



TODAY'S NEWS

Friday, 13th February 2026

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister McAllister](#) | [Minister Rae](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#) |
[Assistant Minister White](#) | [Special Envoy Repacholi](#) | [Department](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [Adelaide Advertiser](#) (page 3) reports that South Australia's public hospitals recorded seven 'sentinel events' causing death or serious injury in 2023-24, including six from medication errors.
- The [West Australian](#) (page 3) reports that four in five Australians support a mandatory health star food rating system, a Cancer Council survey found. *Also reported by:* [Hobart Mercury](#), [Yahoo! News Australia](#)
- The [Adelaide Advertiser](#) (page 4) reports that AMA SA said Wednesday's election debate between South Australian Health Minister Chris Picton and shadow minister Heidi Girolamo failed to deliver the specifics they had asked for.
- The [Daily Telegraph](#) (page 5) reports Fraud Fusion Taskforce co-chair John Dardo told Senate Estimates that inappropriate, mischievous and fraudulent NDIS claims account for some 6 to 10 per cent of the scheme's budget. *Also reported by:* [Herald Sun](#), [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Hobart Mercury](#).
- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 5) reports that the Victorian government is offering training in the use of two recently-approved anaphylaxis treatments, the Neffy nasal spray and Jext autoinjector, to staff in public and non-government schools.

- The **NT News** (page 6) reports that University of Queensland research found Indigenous Australians are five times as likely as other Australians to die from blood cancers. *Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury](#)*
- The **Hobart Mercury** (page 7) reports that ANMF Tasmania's fight against state government's proposal to cut the ambulance wait target from 60 to 45 minutes has been escalated to arbitration in the Tasmanian Industrial Commission.
- The **Canberra Times** (page 7) reports that Australian National University scored near the bottom in a study of stress and mental health in university staff across Australia.
- The **Herald Sun** (page 9) reports that there are now 3137 patients in hospital waiting for aged care places, a 30 per cent rise since last September but only 3 per cent up on December. The issue will be central to today's meeting of state and territory health ministers with federal counterpart Mark Butler. *Also reported by: [Courier Mail](#)*
- The **Hobart Mercury** (page 10) reports that 77 per cent of GP clinics in Tasmania now bulk-bill, up 5.5 per cent on 12 months ago. Assistant Health Minister Rebecca White said the government's \$8.5 billion investment in bulk-billing "not only helps patients, it supports local doctors to provide the care their communities rely on".
- **The Australian** (page 11) reports that all medical specialist fees will be disclosed on the Medical Costs Finder website under legislation introduced on Thursday. Minister for Health Mark Butler said it will fix the previous government's failed opt-in system and give Australians clarity and choice. *Also reported by: [Medical Republic](#), [Medical Forum](#)*

MINISTER BUTLER

New laws aim to end hidden specialist fees

The Australian, General News, 13/02/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 11

Patients needing a specialist are set to have more information to compare doctors' costs after new legislation was introduced to parliament by the Albanese government on Thursday. Health Minister Mark Butler said the legislation would help take the guesswork out of healthcare costs and fix what he said was the previous government's "failed" price disclosure tool, the Medical Costs Finder.

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

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Government moves to expose non-GP specialist fees

The Medical Republic, Other, 12/02/2026, Caitlin Wright

The federal government is moving to pull back the curtain on non-GP specialist fees, introducing legislation today that would require more detailed medical billing data to be made public. [...] Federal health minister Mark Butler said specialists and private health funds were given the opportunity to be upfront about patient costs and out-of-pocket expenses but had failed to do so.

[Read More](#)

All medical specialist fees may soon be listed online

Medical Forum, Other, 12/02/2026

Specialists may soon have to make their fees public after legislation to allow the government to publish such details was introduced to Parliament. [...] According to Health Minister Mark Butler that number has since risen to 88 individual doctors.

[Read More](#)

3000 old folk left stuck in hospitals

Herald Sun, General News, 13/02/2026, Adella Beaini, Page 9

More than 3000 elderly Australians are being left stranded in hospitals costing taxpayers \$1.2bn a year and clogging emergency departments nationwide. [...] State health ministers will confront Federal Health Minister Mark Butler in Canberra today, warning that the crisis is spiralling and demanding urgent action.

