



TODAY'S NEWS

Friday, 9th January 2026

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian Financial Review](#)** (page 1) reports that Health Minister Mark Butler is considering advice from the PBAC on whether GLP-1 weight-loss drugs should be subsidised by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, with the government reportedly reluctant due to cost concerns.
- **[The Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 1) reports that the Australian Neurodivergent Parents Association have written an open letter to Health Minister Mark Butler and NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister threatening legal action against the government's Thriving Kids plan, claiming it is potentially illegal and contravenes the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- **[The Hobart Mercury](#)** (page 4) reports that Health Minister Mark Butler has welcomed the announcement of Tasmania's seventh Medicare Urgent Care Clinic, in Kingston, saying that the clinic would "help ease pressure on the Royal Hobart Hospital".
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 5) reports that human resources documents from Queensland Health revealed that the agency has required mandatory Google search reviews of all prospective medical officers since 2016, in order to identify criminal and disciplinary history of applicants in the wake of the so-called "Dr Death" scandal.

- [The Herald Sun](#) (page 6) leads coverage reporting that a clinical trial for a new drug, IB409, is underway in Queensland. The drug, derived from funnel-web spider venom, aims to reduce heart and brain damage during heart attacks and strokes.
- [The Adelaide Advertiser](#) (page 2) reports that South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas has promised a \$22 million new emergency department for Clare Hospital if re-elected, although the proposal would not deliver an emergency helipad.
- [The Sydney Morning Herald](#) (page 10) reports that a NSW Ambulance official has warned the public of "compounding" health effects as a result of the state's ongoing heatwave, with groups including the elderly and children particularly vulnerable. The warning comes as new analysis by ANU suggests that between 5 and 10 per cent of emergency department visits in Sydney and Perth are heat-related.

MINISTER BUTLER

Doctors divided on PBS push for GLP-1s

Australian Financial Review, General News, 09/01/2026, Michael Smith, Page 1

The Albanese government is resisting calls for a broader subsidy of weight-loss medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to treat obesity, which health economists warn would put unprecedented strain on healthcare budgets.

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

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NDIS autism legal fight

Adelaide Advertiser, Edition Changes, 09/01/2026, Darcy Fitzgerald, Page 1

Labor's major ndis overhaul for children with autism faces a potential legal roadblock, as a disability advocacy group threatens United Nations intervention. The Australian Neurodivergent Parents Association claims the multibillion-dollar Thriving Kids plan to move children aged up to eight with "low to moderate support needs" off the NDIS may be illegal. [...] ANPA president Sarah Langston penned the legal threat to Health Minister Mark Butler and Disability Minister Jenny McAllister in an open letter on Thursday.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Kingston revealed as next care clinic

Hobart Mercury, General News, 09/01/2026, David Killick, Page 4

Tasmania's latest Medicare Urgent Care Clinic will be built in the Channel Court Shopping Centre and is expected to begin delivering care to the community in the coming months, federal Franklin MP Julie Collins announced on Thursday. [...] Federal Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler said the new facility would help ease pressure on the Royal Hobart Hospital, where about 32 per cent of emergency department presentations in 2024-25 were for semi-urgent or non-urgent conditions.

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

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Urgent care back

Border Watch, General News, 09/01/2026, Charlotte Varcoe, Page 1

Those seeking non-life threatening medical care have rejoiced with the reopening of the Mount Gambier Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC). [...] Federal Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler said he was pleased to see the Mount Gambier Medicare Urgent Care Clinic reopen.

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Care clinic open

Mount Gambier's Medicare Urgent Care Clinic reopened this week - after the initial clinic was closed abruptly in June. [...] Federal Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler on Tuesday welcomed the reopening of the clinic, where no appointment is needed, patients can walk in and all services are bulk billed.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#).

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1800MEDICARE now live and taking calls

Medical Forum, Other, 08/01/2026

The rebranded Healthdirect hotline – 1800MEDICARE – is now operational across Australia as part of the federal government's pledge to make healthcare more accessible. [...] Announcing the service's operation this month Health Minister Mark Butler said 1800MEDICARE would work with existing services, supports local care, and "will help divert people with less serious health concerns away from emergency departments and towards more appropriate health care".

