacconist after suspected firebomb of different vape store

ABC Online, Other, 06/01/2026, Madigan Landry, Jacqueline Lynch & Anna Cox

A tobacco store in Bunbury, 150 kilometres south of Perth, has been raided less than 72 hours after a different shop in the same town is suspected to have been firebombed. Police descended on the tobacco shop this morning, seizing vapes and cigarettes.

[Read More](#)

Teen faces court over Baldivis convenience store arson linked to illegal tobacco trade

ABC Online, Other, 06/01/2026, David Weber

A 14-year-old boy who allegedly set fire to a Baldivis convenience store may be facing threats from organised crime figures, the Perth Children's Court has heard. The youth was charged after the convenience store was set ablaze on December 22.

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Illegal vapes and tobacco seized in Newcastle/Hunter in crackdown

Newcastle Herald, Other, 06/01/2026, Damon Cronshaw

Illegal vapes, cigarettes and tobacco with an estimated street value of more than \$2.8 million have been seized in Hunter New England in six months. NSW Health inspectors conducted more than 220 retail inspections in the district from July 1 to December 12.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Aussie mum and dad both diagnosed with brain cancer months apart

9News, Other, 06/01/2026

It's a fight a Perth mother and father didn't see coming. [...] According to Cancer Australia, there's a one in 156 chance of being diagnosed with brain cancer by the age of 85.

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Protect your sight

If you're living with diabetes, you've probably had plenty of advice about managing your blood glucose, eating well and staying active. However, there's one part of your body that deserves just as much attention and that often gets overlooked your eyes.

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Hiding in plain sight

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/02/2026, Page 104

It is well-known that diabetes can affect the eyes, kidneys, feet, heart, and the circulation. However, there are other complications of diabetes that are much less recognised.

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2GB, Afternoons, 06/01/2026, Lucy Zelic

Interview with Chris O'Brien Lifehouse Dr. Sanjay Warriar about early detection of breast cancer. Warriar discusses common signs such as breast lumps, the importance of early detection, and explains that mammograms remain the standard screening tool because they can detect cancers before symptoms appear. He notes that emerging alternatives like blood tests and new imaging technologies are promising but not yet suitable for population-wide screening.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

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IMMUNISATION

Low vax, high risk

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 07/01/2026, Isabella Pesch, Page 6

Nearly one third of Queensland students have been avoiding free school immunisation programs for life-threatening infections like HPV and whooping cough, with vaccination rates plummeting to their lowest level in six years. Health authorities are concerned plunging immunisation rates could trigger deadly diseases to make a comeback.

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How does new US vaccination regime differ from Australia's?

The Australian, Other, 07/01/2026, Stephen Lunn

Infectious diseases experts are concerned the US government's decision to cut the number of recommended childhood vaccines could undermine trust in Australia's vaccination program. The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention on Monday changed its guidelines to recommend children be vaccinated against 11 diseases, down from 17 under the previous guidelines.

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Channel 10, 10 News, 06/01/2026, Sharyn Ghidella

Vaccination rates for key immunisations have dropped sharply across Queensland schools, with less than half of students in some areas receiving recommended vaccines. HPV vaccination for Year 7 students fell to just over 61% in 2024, down 10% from 2019, while diphtheria and tetanus rates have also declined. The Sunshine Coast has the lowest uptake, while the Torres Strait Islands and Cape communities have the highest, with medical experts blaming vaccine disinformation and conflicting advice.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 06/01/2026

Queensland's state school immunisation program has hit a six-year low, with HPV vaccine uptake among Year 7 students falling from 74.5% in 2019 to just over 61% in 2024. More than a third of students have missed the free program, with rates as low as 43% on the Sunshine Coast, while remote regions such as Torres and Cape lead uptake at 77%. Health authorities warn that pandemic disruption, low consent returns, and vaccine hesitancy are driving the decline, increasing the risk of preventable disease outbreaks.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Millions of people catch this nasty parasite every year from pets now we know why

Age, General News, 07/01/2026, Angus Dalton, Page 17

They call it beaver fever, and there's a good chance you've had it. The giardia parasite infects 280 million people a year, including 600,000 Australians, by colonising the small intestine, robbing its host of nutrients and unleashing cramping, bloating and greasy diarrhoea.