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

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3100 old folk stuck in hospitals

Courier Mail, General News, 13/02/2026, Ellen Ransley, Page 17

More than 3100 older Australians are now stuck languishing in hospital because they can't get an aged care bed. But there are signs the "bed block" crisis is stabilising, according to an updated report state and territory health ministers will hand their federal counterpart Mark Butler in a meeting today.

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Elderly stranded in hospitals

Fleurieu Sun, General News, 12/02/2026, Dee Elferink, Page 6

Member for Mayo Rebekha Sharkie is calling on the Federal Government to continue to take action on the number of elderly people in public hospitals, despite the \$25 billion boost announced following a recent National Cabinet meeting. [...] In response to Ms Sharkie's question, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler acknowledged the longer stay of older patients in hospitals was "quite significant" and that rising demand for residential aged care resulted in increased pressure on the public hospital system.

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Profit put before patients

Herald Sun, General News, 13/02/2026, Brett Heffernan, Page 51

With reports that private health insurance premiums could rise by an average of 5 per cent this year, private hospitals warn that the federal government must act to head off another annual profit boost for insurers. [...] We are about to mark the 12month anniversary of Federal Health Minister Mark Butler's ultimatum to insurers to lift payments to private hospitals in the wake of record profits and higher management fees.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Melbourne opens \$1bn vaccine facility

Manufacturers' Monthly, General News, 01/02/2026, Page 6

Australia has taken a step forward in onshore vaccine production with the opening of CSL Seqirus' cell-based influenza vaccine and antivenom manufacturing facility in Melbourne. The facility was inaugurated by The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health, Disability and Ageing.

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More WA GP clinics switch to fully bulk billing

Medical Forum, Other, 12/02/2026, Aleisha Orr

Eighty-eight GP clinics in Western Australia have moved from being a mixed billing practice to fully bulk billing since the federal government's incentives began in November. The Department of Health Disability and Ageing released figures showing the number of fully bulk billing clinics in each state prior to Bulk Billing Incentive Program incentives beginning and up to January 31, 2026. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler had sold the incentive program as something that would result in 90% of all GP clinics offering bulk billing by 2030.

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Medicare investment leads to jump in bulk billing

Starts at 60, Other, 12/02/2026, Matt Lennon

New data shows more than 3,400 general practices across Australia are now registered as fully bulk billing, following federal government investment aimed at strengthening Medicare. Almost 1,300 of those practices were previously mixed billing, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler today saying this number continues to rise each week. [...] Australians can locate their nearest bulk billing practice through the federal health department website.

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ABC Western Queensland, Breakfast, 12/02/2026, Danny Kennedy

Pre-recorded interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Compere says the bulk-billing rate has rebounded since the Federal Government rolled out changes to make more GP appointments free. Butler says they are on the right track regarding this after putting in place record investments in November. He says this is the core part of their strengthening of Medicare.

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A new aged care home every three days? Canberra's maths is right – its capital plan isn't

The Weekly Source, Other, 12/02/2026, Lauren Broomham

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler dropped a line last week that should have stopped the sector cold: Australia needs to open a new aged care facility every three days for the next 20 years. [...] At 100 beds apiece, that's around 12,000 beds a year – not far off what the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has been forecasting.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

ABC Radio Canberra, 09:00 News, 12/02/2026

Thirty NDIS participants have commenced a pilot program to test a new needs-based assessment model, ahead of major structural reforms to the scheme's funding formula. NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister says this trial is the start of an "extensive and transparent" testing phase designed to ensure the new assessment tools are fair, accurate and sustainable before being rolled out nationally later this year.

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MINISTER RAE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

GP bulk billing rates on the rise

Hobart Mercury, General News, 13/02/2026, Bridget Clarke, Page 10

The number of Tasmanian general practice clinics offering bulk billing continued to rebound in the last quarter, according to new federal government data. [...] Assistant health minister Rebecca White said bulkbilling offered patients peace of mind.

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Health Star Ratings inch closer to becoming mandatory for food brands

Health Star Rating labels could become mandatory for all packaged foods in Australia, with federal and state ministers reportedly set to overhaul the way businesses big and small display nutritional value. [...] In a statement, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Rebecca White called that reform "a sensible next step that will enhance consumer choice."

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'Life-saving' initiative: \$22.7 million secures domestic violence support program

Blue Mountains Gazette, Other, 12/02/2026, Georgina Jelovic

A vital pilot program designed to help local doctors and nurses identify victims of domestic violence has been thrown a \$22.7 million lifeline by the federal government. Federal Member for Macquarie Susan Templeman joined Assistant Ministers Rebecca White and Ged Kearney to announce the funding extension for the Supporting Primary Care Response to Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Pilot.

