



TODAY'S NEWS

Tuesday, 24th February 2026

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister McAllister](#) | [Minister Rae](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#) |
[Assistant Minister White](#) | [Special Envoy Repacholi](#) | [Department](#)
| [Ageing and Aged Care](#) | [Disability and Carers](#) | [Primary Care](#)
| [Population Health](#) | [Chronic Conditions and Screening](#) |
[Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](#) | [Immunisation](#) | [Health Systems Strategies](#)
| [Health Economics & Research](#) | [First Nations Health](#)
| [Public Hospital and Health Reform](#) | [Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office](#)
| [Health Workforce](#) | [Technology Assessment and Access](#)
| [Medicare Benefits and Digital Health](#) | [Benefits Integrity](#) | [Australian CDC](#) |
[Therapeutic Goods Administration](#) | [Office of Drug Control](#) | [Food Standards](#)
| [AICIS](#)

LINKS

[Click here to view full print articles in this report](#)

[Click here to view front pages of today's newspapers](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 7) reports that according to report from the TGA in April, Australia has no official data on how many children identifying as trans have been given gonadotrophin-releasing hormone analogues for gender dysphoria because the medicines are prescribed “off-label” and have not been assessed for efficacy or safety for that purpose. Health Minister Mark Butler sought advice on puberty blockers after the UK’s ban in 2024, and in January 2025, Mr Butler announced the National Health and Medical Research Council to review existing guidelines.
- **[The Canberra Times](#)** (online) reports that Dr Kerith Whittigan launched an online petition for a five-minute sunscreen break before lunch in Australian schools for children’s sun safety and to prevent skin cancer, with more than 670 medical professionals signing the open letter to the Federal Government. A spokesperson for the Health Department stated organisations, state and territory health departments and Cancer Council Australia deliver public health campaigns promoting sunscreen.
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports that Health Minister Mark Butler said allegations about Melbourne surgeon Simon Gordon were “distressing” and asked the Victorian health department to investigate how Epworth Private Hospital managed the case. Mr Butler said Medicare was also investigating Mr Gordon’s billing for procedures claimed for severe endometriosis, despite pathology showing mild or no disease. *Also reported by: [The Herald Sun](#), [The Sydney Morning Herald](#)*

- [The Herald Sun](#) (page 1) reports that Victorian hospitals were found to have provided patients abridged versions of incident reports and told them it was the original, while more detailed reports were sent to health authorities, with the state government saying it was unacceptable.
- [The Australian](#) (page 4) reports that health experts said One Nation MP Barnaby Joyce's proposal to restrict doctors' access to Medicare unless they serve in regional areas could face legal challenges, impact recruitment and retention, and would "do more harm than good".
- [The Daily Telegraph](#) (online) reports the NSW state government has introduced a personalised childhood vaccination schedule tool to help parents track doses and receive reminders amid rising measles cases.

MINISTER BUTLER

Flying blind on puberty blockers

The Australian, General News, 24/02/2026, Bernard Lane, Page 7

Australia's medicine safety officials have warned the federal government they are flying blind on the use of puberty blocker drugs for gender-distressed minors. [...] This prompted Australian Health Minister Mark Butler to seek urgent advice on the safety of transgender puberty suppression used by children's hospitals.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

New doubts about gender drugs

The Australian, Editorials, 24/02/2026, Page 10

The move by the UK's health watchdog to pause a trial of puberty-blocking drugs for gender-confused children due to safety concerns such as infertility, reduced bone density and impacts on brain development raises serious issues for Australian health authorities. [...] Such treatments are a state issue here, but Health Minister Mark Butler has ordered a National Health and Medical Research Council review and revision of Australia's guidelines, with interim advice due midyear.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Union push for childcare pay increase

Australian Financial Review, General News, 24/02/2026, Ronald Mizen, Page 1

One of Australia's most influential unions is urging the Albanese government to make permanent a 15 per cent pay rise for 60,000 childcare workers.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

More bulk-billing docs but rates soar

Hobart Mercury, General News, 24/02/2026, Ellen Ransley, Page 8

Bulk-billing rates in Queensland have increased by almost 7 per cent in the past year. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said "over the past year, we've made sure more Australians find it easier to find a bulk-billing doctor".

