



# TODAY'S NEWS

Friday, 23rd January 2026

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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports that health experts are concerned with the rise in shingles cases among younger Australians, with case numbers almost tripling in the 25-to-49 age group over the past 13 years.
- **[The Age](#)** (page 14) reports that WorkSafe has confirmed St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne has been charged over the death of an Aboriginal woman who voluntarily admitted herself for psychiatric care and then died by suicide shortly after.
- **[The Courier Mail](#)** (page 1) reports that experts fear the current flu vaccine will not be able to keep up with mutations in the "super-K" flu strain which is spreading quickly across Queensland.
- **[The Northern Territory News](#)** (page 5) reports that the Royal Darwin Hospital and Alice Springs Hospital will receive up to \$90,000 from the Australian Stroke Alliance to create a role to support stroke care and improve efficiency.
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports that private cardiologists have raised concerns about systemic delays in the ACT public health system's cardiac services, alleging prolonged wait times for procedures that have prompted some patients to be referred interstate.

- **ABC Online** reports that Australians have faced more than one natural disaster per week on average since January 2025, with experts noting access to mental health services can be limited in regional areas and repeated disasters can have long-term impacts on wellbeing.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### **At Long Last, Medical Training Places have been Secured for Mildura**

North West Express, General News, 22/01/2026, Page 4

Member for Mallee, Dr Anne Webster, has hailed Monash University allocating 10 medical doctor training places to Mildura as one of the regional capital's greatest moments in its history. [...] Late last year Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and Federal Education Minister Jason Clare announced Monash had secured 10 Commonwealth supported places (CSPs) per annum for students studying medicine.

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### **Royal Far West welcomes government funding boost**

Nyngan Weekly, General News, 22/01/2026, Page 13

Royal Far West (RFW) has welcomed the Australian government's announcement last month of \$3.5 million in funding for 2026-27 to continue its paediatric allied health service, which supports children with developmental delays in rural and remote schools and preschools across Australia. [...] We sincerely thank Minister for Health Mark Butler and the Department of Health for their continued support of country kids and their families," she added.

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### **Calls to bring back hard-hitting anti-smoking campaigns to warn off gen Z**

ABC Online, Other, 22/01/2026, Charlotte Wilkes

Despite smoking rates falling to their lowest level since peak use in the 1960s and 70s, concerns are growing about the risk of a resurgence as tobacco giants target younger generations through social media. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said since 2023, the government has committed more than \$100 million to national quit initiatives and campaigns.

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### **GP training is up, but supervisors feel the pinch**

The Medical Republic, Other, 22/01/2026, Holly Payne

General practice registrars won big in 2025, but GP supervisors barely got a look in. It's time for that to change, says GPSA's new chair. Health Minister Mark Butler has made no secret of the fact that he intends to increase the number of junior doctors going into GP training – but what will it take to keep the GP supervisor workforce on board?

[Read More](#)

### **ABC Radio Sydney, Breakfast, 22/01/2026, Craig Reucassel**

Health experts and anti-tobacco advocates are calling for a return to the "hard-hitting" graphic campaigns of the 1990s to combat stalling smoking rates and the rise of vaping. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler defended the current approach, noting that since 2023, the government has committed more than \$100 million toward evidence-based cessation initiatives.

Also reported by: [ABC Radio Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#)

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## MINISTER MCALLISTER

## MINISTER RAE

### Refreshed Council of Elders announced

Community Care Review, Other, 22/01/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Five members will maintain their place as ongoing members, including chair Anne Burgess, and nine new members will join. [...] Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae said Australia's aged care system is better thanks to the "practical, passionate insights and diverse experience" of the council members.

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### Engineered exclusion: How co-payments and gouging force pensioners out of their homes

HelloCare, Other, 22/01/2026, Jakob Neeland

As someone living somewhat comfortably with the effects of polio – until that support was abruptly cut off due to the age limit imposed by the NDIS – I have a great deal of firsthand experience with the impacts of poorly designed care policies and exclusion from essential supports. [...] Minister Sam Rae says he is monitoring the situation, praising the Council of Elders as the voice of older people.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

### Social media ban success

Coast Community Pelican Post, General News, 22/01/2026, Page 29

Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and Member for Dobell Emma McBride says the Federal Government's world leading social media minimum age law is working, with more than 4.7 million accounts deactivated, removed or restricted within days of the law coming into effect on December 10, 2025.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

### Why city's UCC had record patient surge

Launceston Examiner, General News, 23/01/2026, Lauren Richardson, Page 5

The Launceston Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) had its busiest week ever over the new year, and doctors are putting it down to accessibility of GPs, and a spate of nasty respiratory illnesses. [...] Caption Text: Launceston Medicare Urgent Care Clinic and Federal Assistant Health Minister Rebecca White.

