



TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 8th February 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sun Herald](#)** (page 1) reports that one in ten patients needing a hospital bed in NSW are waiting for more than a day, as state hospitals fail to meet new access targets. NSW Health Minister Ryan Park said "I need some additional work from the Commonwealth [...] to get those patients out of acute beds and into an appropriate setting aged care or [into] NDIS support".
- **[The Sunday Age](#)** (page 1) reports that Melbourne gynaecologist Dr Simon Gordon has surrendered his medical registration and AHPRA is conducting an investigation with the doctor being accused of performing unnecessary endometriosis surgeries.
- **[The Sunday Mail Adelaide](#)** (page 1) reports that the SA government will go into the next election committing to a \$250m no-interest loan program for the construction of 650 aged care places across the state.
- **[The Sunday Times](#)** (page 1) reports that WA Chief Health Officer Andy Robertson has warned children and adults could die unless vaccination rates improve, citing damage caused by misinformation from the anti-vaccination lobby.
- **[The Sunday Tasmanian](#)** (page 1) reports that a joint operation between Tasmania Police and the state Health Department has resulted in the seizure of \$3.2m worth of tobacco, cigarettes and vapes.

Beds are churning

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 08/02/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 1

A \$250m no-interest loan scheme to turbocharge construction of 650 aged care places will be a centrepiece Labor election pitch. [...] With first of the baby boomers hitting their 80s this year and an ongoing immigration program, federal Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler earlier this week said on radio FIVEaa the nation would need "a new aged care facility every three days for the next 20 years it boggles the mind."

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Aged care key to solving hospital, ramping crises

Sunday Mail Adelaide, Editorials, 08/02/2026, Page 59

Health dominated the 2022 state election and will be a key issue in the coming weeks before the upcoming poll on March 21. [...] Federal Ageing Minister Mark Butler says we will need a new aged care home every three days for 20 years as the first Baby Boomers hit 80 from this year this is just plain bad planning by successive federal governments as this looming silver tsunami has been in plain sight for decades.

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US social media personality Sur Ronster fined after swarm of ebike riders converges on Sydney Harbour Bridge

The Guardian, Other, 07/02/2026, Nick Visser

New South Wales police have fined an American social media personality and issued two traffic infringement notices for alleged negligent driving after a swarm of ebike riders converged on the Sydney Harbour Bridge in peak-hour traffic on Tuesday. [...] The federal health minister, Mark Butler, said on Friday that illegal ebikes were a "total menace on the road".

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'Take them away, crush them': Australia faces an ebike surge that some say poses a health emergency

The Guardian, Other, 07/02/2026, Luca Ittimani

After the Sydney Harbour Bridge was swarmed by 40 or so ebikes and e-motorcycles on Wednesday, the Australian government said the country faced a "real emergency". "[Illegal ebikes] are a total menace on the road," the health minister, Mark Butler, said on Friday.

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'Miracle' weight loss drugs?

WEB Northside Living, Other, 07/02/2026, Niki Waldegrave

Obesity is killing Australians, the economy and the health system, with one in three Aussies overweight/ [...] Last month, Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler announced incoming PBS subsidies for Wegovy in patients with established cardiovascular disease and obesity.

[Read More](#)

The West Live, Podcast, 06/02/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has promised a crackdown on e-bikes as emergency rooms across Australia deal with a rise in the number of young people suffering catastrophic injuries.

Also reported by: [The West Live \(Perth\)](#).

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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DEPARTMENT

Hundreds of times more potent than heroin: What are the 'blue pills'?

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 07/02/2026, Jimmy Parker

Bright blue pills that look like a standard OxyContin painkiller tablet could be a "counterfeit" cocktail containing the potent substance nitazene, which is up to 500 times more potent than heroin. [...] According to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing , three people die every day from opioid-related use, more than 110,000 Australians are currently struggling with opioid dependence, and 64 per cent of drug-induced deaths in 2018 involved opioids.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

'Super-ager' Brian Barry reveals the secrets to a dementia-free life

The Courier Mail, Other, 07/02/2026, Heidi Douglass

Brian Barry turns 102 on February 6. He doesn't think of himself as remarkable. He'll tell you he "just kept going", that his long life is "luck", and that he talks "a lot of rot". But sit with him for even a few minutes and a very different picture emerges: a sharp mind, quick humour, deep empathy – and a philosophy of life that quietly mirrors what decades of brain ageing research has been trying to explore.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 07/02/2026, Fauziah Ibrahim and Johanna Nicholson

Interview with Christina Ryan, CEO of the Disability Leadership Institute. Ryan comments on concerns over autistic children being removed from the NDIS and placed into Thriving Kids program.