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February marks a turning point for ovarian cancer awareness and advocacy

villagevoice.net.au, Other, 12/02/2026, Kellie Evans

February is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, and this year it arrives with a renewed sense of optimism, unity and forward momentum for women, families and communities across Australia. [...] Pictured (L-R): Alison Evans, CEO ANZGOG, Debbie Shiell, CEO OCA, Rebecca White MP, Assistant Minister for Health and Robin Penty, CEO OCRF.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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DEPARTMENT

Why eight Australians died via vaccine

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 13/02/2026, Liam Mannix, Page 19

Australian researchers believe they have finally cracked the mystery of lethal blood clots caused in extremely rare cases by AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine and they think new jabs can be designed to avoid the problem. [...] A federal Department of Health spokesman said it had received 4964 compensation claims, processed 4369 of them and paid \$62.3 million in compensation.

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

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Pocock savages officials over Burrangiri access failure

Canberra Times, Other, 12/02/2026, Ray Athwal

A bureaucratic "glitch" in the federal government's landmark aged care reforms has locked Canberra's most vulnerable residents out of half of the territory's respite beds, despite explicit ministerial promises that no one would be "worse off" under the new system. [...] Health secretary Blair Comley faced pressure to reveal if the agency warned the minister about this ACT-specific crisis, but officials cited "deliberative matters" to avoid disclosing the specifics of their advice.

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The 50-year Medicare 'myth': How an ex-prisoner is turning healthcare

in Aussie jails on its head

9News, Other, 12/02/2026, Emily McPherson

Having spent 10 months in jail, Damien Linnane knows all too well the dangerous gaps that exist in the healthcare that's provided to Australian prisoners behind bars. [...] A spokesperson for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said: "State and territory governments are responsible through their own legislation for the delivery of corrective services, which includes delivery of healthcare to persons in prisons".

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Here's the average BB PIP payout

The Medical Republic, Other, 12/02/2026, Holly Payne

The universal bulk-billing practices signed up to the Bulk Billing PIP received an average of almost \$21,000 under the first two months of the program, The Medical Republic can reveal. [...] By the end of December 2025, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said there was a total of 3251 practices registered for the BB PIP.

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More WA GP clinics switch to fully bulk billing

Medical Forum, Other, 12/02/2026, Aleisha Orr

Eighty-eight GP clinics in Western Australia have moved from being a mixed billing practice to fully bulk billing since the federal government's incentives began in November. The Department of Health Disability and Ageing released figures showing the number of fully bulk billing clinics in each state prior to Bulk Billing Incentive Program incentives beginning and up to January 31, 2026. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler had sold the incentive program as something that would result in 90% of all GP clinics offering bulk billing by 2030.

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Medicare investment leads to jump in bulk billing

Starts at 60, Other, 12/02/2026, Matt Lennon

New data shows more than 3,400 general practices across Australia are now registered as fully bulk billing, following federal government investment aimed at strengthening Medicare. Almost 1,300 of those practices were previously mixed billing, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler today saying this number continues to rise each week. [...] Australians can locate their nearest bulk billing practice through the federal health department website.

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A comprehensive guide to AI in healthcare

Oncology Republic, Other, 12/02/2026, Laura Andronicos

Use of generative artificial intelligence (genAI), such as chatbots and scribes, has become increasingly normalised in clinical practice. [...] Professor Parry believes oversight from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is a requirement for genAI use in medicine.

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A new aged care home every three days? Canberra's maths is right – its capital plan isn't

The Weekly Source, Other, 12/02/2026, Lauren Broomham

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler dropped a line last week that should have stopped the sector cold: Australia needs to open a new aged care facility every three days for the next 20 years. [...] At 100 beds apiece, that's around 12,000 beds a year – not far off what the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has been forecasting.

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4,812 older Australians died waiting for appropriate home care in 2024-25

The Weekly Source, Other, 12/02/2026, Caroline Egan

The brutal reality of the inadequacies of the current aged care system was laid bare at the Australian Government's Additional Senate Estimates on Wednesday (11 February). In 2024-25, 4,812 older people died waiting for the level of home care they had been assessed as needing, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing revealed - a significant increase on the 3,383 deaths recorded in 2023-24.