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

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ADHD drugs BMI link

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 07/01/2026, Page 12

Children and teenagers with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) particularly those taking medication could be at risk of a higher BMI, international research suggests. Researchers in South Korea compared the height and BMI of almost 13,000 children aged six to 11 and 22,000 teens over time.

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Beyond the scales

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/02/2026, Page 111

For many Australians, losing weight is about more than appearance; it's about reclaiming health, confidence, and joy in daily life. New research from CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, has revealed that the benefits of losing weight reach far beyond physical appearance or even clinical markers of health.

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Full speed ahead on clinical trials roadmap

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2026, Cathy O'Leary, Page 14

There are solid benefits that come from clinical trials, for patients, doctors and researchers alike. Now a WA roadmap is trying to accelerate the way forward.

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Are crabs animals and should we experiment on monkeys? Major review of Australia's research code to mull tough questions

The Guardian, Other, 07/01/2026, Petra Stock

Animal sentience, categorising crustaceans as animals, and rehoming lab animals are all on the table as the Australian code for animal research is scrutinised for the first time in a decade. More than 845,000 animals – including mice, rats, guinea pigs, rabbits and primates – are used in laboratories in Australia each year, based on data from Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 06/01/2026, Kylie Baxter

Interview with HACSU Delegate and Ambulance Communications Officer Becc Gibson about ambulance ramping and transfer of care targets in Tasmania. Gibson says peak Christmas demand saw hospitals repeatedly miss the 60-minute ambulance transfer target, with some ambulances stuck for hours. She supports the government's plan to move to a 45-minute target but argues that it will only be realistic if backed by significant staffing and resourcing across emergency departments, hospitals and Ambulance Tasmania.

Continuing on: [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#).

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Mum's watch house death 'indictment of system'

Northern Territory News, General News, 07/01/2026, Zizi Averill & Gera Kazakov, Page 6

The death of a mother of five in an outback watch house was a "devastating indictment of systemic failure" in the Territory, her family's lawyers say. O'Brien Criminal and Civil Solicitors say they will act for the family of the 44-year-old woman known for cultural reasons as Kumanjayi Dempsey.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

A year to save Australia here is what I would do

Northern Territory News, General News, 07/01/2026, Mike O'Connor, Page 11

There are some things that need to change in this country over the next 12 months and so driven by a sense of civic pride and a determination to annoy, irritate and enrage as many people as possible here is my list. [...] Stop avoiding the fact that we face a shameful health care crisis with long-stay patients now occupying 10.4 per cent of all occupied Queensland hospital beds including 688 elderly patients in need of an aged care facility, 142 of those with dementia or other high care needs with 350 young patients also stuck in hospitals, more than 50 per cent of them with a mental health-related diagnosis.

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Delays to key hospital a tough pill to swallow

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 07/01/2026, Keith Woods, Page 6

Here's a poser for you dear readers. Who said this, on November 6, 2022, about the proposed Coomera Hospital: "We are several hundred beds short on the northern Gold Coast alone.

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William Spiteri death sparks Gladstone Hospital community outrage

Gold Coast Bulletin, Other, 06/01/2026, Gabriel Garcia and Carlie Walker

A story of a Central Queensland man who died after languishing in Gladstone hospital for almost two weeks has created shockwaves within the community with readers flooding social media pages expressing their thoughts. [...] Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service Chief Executive Officer Lisa Blackler said while she did not comment publicly about individuals' health care, she could say the

"clinical teams put the safety and wellbeing of all patients as their priority and work hard to provide the best possible care available to them."