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## SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

### Hit the pelvic floor, boys

Daily Telegraph, General News, 23/01/2026, Jonathon Moran, Page 22

Olympic shooter turned Labor MP Dan Repacholi has urged fellas to get in on the pelvic floor action.

"I'm not talking push ups or sit ups. I'm talking pelvic floor exercises. Yep. Those ones," he wrote on social media.

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## DEPARTMENT

### **Royal Far West welcomes government funding boost**

Nyngan Weekly, General News, 22/01/2026, Page 13

Royal Far West (RFW) has welcomed the Australian government's announcement last month of \$3.5 million in funding for 2026-27 to continue its paediatric allied health service, which supports children with developmental delays in rural and remote schools and preschools across Australia. [...] We sincerely thank Minister for Health Mark Butler and the Department of Health for their continued support of country kids and their families," she added.

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### **Court convicts Tocumwal herbalist for selling unapproved therapeutic goods described as 'dangerous'**

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 22/01/2026, Brendan Gullifer

A self-prescribed herbalist sentenced to jail for selling a prohibited skin salve online on the basis of shonky health claims says she has received death threats. [...] Department of Health, Disability and Ageing deputy secretary and TGA head Anthony Lawler said the TGA has conducted an "extensive investigation".

[Read More](#)

### **Skill your staff for reablement success**

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 22/01/2026, Natasha Egan

Geriatrician Professor Maria Fiatarone Singh is among the confirmed speakers for Positive Ageing Summit 2026, which promises a fresh program coupled with the energy and camaraderie of the inaugural event. [...] Australia's chief allied health officer Anita Hobson-Powell is also coming back to talk about the movements she's seen in the preceding 12 months.

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### **A missed opportunity to fix primary care for the places that need it most**

Croakey, Other, 22/01/2026, Melissa Sweet

A much-anticipated review of the Primary Health Network (PHN) business model has recommended reforms to address concerns that the PHN Program's full potential remains unrealised. [...] The review, conducted by Boston Consulting Group for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA), notes that the primary healthcare landscape has changed significantly since PHNs were established in 2015, but their business model has not.

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### **Craig went to an urgent care clinic, but it couldn't provide the help he needed**

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 22/01/2026, Natalie Croxon

The federal government created its Medicare Urgent Care Clinics to ease pressure on hospital emergency departments, but the availability of imaging services is pushing patients back into the system the clinics were designed to relieve. [...] A spokesperson for the federal Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said primary health networks and providers decided service hours and delivery models for Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (UCCs).

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## **HealthConsult's Residential Aged Care Cost Collection 2024 contract has more than doubled in value to over \$17 million, as the Sydney-based consultancy surveys 150% more providers than originally planned.**

The Weekly Source, Other, 22/01/2026, Caroline Egan

The motivation for the increased survey scope is to improve the relevance and quality of the data collected, the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA) told The Weekly Source. [...] Their findings influence the costing advice IHACPA gives the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to determine aged care pricing, including AN-ACC.

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## **"Vast majority" of new home care clients on Interim Packages**

The Weekly Source, Other, 22/01/2026, Caroline Egan

Older Australians, who may have waited more than two years to be assessed and for their home care funding to come through, are receiving "Interim" packages when the funding finally lands. [...] Though information about Interim Packages is available on My Aged Care, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has done little to communicate with older people seeking home care the possibility of receiving only partially funded Packages.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### **Tasmanian government 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' with facility purchase amidst aged-care bed crisis**

Hobart Mercury, General News, 23/01/2026, Emily Shepherd, Page 16

It is no secret Tasmania much like the rest of Australia has an ageing population. The Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2020 estimates there were 4.2 million people living in Australia over 65, 16 per cent of the entire country, and by 2066 this population cohort will make up to 23 per cent of the population.