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Providers flag “millions” in unpaid Support at Home claims as admin burden bites

The Weekly Source, Other, 12/02/2026, Lauren Broomham

[...] Ageing Australia CEO Tom Symondson told The Weekly SOURCE the peak body is aware of providers waiting on outstanding payments and is working with both the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and Services Australia to triage cases where delays are creating cashflow stress.

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PBAC recommends expanded vaccine access

The Medical Republic, Other, 12/02/2026, Amanda Sheppard

Vaccines dominated the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee's December 2025 meeting, with the PBAC recommending the inclusion of updated covid and respiratory syncytial virus vaccines on the National Immunisation Program, alongside a raft of medicine listings and amendments across multiple therapeutic areas. [...] All PBAC recommendations are subject to successful price negotiations between sponsors and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, followed by approval from the federal health minister.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Aged care sector says Support at Home not working

Aged Care Insite, Other, 12/02/2026, Stefanie Schultz

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) has blasted the Albanese government, demanding urgent action to address the ongoing challenges threatening to destabilise the transition to the Support at Home (SaH) program. The current Commonwealth Home Support Program (CSHP) is due to wind up in July 2027, however, OPAN has listed increasing wait times, unaffordable essential services, a lack of cottage respite and a host of implementation woes, as urgent issues with SaH that need to be addressed by the federal government.

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SA Labor's \$250m aged care election pledge

Aged Care Insite, Other, 12/02/2026, Stefanie Schultz

With just over five weeks until South Australians head to the polls, the current Labor government has made a significant pledge to boost the state's aged care sector. If re-elected on March 21 the Labor government has promised to fund a new \$250m no-interest loan scheme, incentivising providers to create 650 additional aged care places and ease hospital congestion.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

\$5b 'integrity leakage'

Hobart Mercury, General News, 13/02/2026, Julie Cross, Page 18

Up to 10 per cent of NDIS claims are inappropriate, made in mischief or are outright criminal, according

to the scheme's fraud boss. Co-chair of the Fraud Fusion Taskforce, John Dardo, told Senate Estimates that he couldn't give an exact figure on fraud within the scheme, but said he had a good idea of the cost of what he called "integrity leakage".

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

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Mother's emotional plea

Burnie Advocate, General News, 13/02/2026, Helen Kempton, Page 1

For Cheryle Laphorne and her daughter Matilda, transport isn't just about getting around, it determines if they can live as active members of the community. The Ulverstone-based mother, carer and small business owner lives with MS, while caring for daughter Matilda, who uses an electric wheelchair due to suffering a rare disease which causes complex conditions.

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Carers WA struggling to cope with unprecedented demand for support services

ABC Online, Other, 12/02/2026, Rhiannon Shine

A WA organisation that helps people caring for vulnerable family members says its funding is stretched to the limit, leaving it unable to meet surging demand for carer support services. It is estimated that there are more than 320,000 people in WA who care for people needing assistance.

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ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 12/02/2026, Adam Steer

The Federal Government says teachers will not take on additional responsibilities under the Thriving Kids program. Some supports under Thriving Kids are expected to be offered in schools, which has raised concerns about teachers' workloads. A government spokesperson says the program would not be delivered at a cost to schools.

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PRIMARY CARE

No relevant coverage

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POPULATION HEALTH

RTDs fuel post-pandemic alcohol growth

National Liquor News, General News, 01/03/2026, Page 124

More than 14 million Australians are now consuming alcohol up 430,000 since the end of the pandemic in late 2022 driven by an increase for RTDs. New data from Roy Morgan's Alcohol Consumption Report shows the proportion of Australian adults who drink alcohol was at 64.9 per cent in the 12 months to September 2025, down 2.9 percentage points from the 12 months to September 2022 (67.8 per cent) at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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'Be serious about this, because it's taking our people' - Indigenous communities urged to access free lung cancer screenings

National Indigenous Times, Other, 12/02/2026, Jarred Cross

Gilbert Wanganeen is urging Indigenous people not to wait until it's too late when it comes to lung cancer. Launched in July 2025, the National Lung Cancer Screening Program offers free scans through low-dose CT scans to support early detection, which supports successful treatment of the disease. [...] Between 2021-2023, it was the fourth-leading cause of death amongst First Nations people, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Pilot's plea to check your heart

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 13/02/2026, Joel Ehsman, Page 11

The world is a stressful place. The cost of living is rising, house prices aren't going down, and the Ashes ended early. Heart Research Australia knows stress is rising, but is warning it can be a key risk factor for heart disease.