[Read More](#)

WIN Wollongong, WIN News, 08/01/2026, Bruce Roberts

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Union says patients at major Far South Coast hospitals are waiting up to 30 hours in emergency departments for beds. Union representatives at South East Regional Hospital say emergency presentations are rising without additional staffing and that the ongoing bed block at Wollongong Hospital continues to strain the system, particularly for elderly patients awaiting aged care placement. NSW Health Minister [Ryan Park] says bed block is linked to federal responsibilities, while the Federal Health Minister [Mark Butler] says the Commonwealth is working to address pressures in the public hospital system.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

NDIS autism legal fight

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 09/01/2026, Darcy Fitzgerald, Page 1

Labor's major NDIS overhaul for children with autism, Thriving Kids, faces a potential legal roadblock as a leading disability advocacy group threatens United Nations intervention. [...] ANPA president Sarah Langston penned the legal threat to Health Minister Mark Butler and Disability Minister Jenny McAllister in an open letter on Thursday.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#).

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MINISTER RAE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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DEPARTMENT

Overhaul of NDIS 'terrifies' parents

Courier Mail, General News, 09/01/2026, Darcy Fitzgerald, Page 11

Labor's huge National Disability Insurance Scheme overhaul, Thriving Kids, faces a potential legal roadblock as a leading disability advocacy group threatens UN intervention. [...] Mr Butler's office referred its response to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#).

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'Potential harms': why free lung cancer screening stops after turning 71

The Senior, Other, 08/01/2026, Lisa Edser

The government lung cancer screening test is a new initiative to identify the deadly disease in people showing no symptoms - but why is there a cut-off after the age of 70? [...] A Department of Health, Disability and Ageing spokesperson told The Senior the age of the test was based on recommendations by the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC).

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Mellors steps down from Regis

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 08/01/2026

Regis Healthcare is set for a leadership change in 2026, with an executive search to commence amid news of Dr Linda Mellors' resignation. Dr Linda Mellors has resigned from her position as chief executive officer and managing director of Regis Healthcare after more than six years in the role, with the intention of pursuing opportunities outside of the aged care sector.

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14.5 million PBS scripts in RACFs

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 08/01/2026, Peter Allen

Covid antivirals lead in top 10 list of subsidised drugs dispensed in RACFs, by highest cost to government Around 14.5 million PBS prescriptions were dispensed in residential aged care facilities (RACFs) from July 2024 to June 2025, according to a new government report.

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Volunteers sought to provide friendship and support to isolated older people

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 08/01/2026

Anglicare has launched a recruitment drive for volunteers to provide friendship and companionship to isolated older people in the Western Downs through weekly visits. Listen to this article Anglicare have called on the community to volunteer and help those in the aged care sector.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Disability support worker charged with client's manslaughter granted bail

ABC Online, Other, 08/01/2026, Anton Rose

An NDIS worker allegedly snuck out of his client's home and left him alone for hours before the man started a fatal house fire that claimed his own life. Mohammed Khryzat, 38, died after a blaze ripped through a home on River Avenue Carramar in April 2021, having allegedly been left unsupervised by a care worker the night before.

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PRIMARY CARE

Deadly blaze threat across entire state

Herald Sun, General News, 09/01/2026, Jordan McCarthy & Carly Douglas, Page 5

A total fire ban is in place across Victoria as authorities prepare to deal with catastrophic conditions not seen since the deadly 2019-20 bushfires. [...] Ambulance Victoria has declared today a "Red Escalation" across the state from 7am, due to the catastrophic fire danger.

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Clinic back on the mend

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 09/01/2026, Page 16

A medical clinic in the SouthEast has reopened after it was forced to shut following the collapse of a local service provider. On Tuesday, the Mount Gambier Urgent Care Clinic reopened the doors to its Sturt St health care centre.

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True cost of helping

Ballarat Courier, General News, 09/01/2026, Michelle Smith, Page 1

In the past few weeks, Ballarat paramedic Stephen Pengelly has been spat on, verbally abused and hospital security had to step in when a patient's family became agitated at him while caring for their loved one. The incidents are part of a growing trend of abuse towards paramedics across Victoria - including 10 very serious incidents over Christmas where paramedics across the state were threatened, spat on, and physically or sexually assaulted.

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The big cavity in our health care

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09/01/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 8

Only one in two adults in the Hunter New England Health district visited a dental professional last year, health data shows. The district's rate of 52 per cent for this measure was the second worst result among the state's 15 health districts.

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Gefen Bitton in 'limbo' as medical flight to Israel stalled by Indonesian

government

The Australian, Other, 08/01/2026, Elizabeth Pike & James Dowling

Bondi massacre hero Gefen Bitton has been left in "limbo" after a Jewish medical flight due to take him home to Israel for lifesaving treatment was stalled by Indonesian officials, forcing the Albanese government to intervene. [...] He also agreed to bankroll the Hatzolah Air flight after reportedly granting Mr Bitton permanent residence in Australia, providing him Medicare cover for his extensive treatment.