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### **Twins study finds stronger social connections key to better mental health in Seniors**

Australian Seniors News, Other, 22/01/2026

Research from the Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHeBA) at UNSW Sydney has found that social interactions in later life are largely shaped by life experiences – not genetics – and that staying connected with friends, neighbours and the community may help protect older adults against depression.

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### **SaH prices 'disgraceful', hardship applications a 'debacle'**

Community Care Review, Other, 22/01/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

An advocacy group is calling for an urgent review of the Support at Home program and an immediate moratorium on co-payments. The Australian Self-Managed Support at Home Consumer Core Group has called for an immediate review of the Support at Home program.

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### **Support at Home leaving older people without care: Inspector-General of Aged Care**

The Weekly Source, Other, 22/01/2026, Caroline Egan

The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care (OIGAC) has restated its concern that demand for home care services continues to exceed available supply. The OIGAC concerns were first detailed in

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## Fewer patients stranded in hospital waiting for aged care

The Weekly Source, Other, 22/01/2026, Caroline Egan

The number of Australians in hospital waiting on residential aged care eased 2% from 2,806 in October 2025 to 2,743 in January 2026, according to figures that The Weekly SOURCE has gathered from State health departments. The decline could reflect, at least in part, increased State investment in transitional care measures.

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## DISABILITY AND CARERS

### NDIS is troubled for PM's people

Daily Telegraph, General News, 23/01/2026, Jake McCallum, Page 15

Vulnerable NDIS patients living in Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's inner-Sydney electorate of Grayndler are experiencing some of the worst resourcing and services in the state while trying to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme, according to a new study. The Kismet Healthcare dataset measures how effectively the NDIS is functioning in federal electorates through \$2.2bn worth of transaction data obtained through participants across the country.

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

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### Death and taxes

The Nightly, General News, 22/01/2026, Stephen Johnson, Page 10

Treasurer Jim Chalmers is resisting calls to revive an inheritance tax and raise the GST after the OECD called for the consumption tax to be increased or broadened to raise more revenue during a time of Budget deficits and spiralling NDIS costs. The Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, headed by former Australian Liberal finance minister Mathias Cormann, noted Australia was one of the few rich-world nations that didn't have death duties.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Two hospitals receive \$90,000 to improve stroke-care quality

Northern Territory News, General News, 23/01/2026, Lottie Hood, Page 5

The Northern Territory is gaining a boost in funding for stroke patients in an effort to get Australia's hospitals up to speed with other nations' health services. Royal Darwin Hospital and Alice Springs Hospital will receive up to \$90,000 from the Australian Stroke Alliance to create a role to support stroke care and improve efficiency.

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

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### Difference between life and death

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 23/01/2026, Page 3

People in rural and regional areas have continued to benefit from the astounding work LifeFlight has done over the past 12 months. In a record number of missions and rescues, LifeFlight has released

statistics to show a total of 960 people helped in Toowoomba, a 6 per cent increase from the previous year.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#)

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## Where's our PET scanner?

Warrnambool Standard, General News, 23/01/2026, Ben Silvester, Page 1

The state government has knocked back an offer that would have delivered Warrnambool's long-overdue cancer detection device in 2025 at no expense to the taxpayer. The state government promised Warrnambool a positron emission tomography (PET) scanner if it won the 2022 state election, but the promise remains unfulfilled, unfunded and unlikely to be delivered until 2028.

Also reported by: [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#)

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## III-conceived: Inside Australia's IVF money-making machine

Australian Financial Review, Other, 22/01/2026, Michael Smith

Just before Victoria Yates turned 35, something happened to her social media feeds. They were suddenly flooded with ads and reels about egg freezing.

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## Canberra cardiologist speaks out over concerns the ACT health system is failing cardiac patients

ABC Online, Other, 22/01/2026

A Canberra cardiologist is referring patients interstate, due to his concerns about wait times in the ACT's public health system. Dr Siang Yong Soh, who is a private Canberra cardiologist and former registrar at Canberra Health Services (CHS), said he and five other cardiologists felt impelled to speak up on behalf of their patients and public hospital counterparts.