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PRIMARY CARE

Cure specialist fee pain

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 08/02/2026, Page 12

Australians are demanding urgent action to curb rising medical specialist fees that are forcing a growing number of people to delay or abandon vital medical care. A national Private Healthcare Australia survey has revealed widespread concern about affordability and access to specialist doctors.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Drivers hit illicit drugs

Sunday Age, General News, 08/02/2026, Melissa Cunningham, Page 1

Rising numbers of Victorian drivers are using cocaine and highly potent synthetic drugs, with nearly one in four who have been injured in a crash found to have illegal substances in their blood. The findings of a world-first, decade-long study showed at least one common illicit drug was detected in 23 per cent of samples taken from drivers, in some cases alongside presence of alcohol.

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Quit premise up in smoke

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 08/02/2026, Tamara Mcdonald, Page 26

Desperate vape addicts are finding the habit even harder to kick than traditional cigarettes, with experts reporting an alarming trend of people swapping to smoking over puffing to try and quit their nicotine addiction. It comes as results from a national survey, exclusively obtained by this masthead, revealed almost one in 10 Australian adults had purchased under-the-counter vapes in the past 12 months, as the black market continues to thrive.

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

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Hazards of working life spent glued to a chair

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 08/02/2026, Paige Fryer, Page 22

They call it "lawyer's hump" the damage to the backs, necks, shoulders and hips of sedentary office workers. Australians now spend nearly seven hours a day glued to their chair, but experts warn the real danger isn't the seat itself it's the long, unbroken stretches of sitting that crowd out everyday movement.

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Tobacco crims in new ploy

Illegal tobacco shops are posing as suppliers to sell counterfeit products that have the exact same packaging and barcodes as legal products. The latest tactics come as Queensland Health shut almost 200 tobacconists for three months since the new laws came in at the end of 2025.

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

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Sun safety past peak

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 08/02/2026, Page 12

Australians may be putting their skin at risk by winding back sun protection too early, with dermatologists warning that UV exposure remains high well beyond peak summer. Dermatologist and Doctify expert Emma Hiscutt says she commonly sees a drop-off in sun protection habits in March despite UV levels remaining high enough to cause skin damage.

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How controversial cell therapy is making a comeback to fight incurable diseases

The Australian, Other, 07/02/2026, Penny Timms

It's a controversial arm of science that's enjoying reinvestment after years in the sin bin. Will this be the rejuvenation cell therapies need?

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What our teeth reveal about the growing gap between rich and poor

ABC Online, Other, 07/02/2026, Eve Vincent

Teeth are one of the most visible markers of poverty: structural circumstances that are individually borne. In an essay for Aeon, US journalist Sarah Smarsh calls them "poor teeth".

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The sunburn truth no one warns you about

NEWS.com.au, Other, 08/02/2026, Melody Teh

Most Australians know the signs of sunburn. However, fewer realise it doesn't always show up where they expect.

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Retirement rental time bomb risk facing thousands of Victorians

NEWS.com.au, Other, 07/02/2026, Nathan Mawby

Victoria is sitting on a retirement time bomb with the number of homeless aged over 75 set to surge as the nation's "broken" rental assistance solutions fail them. [...] According to the RLC's analysis of Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data, a further 24,940 would be in rental stress if they weren't receiving government rental support.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Tumour nearly killed me at 21

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 08/02/2026, Isabella Pesch, Page 30

A Sunshine Coast woman has revealed the horrifying moment a ruptured ovarian tumour nearly claimed her life at just 21 years old. The now 25-year-old Destinee Zischka said she had been experiencing nausea and bloating, and was vomiting every time she tried to eat.