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Extreme hot and cold driving inland health emergencies

Canberra Times, Other, 08/01/2026, Poppy Johnston

Both extreme heat and cold are responsible for one in 15 visits to the emergency department in Australia's biggest inland city. Canberra, known for both bitter winters and scorching summers, experienced a greater share of cold-related health emergencies in the two decades to 2021, at roughly four per cent of all presentations, or 57,600 incidents.

Also reported by: [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#).

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POPULATION HEALTH

How dancing keeps you on your toes mentally and physically

Age, General News, 09/01/2026, Trisha Pasricha, Page 13

There are several science-based ways to lower your risk of dementia but one especially fun option might surprise you: dancing. Dancing combines some of the best elements known to be associated with longevity: exercise, creativity, balance and social connection.

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We're up for fight on dementia

Herald Sun, General News, 09/01/2026, Mukesh Haikerwal, Page 29

Caring for people living with dementia is a significant challenge in Australia. It is one of the most feared diagnoses in the community. [...] Dr Mukesh Haikerwal AC is Deputy Chair of the Australian General Practice Alliance and former Chair of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the AMA, AMA Victoria and the World Medical Association

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Strategic investment in palliative care could ease hospital bed block, PCA says

HelloCare, Other, 08/01/2026, Jakob Neeland

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) is calling on the Federal Government to make targeted investment in end-of-life care a priority in the 2026 Budget, arguing that stronger community-based palliative services could significantly reduce pressure on Australia's overcrowded public hospitals. According to the peak body, hospital bed block is being driven not only by rising demand for acute care, but by gaps in palliative support that leave people with life-limiting illnesses with nowhere else to go.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Weight returns in two years without GLP-1s

Australian Financial Review, General News, 09/01/2026, Jessica Penny, Page 4

Grandmother Karen Holman is one of the 2 per cent of Australians taking weight-loss drugs. She has

lost 28 kilograms since September 2023 and says "everything has changed".

Also reported by: [Australian Financial Review \(Online\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Scientists use tumour 'treasure trove' to find why bowel cancer is soaring in young people

The Australian, Other, 09/01/2026, Jacquelin Magnay

The mystery as to why young Australians are contracting bowel cancer at the fastest rate in the world could be uncovered in a north London hospital basement. Tens of thousands of decades old bowel cancer tumour samples, carefully stored in paraffin wax and filed away in the bottom of St Mark's Hospital, the UK's national bowel hospital, are to be used in a pioneering study comparing the cancers from more than 70 years ago to the cases of today.

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24 year old with rare blood disorder calls for more stem cell donors

The Courier Mail, Other, 08/01/2026, Bella Munro

For the past nine months, biweekly blood and platelet transfusions have kept Sam Titterton alive after being diagnosed with a rare blood disorder, but he can't stay on the transfusions forever. Sam Titterton went from life on the cricket pitch, footy oval and golf course to needing twice-weekly blood and platelet transfusions to stay alive.

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Cricket fans put to the test

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 08/01/2026

Fans attending the Melbourne Boxing Day test were invited to take a free Shane Warne Legacy (SWL) Health Check to get to know their numbers and start a conversation about their health. A total of 7,431 checks were delivered, with hopes of beating last year's test total of over 13,000 fans stymied by the short-lived test.

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3AW, Drive, 08/01/2026, Shane McInnes

Interview with John Dixon, obesity specialist at Swinburne University of Technology, on new research from the University of Oxford on weight loss drugs. Dixon says results show that people who lose weight using injectable medications such as Ozempic and Mounjaro need to remain on them long term to maintain weight loss, with weight returning quickly once treatment stops. He says long-term safety data from diabetes treatment shows the drugs reduce risks for those with chronic diseases like heart and kidney disease.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Fatal police shooting raises mental health questions

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09/01/2026, Alex Mitchell, Page 8

Police have shot dead a man believed to have been experiencing a mental health episode who barricaded himself inside a house during a six-hour stand-off. [...] Advocates say the shooting has "devastating" similarities to a 2019 incident and again raises questions about police-led responses to mental health episodes.