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## Royal Hobart Hospital medical scan backlog creating late diagnosis risk, AMA says

ABC Online, Other, 22/01/2026, Monty Jacka

At least one patient at the Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH) has recently had a serious condition diagnosed late due to issues with handling medical scans, according to Tasmania's peak doctors' association. Michael Lumsden-Steel, the president of the Australian Medical Association in Tasmania, said the patient was only made aware of the diagnosis at a point where their prognosis was "not as good as it should have been".

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## NSW Health Minister hiding from hospital's maggot, mould and maintenance mess

Newcastle Herald, Other, 22/01/2026

Calls to end the private operation of the Calvary Mater Hospital are growing after the Waratah hospital closed two wards in two weeks due to maggots falling on patients from vents in the ceiling and an air conditioning mould infestation. NSW Health Minister Ryan Park refused to address questions about the state of the Calvary Mater Hospital after it closed two wards this month, while the private company at the centre of the maintenance crisis insisted it is "going above and beyond its contractual obligations".

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## **purchase amidst aged-care bed crisis**

Hobart Mercury, General News, 23/01/2026, Emily Shepherd, Page 16

It is no secret Tasmania much like the rest of Australia has an ageing population. The Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2020 estimates there were 4.2 million people living in Australia over 65, 16 per cent of the entire country, and by 2066 this population cohort will make up to 23 per cent of the population.

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## **Booming trade down to inaction**

West Australian, General News, 23/01/2026, Charlton Hart, Page 5

If there was an Olympic sport for "tough talk with zero follow-through", the Cook Government would be standing atop the podium probably lighting a victory cigar they bought for \$10 from a deli. Premier Roger Cook's vow to "crush and destroy" the illicit tobacco trade couldn't look anymore embarrassing.

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## **Muscle mass crunch time**

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 23/01/2026, Pauline Braniff, Page 14

A first look at female muscle health over the decades has revealed the critical period in mid-life when women's physical activity, particularly strength-based exercise, needs to increase, not slow down. Described across two articles published in the Journal of Physiology by Deakin University's Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN), the research provides the clearest picture to date of the role played by the female sex hormones oestrogen and progesterone in muscle ageing, especially during the menopausal transition.

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## **Tobacconists shun licensing scheme as crackdown looms**

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 22/01/2026, Chris Vedelago and Marta Pascual Juanola

Thousands of tobacco retailers appear to have shunned the state government's new tobacco licensing scheme aimed at cracking down on the multibillion-dollar illicit cigarette trade. Fewer than half of the state's 8000 retailers have signed up to obtain a licence two weeks out from the start of the clampdown.

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## **Human-induced climate change intensifying Australian heatwaves, turning rare events into regular occurrences**

NEWS.com.au, Other, 23/01/2026, Andrew Hedgman

A new study has sounded the alarm on how the record-breaking temperatures experienced in early January will become "five times more likely" in the future. Human-induced climate change made Australia's scorching early January heatwave five times more likely, according to a new analysis, as experts warn that such extreme weather is rapidly shifting from rare event to regular occurrence.

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

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## **Radio National, Breakfast, 22/01/2026, Sally Sara**

Interview with Dr Nick Chartres, Senior Research Fellow at the University of Sydney and Scientific Lead at the Centre to End Corporate Harm at the University of California in San Francisco, discussing microplastics. [...] What this article was citing was research looking at basically how we can count the number of particles in the tissue. It's not whether they're getting into our bodies and it's not whether they're necessarily harmful. So this was very specific, but the way the story framed and also a quote from a Dow Chemical company employee or former employee was that all the evidence is not to be trusted.

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## CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

### Only 21: a skin cancer warning

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 23/01/2026, Matilda McDermott, Page 12

A young woman has revealed the nightmare cancer battle she faced, which involved having her neck slashed open, after discovering a tiny dot on her skin. Ashli Wallace-Mitchell was just 21 when she was diagnosed with a melanoma on her neck.

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### Community urged to remain SunSmart

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 23/01/2026, Allan Murphy, Page 6

Mallee residents have been urged to maintain consistent sun protection with new data showing regional Victorians are more likely to be diagnosed with, and die from, melanoma than people living in the state's major cities. Melanoma rates in the Loddon Mallee are 34 per cent above the state average, while the latest Victorian Cancer Registry (VCR) report shows more than 3000 Victorians were diagnosed with melanoma the deadliest form of skin cancer in 2024.