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

Personalised cancer care

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 08/02/2026, Page 5

A world-first clinical trial will test cancer vaccines designed specifically for children with advanced or treatment-resistant brain tumours. The study co-led by The University of Queensland and the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, and partnered with mRNA medicines platform company Providence Therapeutics will provide personalised vaccines to children and adolescents.

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

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Pregnant women in WA's Kimberley face big distances to hospital and high rates of heart condition, diabetes

ABC Online, Other, 07/02/2026

For expectant mothers living across Western Australia's vast remote north, getting to the nearest hospital is not always straightforward. Far from having a go-bag ready for when contractions start, pregnant women living in towns across the Kimberley are often expected to relocate weeks, if not months, before they are due to give birth.

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New data reveals alarming rise in weekly pain for Aussie women

NEWS.com.au, Other, 07/02/2026, Holly Byrnes

More than half of Australian women with endometriosis now battle weekly symptoms, revealing a hidden epidemic that workplaces are completely unprepared to handle. The female health gap is growing, with Australian women experiencing more disruptive symptoms from reproductive and chronic health conditions.

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

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Channel 10, 10 News (Weekend), 07/02/2026, Georgie Tunny

Researchers from SA Health and Medical Research Institute and Adelaide University are looking into whether a daily fibre supplement could help deal with a side effect of breast cancer treatment.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Last goodbye: Talking with dead helps with grieving

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 08/02/2026, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 49

An Adelaide psychologist is advocating for the increased use of an "obscure but fascinating" therapy found to trigger after-death communications to treat people struggling with the loss of a loved one. Dr Tom Nehmy has spearheaded new globally significant research into how induced after-death communication (IADC) therapy can be successfully incorporated into grief counselling.

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IMMUNISATION

Anti-vax warning

Sunday Times, General News, 08/02/2026, Joe Spagnolo, Page 1

WA's outgoing top doctor, who oversaw the State's controversial COVID-19 lockdowns, has warned children and adults could die unless vaccination rates improve. Dr Andy Robertson said misinformation from the antivaccination lobby was a major issue, adding: "They are against COVID vaccines, but increasingly against other vaccines."

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

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Funding injection

Sunday Examiner, General News, 08/02/2026, Lauren Richardson, Page 1

Tasmanian-led and funded research isn't just increasing medical knowledge, it's having "a direct and immediate impact on the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians". The not-for-profit Clifford Craig Foundation has announced more than \$200,000 in research grant funding for 2026.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Bed block crisis hits crowded hospitals

Sun Herald, General News, 08/02/2026, Angus Thomson, Page 1

One in 10 emergency patients needing a hospital bed in NSW is waiting longer than a day for admission as the public health system continues to fall short of performance targets. Health Minister Ryan Park said the state's hospitals could only meet the ambitious targets if the Albanese government finds a solution to move about 1100 elderly patients waiting for discharge from NSW hospitals into aged care.

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Joint response needed for city's hospitals

Sun Herald, Editorials, 08/02/2026, Page 28

In Australia's three-tiered system of government, hospitals are the responsibility of the states, any civics textbook will tell you. But the reality is much more complicated than that.

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Charity cash spent on art

Sunday Age, General News, 08/02/2026, Broede Carmody, Page 1

A cash-strapped regional hospital has enraged volunteers by telling them it would spend about \$200,000 in community fundraising buying artwork, when they expected the money to go towards beds

and equipment. Charity workers at Albury Wodonga Health's two opportunity shops say funds in the past have been used to improve hospital services.

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Gran died during RAH corridor beds trial

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 08/02/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 7

The Royal Adelaide Hospital was running a radical corridor care trial that included moving patients out of ward beds to "wait in an alternate location" when great-grandmother Helen Sargent died while left unattended in a corridor. Documents obtained by the Sunday Mail detail moves to empty ward beds of patients in busy times, freeing up space for emergency department patients.