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School's out, gym's in as pass helps teens to change their lives

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 09/01/2026, Lydia Roberts, Page 3

Musician Kyle Cartner is singing the praises of a healthy lifestyle to Tamworth's teenagers. Statistics indicate nearly two in five 16 to 24-year-olds have experienced symptoms of a mental disorder in the past year, yet having an active lifestyle is one way to improve your health, he said.

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New First Nations suicide prevention campaign urges early conversations and culturally safe support

National Indigenous Times, Other, 08/01/2026, Dechlan Brennan

A new suicide prevention campaign aimed at strengthening the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has been launched, encouraging early conversations and culturally safe support. Connection is Prevention: Just Have the Yarn urges people to recognise warning signs, speak up early and reach out to those who may be struggling.

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IMMUNISATION

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Deadly venom could soon save your life

Herald Sun, General News, 09/01/2026, Isabella Pesch & Kyle Rode, Page 6

Venom from the deadly funnel-web spider could soon be the key to preventing damage from heart attacks and strokes, as a "promising" Queensland trial enters its first clinical phase for the treatment. The revolutionary treatment has already been administered to the first participants in a clinical trial to look into whether the venom could prevent damage to the heart and brain.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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PFAS and pregnancy: red-zone residents to take part in research

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09/01/2026, Gabriel Fowler, Page 9

The people of Williamtown are at the heart of a study which has received a \$1.8 million funding boost in the latest round of the National Health and Medical Research. Led by the University of Newcastle's Dr Jacinta Martin, researchers will examine how "forever chemicals" affect pregnancy and babies, and whether diet can help protect families.

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

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Ozempic could lower the risk of one of the fastest-rising cancers in young people

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 08/01/2026, Cassidy Morrison

Blockbuster weight loss drugs like Ozempic and Wegovy may lower the risk of colon cancer more than preventive aspirin regimen and reduce the chance of death, a pair of studies suggests. Colorectal

cancer (CRC) is growing in prevalence, particularly among younger Americans under 50 and as low as their 20s , and younger patients are often being diagnosed in later, harder to treat stages after showing few symptoms.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 08/01/2026, Mike Amor & Karina Carvalho

Australian researchers have developed a potential new treatment for heart attack and stroke using a molecule derived from funnel-web spider venom, with the therapy now being tested in a clinical trial. Professor Mark Smythe from the University of Queensland says the treatment aims to prevent damage to the heart and brain, improving long-term outcomes and quality of life.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Sydney\)](#).

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Channel 9, Nine News, 08/01/2026, Brett Mcleod

Australian researchers have begun human trials of a potential treatment for heart attack and heart failure developed from a molecule found in funnel-web spider venom, designed to reduce cell death caused by oxygen deprivation during a heart attack. Gary Jennings, Heart Foundation, says heart attacks are a leading cause of death due to irreversible damage. Researchers say the treatment could help preserve heart function after an attack and are also testing its potential use to protect donor hearts during transplantation.

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

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4BC, Drive, 08/01/2026, Carla Bignasca

Interview with Mark Smythe, CEO of Infensa and researcher at the University of Queensland, on funnel-web spider venom research. Smythe says researchers identified a specific molecule within funnel-web spider venom that can protect heart cells during a heart attack by blocking signals that trigger cell death. He says the lab-developed molecule is now in phase one human trials to assess safety, with plans for further trials to test whether it reduces heart damage and improves heart function in patients.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Chief Minister silent over police nurse program following death in custody

Northern Territory News, Other, 08/01/2026, Zizi Averill & Gera Kazakov

Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro has refused to answer questions after a 44-year-old mother-of-five died in a Tennant Creek watch house cell, remaining silent over the lack of custody nurses and calls for an independent investigation. [...] The NT News asked Ms Finocchiaro about the status of the custody nurse program, and if steps would be taken to ensure health workers were present at all NT watch houses.

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Uncle Gordy Langton's legacy felt across sports and community

National Indigenous Times, Other, 08/01/2026, Joseph Guenzler

The passing of Uncle Gordon Langton late last week has left Aboriginal and sporting communities across Queensland in mourning. [...] Uncle Gordy also worked as an engagement officer with the Institute of Urban Indigenous Health, delivering preventative health messages across Magandjin (Brisbane) and surrounding communities.

[Read More](#)

National study shares wellbeing perspectives of First Nations youth

National Indigenous Times, Other, 08/01/2026, Natasha Clark

For years, public discussions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people have been shaped by statistics on health, education and contact with government systems. A new national study turns that lens around and asks a different question - what does wellbeing look like to First Nations youth themselves?