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### Researchers to trial psilocybin as hope for 'screwdriver behind the eye' cluster headaches

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 22/01/2026, Ashleigh Gleeson

Two weeks ago Ben Fleming was lying on the floor moaning in pain. In a confronting video captured by his wife of 18 years, his hands are clutched to his head and he writhes around on the floor in their Adelaide home.

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

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### Channel 7, Seven News, 22/01/2026, Rosanna Mangiarelli and Will Goodings

A new skin cancer prevention campaign highlights the dangers of invisible UV rays. The Cancer Council SA has slammed trends on social media where young people check UV ratings not to stay safe but to achieve tan skin. Christine Morries from the council reminds people that there is no such thing as a safe tan.

*Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Adelaide\)](#)*

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### Channel 9, Nine News, 22/01/2026, Brenton Ragless

A new skin cancer prevention campaign from the Cancer Council CA exposes the dangers of the UV rays with the release of new advertisements. A new survey has found that younger Australians are more likely to be outside when UV is at its harshest, and will likely wear less sun protection. More Australians are killed by skin cancers than in transport accidents every year, with the council hoping the campaign will leave the right mark.

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### Channel 9, Nine News, 22/01/2026, Melissa Downes and Joel Dry

There has been an asthma warning tonight after hospitals across Queensland reported a major increase in people with the respiratory condition. Dr Adrian Barnett from Mater Hospital says temperature changes and storms can worsen people's asthma. People with no asthma action plan are urged to see their GP.

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### Channel 10, 10 News, 22/01/2026, Tiffany Warne

A skin cancer prevention campaign in South Australia is exposing the hidden, deadly threat of ultraviolet radiation through ads. It comes as the state braces for heatwave conditions this long weekend. New figures suggest young Australians are especially at risk of melanoma. Health experts, including the Cancer Council SA, are reminding people to use protective clothing, apply sunscreen, and regularly check their skin.

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### **Melbourne hospital charged over Aboriginal woman's death**

Age, General News, 23/01/2026, Melissa Cunningham, Page 14

A Melbourne hospital has been charged by the state's workplace safety watchdog over the death of an Aboriginal woman who voluntarily admitted herself for psychiatric help and died by suicide shortly after. WorkSafe confirmed yesterday that St Vincent's Hospital faces two charges under the Occupational Health and Safety Act for failing to ensure "that persons other than employees were not exposed to health and safety risks" over the death of 24-year-old Makalie Watts-Owen.

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

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### **Wild fix for binge eating**

Herald Sun, General News, 23/01/2026, Duncan Evans, Page 15

A psychedelic compound found in "magic mushrooms" could help Australians with binge-eating disorders control the urge for unbridled consumption, the first results from a radical new trial suggest. Entropy Neurodynamics, an experimental ASX-listed biotechnology company, is partnering with Swinburne University for a research program that delivers a psilocinbased solution to patients with binge eating disorder.

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

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### **St Vincent's Hospital charged over 2024 death of Makalie Watts-Owen**

ABC Online, Other, 22/01/2026

St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne has been charged over the death of a young Aboriginal woman who died by suicide while checked in as a patient. The family of Makalie Watts-Owen has given permission to use her name and image.

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### **More than one disaster a week raises concerns over mental health support**

ABC Online, Other, 22/01/2026, Philippe Perez

Australians have faced more than one natural disaster a week on average since January 2025, prompting warnings about mental health impacts and barriers to support in impacted regions. The Commonwealth government's Disaster Assist Program has responded to 58 events nationally since the start of last year, the majority of which are for weather-related events, including bushfires, floods and severe storms, but also for the recent Bondi Beach terror attack.

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### **Charges laid against Melbourne hospital over suicide of Aboriginal woman seeking mental health support**

National Indigenous Times, Other, 22/01/2026, Dechlan Brennan

A Melbourne hospital where a young Aboriginal woman took her life in 2024 after presenting for psychiatric care has been charged by WorkSafe Victoria, with the woman's mother welcoming the decision and saying the hospital "should be held accountable".

## IMMUNISATION

### Mutant flu is spreading fast

Courier Mail, General News, 23/01/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 1

The "super-K" flu strain spreading fast across Queensland over the summer months could beat the current vaccine, scientists fear. Already the "super-K" or H3N2 strain of flu has become dominant in the state, making up 54 per cent of cases, as of the latest data in November.