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Warning over bowel cancer awareness as James Van Der Beek dies aged 48

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 12/02/2026, Taylor Penny

The rates of early-onset bowel cancer are rising at alarming levels in Australia with experts warning us to look for the signs and get screened as soon as possible after the tragic death of actor James Van Der Beek. [...] "The new cells that form sometimes duplicate into what we call polyps," Bowel Cancer Australia Medical Director, Associate Professor Graham Newstead said.

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ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 12/02/2026, Adam Steer

Interview with Bowel Cancer Australia medical director Graham Newstead following the death of actor James Van Der Beek from colorectal cancer. In Australia, early-onset bowel cancer is on the rise, with the risk of being diagnosed under the age of 40 doubling since the year 2000. Newstead says the country has one of the best screening programs for this disease, but it has only been designed for people aged 50 to 74. He says they do not know the exact reason why young people are contracting the disease, but he thinks it has something to do with diet, among other factors.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Mornings, 12/02/2026, Hamish Macdonald

Interview with ABC journalist Jess Kidd, a cancer survivor and advocate for Bowel Cancer Australia, about actor James Van Der Beek's recent death from colorectal cancer at the age of 48.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 12/02/2026, Brett Mcleod

Newborn babies in Victoria will now be screened for another rare but serious condition as part of the heel prick test. Sickle cell disease has been added to the free screening program after years of advocating by patients and their families. The test now screens for 35 conditions and paves the way for earlier diagnoses.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

ANU staff under severe psychological pressure

A national survey into the stress and psychological state of university staff marked the Australian National University as near the bottom among all Australian universities, and at the very worst among the country's major universities. The University of Canberra did better but still had high levels of poor psychological health.

Similar coverage: [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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Crucial change to help diagnose ADHD

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 13/02/2026, Natalie Croxon, Page 5

GPs will be able to diagnose attention deficit hyperactivity disorder under NSW government reforms aimed at improving affordability and access. People seeking an ADHD diagnosis at present need to see a specialist, either a psychiatrist or paediatrician depending on age, which can be a long and expensive process.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 12/02/2026, Lucy Breaden/Kylie Baxter

Interview with Mental Health Council of Tasmania CEO Dan Vautin about the Snows Dry Cleaning building in the heart of Glenorchy being renovated as a Medicare mental health hub. He says the proposal was commissioned by Primary Health Tasmania and the procurement process is now underway.

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IMMUNISATION

Why eight Australians died after having AstraZeneca's COVID jab

Age, General News, 13/02/2026, Liam Mannix, Page 13

Australian researchers believe they have finally cracked the mystery of lethal blood clots caused in extremely rare cases by AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine and they think new jabs can be designed to avoid the problem. Australia pinned its hopes on AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine, only to discover a link to a very rare clotting syndrome mid-rollout.

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GP text nudges boost vaccination rate in kids

West Australian, General News, 13/02/2026, Claire Sadler, Page 49

A simple text message reminder could increase the number of children receiving their vaccinations on time, a WA study has revealed. More than 20,000 text messages were sent to almost 10,000 Australian parents as part of the AuTOMATIC trial, conducted by The Kids Research Institute, in an effort to see if it would improve children getting their scheduled vaccinations on-time.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#), Similar coverage: [Pharmacy Daily \(Online\)](#).

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Text message for vaccines

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 13/02/2026, Page 7

Ten thousand Australian families have demonstrated the effectiveness of a simple text message for increasing the number of children receiving their vaccinations on time. In a trial, from 2021-2024 the Kids Research Institute Australia sent more than 20,000 text messages to Australian parents, showing an increase in timely vaccination rates.

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

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

6PR, Drive, 12/02/2026, Jamie Burnett

Interview with Private Healthcare Australia CEO Rachel David about PHA's survey showing one in three people referred to a specialist doctor has not gone because of the cost. She says some specialist doctors, like surgeons and psychiatrists, are charging upwards of \$500 for an initial appointment alone, and Medicare is not that much of a help.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

First Nations' terminal risk

Northern Territory News, General News, 13/02/2026, Kyle Rode, Page 6

Indigenous Australians are five times more likely to die from blood cancer compared to non-Indigenous Australians due to barriers in treatment and care. World-first research from University of Queensland revealed that access to blood cancer treatment can be slowed down by distance or cost, particularly for First Nations patients who live in regional Australia.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#).