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

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Apology for baby born on freeway

Sunday Times, General News, 08/02/2026, Caleb Runciman, Page 13

WA Health Minister Meredith Hammat has apologised to a mum who had to give birth on the side of the Kwinana Freeway. Ms Hammat said she was "deeply disappointed" Lena had been turned away from St John of God Midland Public Hospital.

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

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Cairns Hospital CEO Leena Singh explains land acquisition steps for \$1bn expansion

The Courier Mail, Other, 07/02/2026, Arun Singh Mann

A number of meetings have already been locked in as the state government begins preparing to resume land for the \$1bn expansion of Cairns Hospital. But key details of stage 1 of the 30-year master plan including costs and build times for each individual project won't be available until the middle of the year, the health service's chief executive Leena Singh said.

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

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'System in crisis': Tasmania's health performance slips

The Mercury, Other, 06/02/2026, David Killick

Tasmania spends the most yet delivers the least in emergency healthcare, with only 47 per cent of critical patients seen on time in a system critics say defies logic. New national data has ranked Tasmania as the worst-performing state in the nation for emergency health and ambulance services, prompting sharp criticism from Labor and the Greens.

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'Small number of surgeons' blamed for Canberra's surgery backlog

Canberra Times, Other, 07/02/2026, Lanie Tindale

The ACT government says long waiting lists for a small number of surgeons in some specialties are to blame for elective surgery backlogs. Canberra Health Services failed to meet its elective surgery wait time targets in the second half of 2025 despite a record number of operations, according to a statement tabled to the ACT Legislative Assembly on Thursday.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Danger of WA's dearth of doctors

Sunday Times, General News, 08/02/2026, Kirsty Lichtenstein, Page 9

WA Health Minister Meredith Hammat has indicated she is not panicking about the high numbers of doctors quitting the WA public health workforce. A Productivity Commission report this week revealed WA ranked last nationally for public hospital doctor retention, with more than one in four doctors leaving the system in 2024.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Concern over surge in endometriosis surgery

Sunday Age, General News, 08/02/2026, Henrietta Cook and Liam Mannix, Page 1

A Melbourne gynaecologist has surrendered his medical registration after being accused of performing unnecessary endometriosis surgeries, fuelling broader concerns about ineffective treatments for the painful condition. The allegations coincide with new data showing the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has received about 225 complaints about medical practitioners who treated and managed endometriosis between 2021-22 and 2023-24.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Has Ozempic boom made it harder for new mums?

Sunday Age, General News, 08/02/2026, Lauren Ironmonger, Page 14

Having come of age in the late 1990s, Jessica Seitz, 33, knows the pressures of diet and "skinny" culture well. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration warns against using GLP-1s during pregnancy and while breastfeeding.

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Ozempic eye warning

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 08/02/2026, Page 11

A safety warning has been issued for weight-loss injections over a rare side effect that cuts blood flow to the optic nerve. UK health officials have warned that injecting Ozempic could cause sudden blindness in one eye, via nonarteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (Naion).

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The war on vapes

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 08/02/2026, Rob Inglis, Page 1

A joint operation between Tasmania Police and the Health Department has resulted in the seizure of \$3.2m worth of cigarettes, tobacco and vapes, as the state government details tough new laws to crack down on the trade of illegal smoking products. [...] It comes after a two-day operation last September saw the Therapeutic Goods Administration, Tasmania's Health Department and local police target five retail outlets in Hobart, seizing commercial quantities of illegal smoking goods.

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Vaccine focus reduced in platform's profit push

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 07/02/2026, Kate Cowling

An ASX-listed pharmacy engagement company will shift focus amid changes to vaccine uptake in the US Pharmacy management platform Adheris Health – formerly MedAdvisor – plans to reduce its reliance on vaccines after their contribution to revenue dropped by more than half in two years. [...] It would be common sense for the TGA to accredit a few local labs to do such tests, and samples...

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

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AICIS

'Absolutely horrified': Community left in the dark about PFAS contamination

ABC Online, Other, 07/02/2026, Fleur Connick

Among the remnants of an ancient rainforest, sits a small wetland rippling with insect life — drawing birds and other animals for food and water. About 250 metres away is the Ourimbah rest area, a car park off the M1 Motorway on the New South Wales Central Coast.

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