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Feds won't be coming to the party

Border Mail, General News, 24/02/2026, Anthony Bunn, Page 1

The Prime Minister has dismissed any prospect of the federal government helping to fund the construction of a new Border hospital. [...] The rejection of federal involvement in building a new hospital has also been underlined by Health Minister Mark Butler in responding to a petition from the

Corowa Wahgunyah Rutherglen Health Action Group calling for Commonwealth funding for a greenfield hospital.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

PM failing us on pub test with hospital

Border Mail, General News, 24/02/2026, Page 12

The Japanese fried rice with tuna was the menu choice for Prime Minister Anthony Albanese when he popped into Albury's Soden's hotel on Sunday night. [...] If only Mr Albanese, his Health Minister Mark Butler and state counterparts were willing to engage, instead of brushing us off.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

'Literally save lives': doctors plea for sunscreen breaks in all schools

Canberra Times, Other, 23/02/2026

After a day playing in the sun at school many children return home with rosy cheeks, sunburnt skin and untouched sunscreen bottles squashed in the bottom of their bags. [...] An open letter from over 670 medical professionals to the Minister for Education Jason Clare and Minister for Health Mark Butler.

Also reported by: [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Lismore City News \(Online\)](#), [Inner East Review \(Online\)](#), [Manning River Times \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Emma, Maya and Rocco all want one thing: a cure for type 1 diabetes

Canberra Times, Other, 23/02/2026, Megan Doherty

She's only six but Maya Konstantinou has already met Prime Minister Anthony Albanese twice. [...] Supported by her parents, Emma and Angelo, Maya has also met other parliamentarians, including federal Health Minister Mark Butler, and each time bravely told her story of what it's like to be a child with type 1 diabetes (T1D).

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

[Read More](#)

Simon Gordon's endometriosis surgeries were gynaecology's open secret. Now colleagues and patients are speaking out

ABC Online, Other, 23/02/2026, Louise Milligan , Mary Fallon & Lara Sonnenschein

A renowned Melbourne surgeon repeatedly removed tissue and organs from young women for "severe" endometriosis when pathology showed they had little or no trace of the disease, prompting multiple complaints by clinicians and patients to hospital management and medical regulators, a seven-month Four Corners investigation has found. [...] When Four Corners made Federal Health Minister Mark Butler aware of the allegations uncovered in our investigation, Mr Butler described them as "sickening".

[Read More](#)

Bulk-billing rates rise, but at what cost?

Croakey, Other, 23/02/2026, Richard Pullin

In radio interviews today, Health Minister Mark Butler was upbeat about a recently reported increase in bulk-billing rates among GPs, while acknowledging that rates remain relatively low in some areas, including the ACT, Western Australia, Hobart, the Hunter Valley and Newcastle.

[Read More](#)

The Zap: don't miss the latest health and aged care news, plus key consultations now open

Croakey, Other, 23/02/2026, Melissa Sweet

Only 45 percent of antibiotics given after surgery were assessed as appropriate, while 35 percent of antibiotics prescribed to people in residential aged care were used for longer than six months, according to a new report featured in this week's column. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler announced

he had approved private health insurance premium increases of an average 4.41 percent to apply from 1 April, saying this was "moderately higher than last year's increase of 3.73 percent and reflects the rising costs of providing medical and hospital services, which rose five percent last financial year".

[Read More](#)

Soapbox: Patients can't live with an unfair system

Insight, Other, 23/02/2026

Eye health professionals know better than anyone that sight-saving treatment for macular disease is not optional – it's essential. [...] These stories will be sent to Federal Health Minister Mr Mark Butler.

[Read More](#)

'Set rebates based on evidence, not politics': RACGP

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/02/2026

The RACGP says the Federal Government must commit to the protection of primary healthcare in future governments by establishing an independent pricing authority. [...] The RACGP's calls form part of its 2026–27 pre-Federal Budget submission, but an independent pricing authority has also been recommended in the Government's own 2024 Scope of Practice Review. However, Federal Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler said the Government is 'not ready to hand off responsibility' for Medicare fees and rebates.

[Read More](#)

Health insurance costs just keep rising

Small Caps, Other, 23/02/2026, John Beveridge

Health insurance—it is the ultimate grudge purchase, the price of which just keeps going up even as the coverage it offers shrinks. Health Minister Mark Butler has confirmed that premiums will rise by 4.41% from April 1, compared to last year's rise of 3.73%.