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ED wait times hit national high

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2026, Page 9

West Australians waited the longest in emergency departments over the last year, new data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare show. On average, 90% of patients who visited an ED were seen within 229 minutes. In some other states patients were seen in less than half that time.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Ramping down

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 07/01/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 1

The ambulance union has agreed to a pay rise of 13.5 per cent over four years as the Labor government locks in most health unions with deals ahead of the March election. Ambos, doctors and allied health workers have signed pay agreements, with only the nurses union still campaigning for a pay rise giving them leverage as they plan a rally at Parliament House on February 5, just over a month before the state election.

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

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Hospital nixes 'dangerous' patient alerts

Cairns Post, General News, 07/01/2026, Samuel Davis, Page 1

A violent forensic patient who escaped Cairns Hospital's mental health unit remains at large with Health Minister Tim Nicholls tight-lipped about an election promise to better protect health workers from attacks. But Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service's CEO has warned against adopting a public alert system when dangerous patients abscond from its facilities.

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Tragic loss sparked regional revolution

Border Mail, General News, 07/01/2026, Jac Marshall, Page 7

For a midwife, there is no place more sacred than the maternity ward - a place of new beginnings and hard-won joys. But for the family of Torie Finnane, the hospital where she dedicated her life became the site of an unthinkable tragedy that, five years on, is fuelling a revolution in regional healthcare.

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Why young doctors are swapping the UK for Australia

The Australian, Other, 06/01/2026, Katie Strick

Henry Gibbons, 30, and Holly Baker, 29, cannot quite believe their new parallel universe. [...] At its core is Medicare , a government-funded universal insurance scheme that provides free and subsidised treatment.

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AdPha warns of health system growth disconnect

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 06/01/2026

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has welcomed news of this year's record intake of graduate doctors into the Queensland health system, but warned that without comparable investment in hospital pharmacy interns, the state risks undermining medicines safety and the long-term sustainability of its health system.

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Channel 10, 10 News, 06/01/2026, Tiffany Warne

More than 2,000 ambulance officers will receive a 13.5% pay rise over four years after union members overwhelmingly approved a new pay deal with the state government. The agreement, backed by 90% of workers, also includes a 200% increase in overtime rates and measures aimed at improving retention and recruitment.

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FIVEAA, Afternoons, 06/01/2026, Mel Usher

Interview with SA Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector Kyam Maher about a new ambulance officers enterprise agreement. Maher says 90% of paramedics voted to accept the deal, delivering a 13.5% pay rise over four years, above-inflation wage growth and improved allowances, penalty rates and regional incentives. He also highlights additional frontline health staff and hospital resources, describing the agreement as a strong start to 2026 for the public health system.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

PBS expenditure by the numbers

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 06/01/2026, Shane Prenzler

How much did the government spend on supply of medicines in 2024-25 compared to the previous year? Government report reveals all Government expenditure was \$19.1 billion for the supply of medicines from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, according to a new PBS report.

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Weight loss jabs' downsides downplayed

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 06/01/2026

The enthusiastic uptake of injectable medications for weight loss, including semaglutide, liraglutide and tirzepatide, has raised concerns that some of the side effects - particularly regarding mental health - are being overlooked. With the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) recommending the PBS listing of Wegovy (semaglutide, Novo Nordisk) for weight loss (PD), their use is expected to become more widespread and potentially reach a more diverse demographic.

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Wegovy gets the nod, Shingrix age lowering knocked back

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 06/01/2026

In the outcomes of its November meeting released at the end of last year, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) recommended an authority-required PBS listing for Wegovy (semaglutide, Novo Nordisk) for adults who have established cardiovascular disease with obesity (PD Breaking News 19 Dec 2025).

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Heidi Murphy's question as the government spruiks Fitzroy pill-testing site success

3AW, Other, 06/01/2026

More than a thousand people have had drugs checked in the four months since the city's first fixed pill-testing site opened in Fitzroy. Victorian Mental Health Minister Ingrid Stitt told 3AW Mornings, "At the conclusion of this trial in the middle of this year, we'll make some decisions about the permanent arrangements, including the fixed site and also the festival and events programme that we will undertake in a permanent way going forward.