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Albanese 'not contemplating failure' on closing the gap

Newcastle Herald, General News, 13/02/2026, Andrew Brown, Page 8

Failing to meet Closing the Gap targets should not be contemplated, the Prime Minister says, despite just four measures being on track to being met. [...] Mr Albanese also used the speech to announced a \$144 million boost to Indigenous health to upgrade more than 100 services in cities and regional areas.

Also reported by: [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Kalgoorlie\)](#), [Central Western Daily \(Orange\)](#), [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Tamworth\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Warrnambool\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Ballarat\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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Peak bodies welcome Indigenous health and education boost as Opposition claims credit for successful programs

National Indigenous Times, Other, 12/02/2026, Dechlan Brennan

Peak bodies have welcomed the government's latest investment in Indigenous-led health and early childhood education announced on Thursday, while the Opposition argues many of the funded initiatives were originally established under the former Coalition government. Delivering the government's latest Closing the Gap report a day before the 18th anniversary of the Apology to the Stolen Generations, the Prime Minister committed to a range of measures , including \$144 million to upgrade more than 100 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) in cities and regional areas.

[Read More](#)

GPs peak body welcomes federal investment in Indigenous health, urges nationwide action to confront racism

National Indigenous Times, Other, 12/02/2026, Giovanni Torre

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has welcomed investments announced by the federal government and urged all Australian governments to put more resources into tackling racism to "ensure it is a not a barrier to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities achieving their aspirations". The RACGP made the call in response to the federal government's latest Closing the Gap report.

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\$144 million upgrade for Indigenous health clinics as PM argues failure on closing the gap is not an option

National Indigenous Times, Other, 12/02/2026, Dechlan Brennan

Indigenous health services across Australia will receive upgrades under a new round of federal investment, with the Prime Minister using his annual Closing the Gap address to argue that improving outcomes for First Nations people remains a national priority. Anthony Albanese is set to announce \$144 million to upgrade more than 100 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) in cities and regional areas.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 12/02/2026, Brenton Ragless

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has announced that the Federal Government will provide \$144 million to upgrade Indigenous health services, including maternal and mental health, as he delivered the annual Closing the Gap address to Parliament.

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Partnership to help boost wellbeing of region's youth

Broome Advertiser, General News, 12/02/2026, Cain Andrews, Page 4

A partnership between the Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Governance Group and the State Government to deliver co-ordinated action in an effort to improve outcomes for young Aboriginal people in the Kimberley was formalised in Broome on February 5. The Kimberley Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing Steering Committee Partnership Agreement aims to share decision making between Kimberley Aboriginal community organisations and State Government agencies to deliver better outcomes for young Aboriginal people.

Also reported by: [Broome Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

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Deadly Choices driving real change in Indigenous health outcomes

SBS, Other, 12/02/2026, Dan Rennie

It's one of the nation's most successful Indigenous health programs, with 94 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people completing regular health checks via Deadly Choices. New statistics are highlighting the powerful impact the Indigenous health initiative Deadly Choices is having across communities, with research showing the program is driving more mob to take control of their health.

[Read More](#)

BHP listens to Pilbara child hearing

Paydirt, General News, 01/02/2026, Page 60

BHP Ltd has partnered with the Ear Science Institute Australia to trial a new ear health initiative in the East Pilbara. The Healthy Ears on Country programme will introduce a surgical fast-track model designed to break down barriers to critical ear surgery by providing fast and easy access to car by streamlining access to surgery in the Pilbara.

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SA public hospital errors on the rise

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 13/02/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 3

Catastrophic medicine errors causing "serious injury or death" are on the rise in South Australian public hospitals with six horrendous mistakes recorded in the latest national data. There was also one case of a suspected suicide of a person while in a psychiatric ward or unit, in the "sentinel events" registered in 2023-24.

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

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Health debate a fizzer

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 13/02/2026, Page 4

The election debate on health lacked answers on ramping, Australian Medical Association SA president Peter Subramaniam said, adding that Health Minister Chris Picton and opposition spokeswoman Heidi Girolamo "failed to deliver the details South Australians deserve". The event at the Capri Theatre on Wednesday night before an audience of doctors and health professionals was the first political debate ahead of the state election.