[Read More](#)

PM's visit to Border involved fried rice, cold beer and cold shoulder on health

The Border Mail, Other, 23/02/2026

The Japanese fried rice with tuna was the menu choice for Prime Minister Anthony Albanese when he popped into Albury's Soden's hotel on Sunday night. [...] If only Mr Albanese, his Health Minister Mark Butler and state counterparts were willing to engage, instead of brushing us off.

[Read More](#)

Independent Medicare pricing unlikely under Labor

The Medical Republic, Other, 23/02/2026, Holly Payne

The RACGP's big-ticket item this pre-budget season would cost a cool \$64 million over four years, and its success is already in question. [...] When asked this morning whether the government would "butt out" of Medicare funding, though, federal health minister Mark Butler answered in the negative.

[Read More](#)

\$331M funding for Rural Generalist training until 2030

The Sentinel News, Other, 23/02/2026

The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) has secured \$331.7m from the Federal Government to deliver its national training program from now to December 2030. The funding, announced by Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler, provided five years of certainty for the training of Rural Generalist doctors serving rural, remote and First Nations communities across Australia.

[Read More](#)

ABC, Four Corners, 23/02/2026, Louise Milligan

A seven-month investigation reveals that Melbourne surgeon Dr Simon Gordon repeatedly removed

tissue and organs from young women for alleged severe endometriosis despite pathology showing little or no disease, triggering multiple complaints from clinicians and patients. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler confirms Medicare is investigating Gordon's billings. Gordon charged higher out-of-pocket fees than peers, and some patients did not have private health insurance.

Report continues on: [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#).

[Play Now](#)

ABC News, News Breakfast, 23/02/2026, Bridget Brennan & Catherine Murphy

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Compere mentions that it has been a year since the Federal Government announced plans to invest billions into bulk-billing as part of its re-election bid. Butler says, according to recent records, there is a jump in bulk-billing right across Australia. He points out that they have 1300 general practises that, last October, were charging people a gap fee, but are now utilising bulk-billing.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, Today , 23/02/2026, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

The Coalition has introduced draft legislation that would criminalise providing any assistance to Australians with terrorist links trying to return home. The bill aims to end "self-managed returns" by making it an offence to help individuals from former ISIS-controlled areas obtain passports or transport without government approval. Health Minister Mark Butler dismissed the proposal as a political stunt, arguing that while the government has "no sympathy" for those who supported the "death cult," the law must not target humanitarian organisations assisting innocent children.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, Today , 23/02/2026, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Butler discusses the Coalition's decision to crack down on "ISIS brides". He added that despite taking in these ISIS families and brides, they will not be providing them with assistance or any type of support to these people.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Canberra, AM, 23/02/2026, Melissa Clarke

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, about the bulk billing push by the Federal Government and the latest concern about a Melbourne gynaecologists that was performing endometriosis, despite the patients not having pathology results. Butler admits that he was "physically sick" when he heard of the details regarding the Melbourne gynaecologist, and he has written to the Vic Health Minister [Mary-Anne Thomas] regarding the matter.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Sydney, Nightlife, 23/02/2026, Philip Clark & Suzanne Hill

Some cost of living measures from the Albanese government seem to be taking effect. Bulk billing rates across the country have risen by 4% in the period from November to January. Health Minister Mark Butler is happy.

[Play Now](#)

Radio National, AM, 23/02/2026, Melissa Clarke

A Four Corners investigation finds gynaecologist Simon Gordon repeatedly performs surgery for severe endometriosis even when pathology shows little or no disease. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has requested an inquiry into clinical governance at Victoria's largest private hospital following clinician complaints. Gordon maintains he only operates when convinced it benefits patients' quality of life.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER MCALLISTER

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER RAE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

DEPARTMENT

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

AI solution is unethical

Hobart Mercury, General News, 24/02/2026, Page 4

AI "digital companions" marketed as a solution for loneliness are unethical and could increase social isolation, research suggests. The Monash University research argues that AI chatbots and avatars being promoted as substitutes for social contact, particularly among older people, only offer an illusion of social connection and risk deepening social isolation.

Also reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

A 'terrible' system for young people: Tax reform architect pleads for real reform

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 23/02/2026, Shane Wright

A doyen of the Labor Party and a key architect of the Hawke-Keating era of economic reform, Bill Kelty, has pleaded with the Albanese government to deliver "real" tax reform that rewards young Australians,

saying older people like himself don't need more help. In an impassioned appearance before a Senate inquiry into the capital gains tax, Kelty, a former Reserve Bank board and secretary of the ACTU, said the increase in support among young people for "fringe" political elements was in part being driven by a tax system that was actively making their lives worse.