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

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### Dr Peter Jones: Childhood vaccination rates have fallen after COVID – here's how we restore public trust

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 22/01/2026, Dr Peter Jones

For most of my career as a paediatrician, childhood vaccination in Australia was not controversial. Parents asked questions, of course, but the underlying trust was there and vaccines were seen as part of the basic social contract of keeping children safe.

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

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### ATAGI updates measles advice

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 22/01/2026

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recently updated advice to recommend that infants aged six to 11 months should receive an additional dose of a measles-containing vaccine (the MMR vaccine) when travelling overseas. The update, which was flagged in a statement from chief medical officer Professor Michael Kidd, comes as measles cases continue to occur, mostly in people who have travelled overseas, with numbers tripling in 2025 relative to 2024.

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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## ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 22/01/2026, Lucy Breaden and Kylie Baxter

Interview with AMA Tasmania president Dr Michael Lumsden-Steel. At least one patient at the Royal Hobart Hospital has recently had a serious condition diagnosed late due to issues with handling medical scans, with the AMA warning of the serious risk this mishandling can cause. Lumsden-Steel says the public healthcare system has remained underfunded and under-resourced, and claims that the Tasmanian Government, which has put a third of its state budget into healthcare, no longer has the money to resolve this issue without the help of the Federal Government through the National Health Reform Agreement. He calls on the Commonwealth to support the state in having a sustainable healthcare system for patients who cannot afford private hospitals, noting that they need more pathologists.

*Interview continues on: [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#)*

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Who will be Australian of the Year?

Canberra Times, General News, 23/01/2026, Page 8

One of these eight inspiring Aussie achievers and advocates will be named the Australian of the Year when the 2026 Australian of the Year Awards are presented at the National Arboretum in Canberra on Sunday January 25. The ceremony will be broadcast live on ABC TV and ABC iView from 7.30pm.

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### Tributes flow as regional hospitals chief retires

Border Mail, General News, 23/01/2026, Anthony Bunn, Page 1

The Riverina's hospitals boss Jill Ludford has announced her retirement after 11 years as chief executive of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District and more than 30 years serving the region. Having begun her career as a nurse and midwife, the Wagga-based leader revealed her departure on Thursday.

*Also reported by: [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#)*

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### Health workers strike for second time

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 23/01/2026, Denika Anderson, Page 1

More than 10,000 healthcare workers across Victoria have taken protected industrial action as part of a push for a new wages deal. As part of the strike new bans including workers closing one in every four hospital beds, ceasing cleaning of non-clinical areas including offices, staff rooms, and cafeterias, as well as the suspension of training and onboarding new staff, will be in place until 1 February.

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### Twenty medical students from Rural Clinical School of WA start regional health care placements in Albany

West Australian, Other, 22/01/2026

Medical students from Perth universities started their placements at Albany Health Campus this week, marking the 21st cohort of students from the Rural Clinical School of WA beginning their careers in

Albany. The 20-strong group includes 14 penultimate students and six final-year students from UWA, the University of Notre Dame and Curtin University, who have relocated to Albany for the placement.

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### **Warned before death**

Courier Mail, General News, 23/01/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 15

Fearful staff warned bosses at a Wide Bay hospital for years that if security for cognitively impaired patients was not stepped up "something awful would happen" then an elderly surgical patient died after allegedly being beaten with a walking stick by a dementia patient as he slept. The shock allegations from a Hervey Bay Hospital whistleblower outline that recommendations from a review of "specials" or security for dementia patients were accepted by executives but never implemented before the tragic death of Neville Martin in March last year.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#).

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### **'We got him': Whistleblower cried with relief after 'Dr Death' exposed**

The Australian, Other, 22/01/2026, Kristen Amiet

A simple Google search revealed what hospital administrators refused to acknowledge – that banned surgeon Dr Jayant Patel should never have operated on patients. Whistleblower nurse Toni Hoffman cried with relief when Dr Jayant Patel's long and serious disciplinary history was publicly exposed.

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## AUSTRALIAN CDC

### **Shingles affecting the young more often**

Age, General News, 23/01/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 1

Health experts are grappling with a perplexing rise in shingles among younger Australians, cases having almost tripled in the 25-to-49 age group over the past 13 years. While shingles is commonly thought of as an older person's condition, an analysis of data from the National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System shows 3778 cases were recorded among those aged between 25 and 49 last year.