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Dispute heats up over ramping

Hobart Mercury, General News, 13/02/2026, Rob Inglis, Page 7

A dispute between health unions and the state government has intensified over a proposed 45-minute target for transferring patients from ambulances into hospitals. The government's transfer of care procedure was implemented in April 2024 as part of a commitment to "ban" ambulance ramping.

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Dispute over transfer times ramps up

Launceston Examiner, General News, 13/02/2026, Annika Rhoades, Page 7

The dispute over ambulance transfer times involving a Tasmanian nursing union and the state government will officially proceed to arbitration before the industrial commission. In mid-December, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) Tasmania challenged the government's transfer of care protocol, citing unsafe workloads for hospital staff and risks to patient safety.

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Nurse's spice of strife

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 13/02/2026, Darren Chaitman, Page 24

A Mid North hospital's updated food menu has sparked a court showdown with a nurse, who says she risks a severe allergic reaction through airborne exposure to dishes featuring capsicum, paprika and chilli. Pauline Christie, a nurse at Burra Hospital, lodged a Work Health and Safety dispute notice with the South Australian Employment Tribunal against her employer in December, after negotiations over the matter reached a stalemate.

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

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'Life and death' claim for southside hospital

Cairns Post, General News, 13/02/2026, Arun Singh Mann, Page 7

A petitioner calling for the construction of a second hospital emergency department in Cairns says the debate over new health infrastructure is far from over. After Cairns Hospital released a \$1bn CBD expansion plan, the health service's chief executive Leena Singh dismissed calls for a second facility or a total relocation.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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Maternity action plan

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 13/02/2026, Michael Nolan, Page 1

Developing a new charter to outline behaviour expectations and clinical standards are among 14 recommendations the Toowoomba Hospital boss has vowed to implement after Darling Downs Health conducted a review of its embattled maternity unit. A summary of the Independent Workplace Culture Review recommendations was shared with staff on Thursday, with DDH chief executive Annette Scott saying she would work on implementing changes.

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Midwives under siege

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 13/02/2026, Nikita McGuire, Page 5

Protesters have targeted Townsville hospital following a shocking leak of graphic images and confidential birth documents from a hospital worker to an anti-abortion activist. Health officials have launched an investigation after sensitive images taken at the Townsville University Hospital by a staff member were sent to anti-abortion activist and law professor Joanna Howe, who then posted them on social media.

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

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Upgrade at Mater's renal unit key to care

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 13/02/2026, Page 3

The Mater Private Hospital has grown its Townsville facilities with a bigger renal dialysis unit and expanded emergency department. Renal nurse unit manager Maree Storey said the addition of four extra treatment chairs at the Pimlico campus now allows 12 patients at a time to receive dialysis.

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Breast care is improved

Border Watch, General News, 13/02/2026, Charlotte Varcoe, Page 10

Those needing surgical breast care procedures may be able to have it closer to home. The Mount Gambier and District Hospital has recently opened up its operating room once a month for a range of different breast cancer surgeries.

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Drama over artwork 'no threat to funding'

Border Mail, General News, 13/02/2026, Ted Howes, Page 6

A Border cancer charity has hosed down suggestions funding arrangements for medical equipment could be compromised in the wake of an artwork scandal at Albury hospital. Albury Wodonga Health came under fire following claims it used \$200,000 raised in its opportunity shops to buy artworks instead of medical equipment.

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'Punishing him': surgeon blasts health service after vocal nurse removed

The Border Mail, Other, 12/02/2026, Anthony Bunn

Sacked Albury Wodonga Health surgeon John Stuchbery says ending nurse Geoff Hudson's work at Albury hospital makes no sense when there is a "desperate" need for nurses. The recently installed Albury citizen of the year was commenting after Mr Hudson was told recently he no longer had a job at Albury hospital.

[Read More](#)

When 44 hours becomes forever: The hidden crisis in our emergency departments

Your Life Choices, Other, 12/02/2026, Don Turrobia

The wheelchair had become Maria Osborn's world for nearly two days. At 63, the grandmother sat in Blacktown Hospital's emergency department, her severe stomach pain worsening with each passing

hour, as chaos swirled around her in a waiting room stretched beyond its limits.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Healthcare pledge

Border Watch, General News, 13/02/2026, Charlotte Varcoe, Page 1

A new \$13m medical school training centre may be built in Mount Gambier/Berrin if the current government is re-elected. Announced earlier this week, Minister for Health and Wellbeing Chris Picton committed to providing the service should they be successful in March.