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

New ED but no chopper

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 09/01/2026, Aden Hill, Page 2

South Australian taxpayers will fund a \$22m new emergency department at a key regional hospital in the Mid North if Labor is returned in the March election. If the government is re-elected, the ED would be built at the 101-year-old Clare Hospital, two hours north of Adelaide, and provide services for Clare Valley.

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Warming climate turns up heat on ACT's emergency departments, study finds

Canberra Times, Other, 08/01/2026, Jasper Lindell

Hotter days as Canberra's climate warms will increase pressure on hospital emergency departments in the capital, with researchers warning health authorities need to do more to protect vulnerable people from extreme weather. Nearly 36,000 presentations to the ACT's emergency departments between 2000 and 2021 could be attributed to heat, but the number could rise to nearly 69,000 between 2040 and 2061 if climate change continues largely unabated.

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Health chiefs speak out after shattered daughter unleashed on the unbelievable hospital blunder that left BOTH her parents dead

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 08/01/2026, Jonica Bray

Health chiefs have launched an investigation into the hospital at the centre of negligence accusations after the Daily Mail revealed an elderly couple died within two days of being denied medical treatment. Margaret Wing, 64, and Steven Jackson, 76, died of Influenza A on November 16 after a worker at Inverell Hospital, in northern NSW, allegedly told them there were no available doctors.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Aussie paramedic warns about the impact of shift work

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 08/01/2026, Hannah Wilcox

An Aussie paramedic has made a worrying revelation ten years into working his dream job, issuing a warning to others. There were scary scenes as the ambulance went the wrong direction at Evangeline Downs.

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

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

AI is easing the pressure on Australia's healthcare system

Canberra Times, Other, 08/01/2026

Fresh innovation and emerging technologies have had a massive impact on the Australian healthcare system over the past few years. Artificial intelligence (AI) has played a key role in fuelling a new era of virtual care, particularly where bulk-billed telehealth services are concerned.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Google searches now mandatory after Dr Death scandal

The Australian, General News, 09/01/2026, Sarah Elks, Page 5

Google searches of a doctor's criminal and disciplinary history are now mandatory for any medical officer applying to work for Queensland Health, in the wake of the Dr Death scandal that rocked the state's public hospital system. The Australian's investigative podcast, Sick to Death, reveals how Indian-born American surgeon Jayant Patel hid a horrific history of malpractice in the United States when he applied to work at the Bundaberg Base Hospital in regional Queensland in 2003.

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

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Doctor charged over child abuse material

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 09/01/2026, Vanda Carson, Page 6

A Queensland doctor has been suspended from practising in Australia after he was charged with possession of child abuse material. [...] He graduated from Griffith University in 2021 and was registered in the profession in December 2021, according to the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Total fire ban tipped for Sydney as city continues to swelter

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 09/01/2026, Daniel Lo, Page 10

Sydneysiders have taken to the city's beaches, rivers and lakes to seek respite from a heatwave roasting NSW which authorities warn will worsen into the weekend, when total fire bans are expected. [...] NSW Ambulance associate director of emergency management Steve Vaughan warned that some groups, including the very old and very young, were more susceptible to sustained, extreme heat.

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Extreme heat sends Aussies to hospitals

Cairns Post, General News, 09/01/2026, Page 4

Extremely hot temperatures are sending thousands of Australians to emergency departments each year, a new study has revealed. Researchers found almost 36,000 presentations to emergency rooms between 2001 and 2021 in Canberra were linked to heat, accounting for one in 40 or 2.5 per cent of all visits.

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

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Hydration key as mercury soars

Daily Advertiser, General News, 09/01/2026, Maryam Sulaiman, Page 3

A heatwave hasn't stopped Kevin Kelly working outside this week. [...] "Look out for each other during this heatwave by limiting outdoor activity, drinking plenty of water, and checking in on vulnerable community members," NSW Ambulance Chief Superintendent Steve Vaughan said.

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The expert advice on exercising during a heatwave

9News, Other, 08/01/2026, Richard Wood

The most severe heatwave in Australia since the 2019-2020 Black Summer has failed to deter many people from their exercise routines. [...] Sports Medicine Australia (SMA) chief executive Jamie Crain advises exercisers to take increased precautions to guard against heat exhaustion or the more serious heat stroke.

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Experts sound alarm as region suffers 'most significant' heatwave in years: 'Will affect everyone ... even healthy people'

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 08/01/2026, Timothy McGill

Several heatwave warnings have been posted for large portions of Australia as the country braces for the most scorching heat it has seen in six years, according to the ABC. [...] Narramore warned that extreme heat waves "will affect everyone, not just the elderly, but also even healthy people as well."