[Read More](#)

Is your suburb an aged care hotspot? New data reveals the areas facing collapse

Canberra Times, Other, 23/02/2026, Carla Mascarenhas

Sunshine Coast nurse Trish fears the aged care system is approaching breaking point. Having worked in the sector for years, she said chronic understaffing, burnout and housing pressures are driving workers away just as demand surges.

Also reported by: [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Nick Bruining: Deeming rate changes and return to 'normal' levels set to wipe out Centrelink part pensions

West Australian, Other, 23/02/2026

A lift in deposit rates coupled with the "normalisation" of Centrelink deeming rates will spell bad news for thousands of income-tested part-pensioners, allowance recipients and Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders. A 0.5 per cent rise in deeming rates announced last Friday results in a double whack for those affected and will see many fortnightly payments reduced or cut altogether.

Also reported by: [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

'Stuff of nightmares': calls for help surge by 50% after Australia launches aged-assistance tool

The Guardian, Other, 24/02/2026, Melissa Davey

Requests for assistance to aged care advocacy services have surged since the government introduced a controversial assessment tool for home care support, with one woman in her 80s describing it as "the stuff of nightmares". Guardian Australia previously revealed that aged care clinicians and support workers have raised serious concerns about the Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT), an algorithm-driven system introduced in November to determine eligibility for aged care services and funding levels.

[Read More](#)

Construction industry calls for mature age workers to fill apprentice shortage as dozens embrace new career

7news.com.au, Other, 23/02/2026, Jonathan Edwards

If you're over 50 and looking for a job, one of Australia's largest sectors wants to hear from you. The building and construction industry is crying out for hundreds of thousands of new mature-age apprentices, as the shortage of urban construction workers is acute.

[Read More](#)

Dementia researchers focus on early intervention

Aged Care Insite, Other, 23/02/2026

It is a condition that impacts one in five older Australians and is often considered a "transition" stage to dementia, but mild memory loss is now in the spotlight. A team led by world-leading dementia researcher Professor Kaarin Anstey is hoping to prove early intervention can slow or eliminate the progress of mild memory loss.

[Read More](#)

Free vaccines for WA aged care residents

Aged Care Insite, Other, 23/02/2026, Stefanie Schultz

The Cook Government has announced a significant new health initiative, providing free respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccinations to older West Australians residing in aged care homes. This \$2.6 million program, set to commence in mid-May, aims to protect approximately 15,000 residents this year, bolstering their health during the winter months.

[Read More](#)

Dear Little Aged Care, stop putting yourselves under pressure

Health Services Daily, Other, 23/02/2026, Steven Hughes

For the love of aged care, not-for-profit providers – please stop spending money you don't have. Failure of workforce management, not the AN-ACC funding model, is the key reason for the residential aged care crisis.

[Read More](#)

Not For Profit sells land approved for retirement living and aged care

The Weekly Source, Other, 23/02/2026, Ian Horswill

A Not For Profit provider has sold a metropolitan site previously approved for retirement living and aged care development, as organisations continue to reassess capital allocation and development pipelines. The transaction follows a separate divestment by Southern Cross Care (Tasmania), which in November last year closed its 94-bed Rosary Gardens aged care home in New Town, 4km north of Hobart's CBD.

[Read More](#)

WIN Rockhampton, WIN News Central Queensland, 23/02/2026, Steve Hart

Elderly Australians and their families face long waits for at-home care assessments despite record federal funding for aged care. The federal aged care minister says all urgent-priority cases receive a care package within a month to ensure timely support.

[Play Now](#)

FIVEAA, Mornings, 23/02/2026, Graeme Goodings

Interview with Miranda Stark, CEO of COTA SA, about the government's aged care and downsizing policies. Stark urges more investment in dementia care, navigation services, and an integrated approach to support older people, particularly those stranded in hospitals due to a lack of aged care.