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2CC, Canberra Live, 06/01/2026, Rod Henshaw

Interview with Deakin University professor Catherine Bennett about the US CDC narrowing routine childhood vaccine recommendations. Bennett says the changes will reduce vaccine uptake and disproportionately harm disadvantaged children, increasing risks from diseases like hepatitis B, meningitis and measles. She warns that the move is out of step with global practice and could have international implications, including higher disease risk for travellers and renewed outbreaks.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Dozens of sunscreens have been recalled, most of them mineral. What does this mean?

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 06/01/2026, Lauren Ironmonger

When consumer advocacy group CHOICE released the results of its independent testing of 20 popular sunscreens in June, it sent the industry into a tailspin. [...] Twenty sunscreens have been recalled by The Therapeutic Goods Administration since July.

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TGA ads new entries to prescribing medicines in pregnancy database

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 06/01/2026

Prescribers are being urged to review the categorisation system for prescribing medicines in pregnancy before issuing scripts to mothers-to-be. Five new entries have been added to the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA's) Prescribing Medicines in Pregnancy database.

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SPF scandal: Reassuring patients on sun protection

Medical Forum, Other, 06/01/2026

The second half of 2025 saw a number of brands take their sunscreen products off the shelves, and Australia's medicines regulatory authority probing SPF ratings. With question marks over the efficacy of SPF ratings, how can GPs ensure patients are being sun safe?

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TGA \$1 million Bendigo vapes bust

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 06/01/2026

An investigation into the suspected illegal supply and manufacture of vaping substances by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) led to a major operation targeting illicit vaping products in Bendigo. With assistance from Victoria Police, the TGA seized over 15,000 disposable vaping devices, vaping accessories and vaping substances with an estimated street value of more than \$1 million from a retail outlet and the home of the company directors.

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TGA ticked by WHO

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 06/01/2026

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has been designated as an 'Authority' by the World Health Organization, strengthening the Australian body's access to medicines. WHO Listed Authority (WLA) organisations are identified as national regulatory bodies that demonstrate advanced regulatory capability.

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Paracetamol is safe during pregnancy

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/02/2026, Page 8

Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration has provided important reassurance for expectant mothers, confirming that robust scientific evidence shows no causal link between paracetamol use during pregnancy and the development of autism or ADHD in children. Paracetamol remains the recommended treatment option for fever or pain during pregnancy when used as directed.

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Vitamin B6

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/02/2026, Page 97

Do you take any vitamin supplements? [...] (Products containing a daily dose of B6 above 10mg now require a warning label, from the Therapeutic Goods Administration.)

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SPF scandal: Reassuring patients on sun protection

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2026, Aleisha Orr, Page 10

The second half of 2025 saw a number of brands take their sunscreen products off the shelves and Australia's medicines regulatory authority probing SPF ratings. [...] Medical Forum has broken down what the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is doing and spoken to the Cancer Council and a local dermatologist to provide an overview of the current situation.

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Safety warning for weight loss drugs

Medical Forum, General News, 01/01/2026, Page 29

Australia's medicines regulator has issued a safety warning for diabetes and obesity medications over the potential risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviours. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) undertook an investigation on adverse events reported to the regulator, including two reports of suicide, one of self-harm and 72 reports of suicidal ideation.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Nestle recalls baby formula in Europe over safety fears

Canberra Times, Other, 06/01/2026, Alexander Marrow

Nestle is recalling specific batches of its SMA, BEBA and NAN infant formula and follow-on formula in countries across Europe due to the potential presence of a toxin that could lead to nausea, vomiting and abdominal cramps. The widespread product recall, which began on a smaller scale in December, is a headache for new Nestle CEO Philipp Navratil, who is trying to kickstart growth with a company-wide portfolio review after a period of management turmoil.

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