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### **Mutant flu is spreading fast**

Courier Mail, General News, 23/01/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 1

The "super-K" flu strain spreading fast across Queensland over the summer months could beat the current vaccine, scientists fear. Already the "super-K" or H3N2 strain of flu has become dominant in the state, making up 54 per cent of cases, as of the latest data in November.

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

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## Find sparks Ross River fever alert

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 23/01/2026, Gemma Carter, Page 1

Residents and holiday-makers are being urged to take precautions against mosquito bites after the detection of Ross River virus in local mosquito traps. The discovery comes on the cusp of the Australia Day long weekend, which is expected to bring a surge in crowds outdoors.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#).

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## 4BC, Drive, 22/01/2026, Gary Hardgrave

Interview with Mater Director of Infectious Diseases Professor Paul Griffin. Another two measles cases have been confirmed in Sydney. Griffin says these cases are quite concerning, noting that measles rates across the world have increased. He claims that the vaccination rate in the country has declined, increasing the chance of local transmission of the disease.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### Weight-loss ad blitz sparks warning from doctors

Australian Financial Review, General News, 23/01/2026, Michael Smith, Page 6

A flood of social media advertisements for new year weight-loss treatments has alarmed doctors and regulators who say drug companies are exploiting grey areas in rules that ban direct advertising of prescription medicines as demand for...

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

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### Home fetal monitors still available online despite being banned in Australia. This is why doctors are concerned

ABC Online, Other, 22/01/2026, Caitlyn Davey

For expectant parents, knowing their baby's heart is beating at a healthy rate can be deeply reassuring. [...] In August 2025, the monitors were banned from sale in Australia by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

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### 'Long way to go': crackdown on black market cigarettes and vapes to ramp up in 2026

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 22/01/2026, Joel Ehsman

Legislation designed to shut down tobacconists selling black market cigarettes and vapes is having an impact, but still has a "long way to go" according to the NSW minister for health. [...] Mr Park said NSW Health was working with NSW Police, the Australian Border Force and the Therapeutic Goods Administration to combat the significant challenge and to "pull this back".

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### LTR Pharma doses first patients in SPONTAN Phase II study for ED

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 22/01/2026, Special Report

The first patients have been dosed in LTR Pharma's Phase II pharmacokinetic clinical study of SPONTAN, its nasal spray to treat erectile dysfunction. [...] The spray is available in Australia through registered healthcare professionals under the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA) Special Access Scheme (SAS) and Authorised Prescriber Scheme (APS).

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

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## **TGA approves adrenaline nasal spray**

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 22/01/2026, Bart Pharm

CSL Seqirus's adrenaline (epinephrine) nasal spray, neffy, has been approved for use in Australia by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Under the TGA approval, neffy can be used to treat anaphylaxis in adults and children aged four years and older, weighing 15kg or more.

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## **Channel 9, Nine News, 22/01/2026, Joel Dry**

A first-of-its-kind Clinical Trials Centre has opened in the Prince Charles Hospital in Queensland, providing patients access to new innovative therapies. The new world-class research hub is a step forward in developing potentially life-saving treatments. A new drug is currently being trialled in the centre, with the aim of getting data and information to be used for its approval by the TGA.

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## **OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL**

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## **FOOD STANDARDS**

### **Mouse salad not very vegetarian**

Herald Sun, General News, 23/01/2026, Ryan Bourke, Page 5

Sorrento's prestigious Continental hotel is facing allegations a dead mouse was found in one of the meals it served to a customer. An Instagram story posted this week shows a screenshot of a text exchange in which a half eaten side salad with a wet, dead mouse is pictured on a plate allegedly served by the hotel's restaurant.

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

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### **Genetically modified purple tomatoes approved for sale**

Newcastle Herald, General News, 23/01/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 9

A genetically modified purple tomato to be sold in Australia is the first of its kind, a Newcastle plant biologist says. [...] Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) declared the product safe to eat in June last year.

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### **Recall issued for Alula baby reflux, colic and constipation formula amid contamination fears**

7news.com.au, Other, 22/01/2026, Savannah Meacham

A recall alert has been issued for two types of baby formula amid fears it contains a toxin that can

cause nausea and vomiting. [...] Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) said the recall comes after international action by Lactalis.

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