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Graduates boost regional hospitals

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 13/02/2026, Crystal Fox, Page 20

More than 30 keen medical graduates have headed to two northern NSW hospitals to help keep a finger on the pulse across the region. The 39 medical interns have joined the Northern NSW Local Health District and have been allocated to both Lismore Base Hospital and Tweed Valley Hospital.

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Interns scrub in for local care

Shepparton News, General News, 13/02/2026, Pip Turton, Page 11

Fresh faces are walking the corridors of Goulburn Valley Health, marking the start of a new chapter not just for 32 interns, but for regional healthcare across Victoria. GV Health is among 12 regional public health services welcoming a record 271 medical interns this year, part of a statewide push to strengthen care closer to home.

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Wenty welcomes new nurses

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 13/02/2026, Lochlainn Heley, Page 3

Wentworth is set to join four other Far West Health sites in welcoming new graduate nurses as they begin the next stage of their professional journeys . A total of 21 graduate nurses will step foot into the Far West Local Health District, spread out between Wentworth, Wilcannia, Tibooburra, Balranald, and Broken Hill.

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

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Pharma taking PBAC to court over knockback

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 12/02/2026

Perth-based Lawley Pharmaceuticals has lodged an application in the Federal Court of Australia seeking judicial review of the decision by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) in

Nov 2025 to not recommend listing of AndroFeme 1, a transdermal testosterone cream formulated for post-menopausal women, on the PBS.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

Masks everywhere, but they leave one group behind

Canberra Times, General News, 13/02/2026, Lanie Tindale, Page 13

Face masks have become as ubiquitous as hand sanitiser since the COVID-19 pandemic, but their prominence has left one group behind. [...] DeafACT secretary Louise Irvine welcomed the new ability for patients to add accessibility requests to the Digital Health Record, the software used by the ACT's public health system.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Mother's fury after autistic son starved to death in hospital following multiple 'failures' by hospital

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 12/02/2026, Zak Wheeler

An autistic man was left starving to death in his hospital bed due to a string of systematic failures at the Gold Coast 's second-largest public hospital, a report has found. Stewart Kelly, 45, died during a 33-day admission at Robina Hospital in 2022. [...] As a result of the report one clinician was referred to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency for further investigation.

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A matter of minutes: The Kitchen precedent, natural justice, and misfeasance in public office

The Mandarin, Other, 12/02/2026, Binoy Kampmark

The Queensland Supreme Court found that a senior Medicare official committed misfeasance by referring a doctor for investigation without properly considering his submissions, a ruling with broad implications for public officials. The implications of a ruling made by Queensland Supreme Court Justice Rebecca Treston on December 19 may prove seismically significant to highly placed public servants and ministers of the Crown.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

WA Health issues measles alert

West Australian, General News, 13/02/2026, Hannah Cross, Page 18

A flight from Indonesia has been listed as an exposure site after WA Health confirmed two new cases of measles in WA. The two cases were aboard Batik Air Flight ID6080 from Jakarta to Perth which landed on February 7 at 12.40am.

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

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New way for staff to save children

Herald Sun, General News, 13/02/2026, Rebecca Borg, Page 5

Victorian parents of children living with anaphylaxis can feel more confident about their child's safety at school, as teachers are trained in two new lifesaving treatments. [...] However the Therapeutic Goods Administration's approval of Neffy offers a needlefree option, while Jext is an autoinjector device.

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UK law firms consider action on behalf of women who developed brain tumours after using contraceptive

The Guardian, Other, 12/02/2026, Anna Bawden

UK law firms are considering legal action on behalf of women who developed brain tumours after using the contraceptive injection Depo-Provera. Depo-Provera is a high-dose synthetic progesterone, prescribed for contraception and other menstrual symptoms, administered via injection every three months.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Support for health stars

West Australian, General News, 13/02/2026, Page 3

Four-in-five Australians are in favour of a mandatory health star rating food labelling system. As food ministers prepare to meet on Friday to discuss the issue, Cancer Council commissioned research shows 80 per cent of Australians support a mandatory system.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), Similar coverage: [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#)

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La Vera Fresh Ricotta 500g recalled amid fears of potential bacterial contamination

7news.com.au, Other, 12/02/2026, Demi Huang

A popular fresh cheese has been recalled over concerns of potential bacterial contamination. Several batches of La Vera Fresh Ricotta 500g from La Vera Cheese have been recalled in an alert issued by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) on Thursday.

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