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 08/01/2026, Jayde Cotic

As Victoria endures a multi-day heatwave, Ambulance Victoria has reported a surge in heat-related call-outs. It comes alongside responses to several grass fires, including one near Geelong, sparked by a car fire on the ring road. Ambulance Victoria CEO Jordan Emery says ambulance activity rose by 41% between 4pm and 5pm, with patients presenting with dehydration, cramps, heat stress and heat stroke. He notes crews also responded to incidents involving people becoming unwell in bushland areas and a child locked in a vehicle during extreme heat.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 08/01/2026, Brett Mcleod

Parks Victoria has closed all public land across Victoria due to extreme heat and catastrophic fire danger, and all V/Line services will be halted except for limited operations on the Geelong and Ballarat lines under an extreme heat timetable. Emergency Services Minister Vicki Ward has urged residents in catastrophic areas to leave early if directed. Ambulance Victoria has confirmed an unprecedented Red Escalation, relocating paramedics from high-risk zones and limiting responses to life-threatening cases only.

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Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 08/01/2026, Holly Stearnes

Temperatures across parts of NSW are forecast to reach up to 40 degrees on Saturday, with hotter conditions expected in western areas. The heat is coinciding with extreme fire danger ratings and total fire bans in some regions. NSW Ambulance has reported an increase in Triple Zero calls during the heatwave, with Chief Superintendent Steve Vaughan warning that those with heat stroke and dehydration symptoms require immediate emergency assistance.

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2CC, Canberra Live, 08/01/2026, Leon Delaney

Interview with Michael Tong, Senior Research Fellow at the Australian National University, on extreme weather and health impacts. Delaney says a study has found that one in 15 emergency department presentations in the ACT are linked to extreme weather. Tong says cold conditions accounted for more presentations than heat in Canberra due to its inland location, higher altitude and generally cooler climate, although extreme heat still poses significant risks.

Interview continues on: [2CC \(Canberra\)](#).

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3AW, Drive, 08/01/2026, Shane McInnes

McInnes reports Ambulance Victoria has declared a Red Escalation of ambulance services across Victoria from 7am tomorrow in response to catastrophic fire danger forecasts for the South West, Wimmera, and North Central and North Country regions. He says paramedics and first responders are being relocated from high-risk branches near bushland or with limited road access to ensure staff safety. He adds crews will only be redeployed into these areas for serious or life-threatening incidents and only after a thorough risk assessment.

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3AW, Mornings, 08/01/2026, Heidi Murphy

Interview with Jordan Emery, Ambulance Victoria CEO, on Ambulance Victoria recording a 41% spike in workload between 4 pm and 5 pm. Emery notes the increase in demand was largely driven by heat-related illnesses, including dehydration and symptoms that worsened throughout the day. He recalls an incident involving a child left in a car and urges the public not to leave children, pets, or elderly people in vehicles. He warns against strenuous outdoor activity, including hiking in remote areas during extreme heat and fire danger, saying such conditions are unsafe and can place additional strain on emergency services.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Balance training reducing residents' fall risk

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 08/01/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Bolton Clarke's Better Balance Initiative has seen significant improvements in balance, functional strength and mobility for the three participants who completed the entire 10-week program. [...] The Balance Mat has been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration as a class 1 medical device.

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Dose of uncertainty: Experts wary of AI health gadgets at CES

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 08/01/2026

Health tech gadgets displayed at the annual CES trade show make a lot of promises. A smart scale promoted a healthier lifestyle by scanning your feet to track your heart health, and an egg-shaped hormone tracker uses AI to help you figure out the best time to conceive.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

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FOOD STANDARDS

They're off the preservation

West Australian, Edition Changes, 09/01/2026, Brooke Rolfe, Page 22

Manufacturers have been urged against adding unnecessary preservatives to food after a study found they could increase the risk of cancer. According to a British Medical Journal report published on Thursday, higher intakes of preservatives, including potassium sorbate, potassium metabisulfite, sodium nitrite, potassium nitrate and acetic acid, were associated with a greater risk of cancers compared with participants in a study who were nonconsumers or lower consumers.

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AICIS

2GB, Afternoons, 08/01/2026, Lucy Zelic

Australian scientists have developed an instant test to gauge the amount of toxic forever chemicals in water, making it easier and faster to identify and mitigate PFAS contamination.

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