[Play Now](#)

FIVEAA, Mornings, 23/02/2026, Graeme Goodings

Interview with Peter Malinauskas, Premier of SA, about aged care solutions and defence site redevelopment. Malinauskas says his government plans to convert the current Women's and Children's Hospital into a 600-bed aged care facility by 2031 in partnership with the non-government sector. He also commits \$250m in concessional loans to help providers build beds sooner, arguing the state will act on the crisis rather than wait on the federal government.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

DISABILITY AND CARERS

Kelty urges bold tax overhaul to fix generational wealth gap

Australian Financial Review, Other, 23/02/2026, Lea Jurkovic

Former ACTU secretary Bill Kelty says changes to the capital gains tax discount did not go far enough to address intergenerational inequality, and has told a Senate committee the government must embrace a more comprehensive tax reform.

[Read More](#)

ACTU and Kelty at odds on tax reform

Australian Financial Review, Other, 23/02/2026, Phillip Coorey & Lea Jurkovic

The union movement says the proceeds of scaling back the capital gains tax deduction for investors should be used to build housing, putting it at odds with ACTU giant Bill Kelty.

[Read More](#)

'We have a cruel system for the young, not by chance but by choice'

Australian Financial Review, Other, 23/02/2026, Bill Kelty

When I told Paul Keating, who I believe is the founder of the modern Australian economy, that I was coming here, he simply asked, "Why?" Well, I said, I like Nick McKim.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Adelaide, Mornings, 23/02/2026, Rory McClaren

Interview with Blair Boyer, Minister for Education in SA, about the rollout of Thriving Kids in schools. Boyer says SA signed onto the 50-50 state federal program before caretaker mode to help manage NDIS growth by introducing foundational supports for children with developmental delay and low to moderate autism needs. He explains the scheme targets new participants aged birth to eight, while current NDIS recipients in that bracket remain on the program.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

Potential \$420,000,000,000 hit of Hanson's migration policy ... and a widow's warning

The Australian, General News, 24/02/2026, Thomas Henry, Page 1

One Nation's plan for "net zero" migration could blow out Australia's debt by almost \$420bn over the next 10 years, while barely making a dent in the nation's welfare bill over the same period, bringing into question the core of Pauline Hanson's economic policy. [...] The migration cost calculations emerged as medical experts questioned how Senator Hanson's right-hand man, New England MP Barnaby Joyce, could avoid a legal minefield with his proposal to ban GPs from Medicare if they didn't serve some time in the regions.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

One Nation's rural GP plan 'conscription'

The Australian, General News, 24/02/2026, Elizabeth Pike, Page 4

Health experts warn that One Nation's proposal to bar doctors from Medicare unless they work a stint in the regions would face a minefield of legal issues and hollow out bulk billing in the cities, with one medical accountant likening the policy to "conscription". One Nation MP Barnaby Joyce hit a wall on Tuesday after he said the party was canvassing a policy that would bar metropolitan-based doctors from participating in Medicare and bulk billing unless they spend a period of time working in rural areas.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Joyce blows up idea worth debate

The Australian, General News, 24/02/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 4

It's a shame when ideas worthy of discussion are obliterated on the altar of Barnaby Joyce's attention span. One Nation recruit Joyce's ridiculous overreach in suggesting Medicare provider numbers should be restricted to all doctors who have not performed a stint in the bush or the regions ensures the kernels of reasonable policy contained in the thought-bomb will be dismissed before a serious discussion can even be had.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Hi-tech healing

Herald Sun, General News, 24/02/2026, Jayitri Smiles, Page 18

A Victorian tech company is leading the world in medical training, using cutting-edge mixed-reality systems that prepare first responders for major emergencies. Clayton South-based BlueRoomXR has developed high-pressure virtual reality simulations that drop trainees into critical medical environments such as battlefields and emergency rooms.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

The rural care you can wear

Herald Sun, General News, 24/02/2026, Jayitri Smiles, Page 18

An emerging Australian medical device will detect the earliest warning signs of serious illness, well before patients realise something is wrong. Husband-and-wife founders of ObservaCare, Rod and Deborah Martin, are trialling wearable technology that tracks vital signs with hospital-level precision when patients are hundreds of kilometres away.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Coroner calls for home oxygen overhaul after man's death

Ballarat Courier, General News, 24/02/2026, Amy Roulston, Page 3

A coroner is calling for a statewide overhaul of home oxygen protocols after a 76-year-old Mount Clear man died when his oxygen supply ignited as he lit a cigarette, despite an earlier "warning sign" of what was to come. Ballarat's Jeffrey Thomas Wilson had a 60-year history of smoking and was exposed to asbestos for almost half his life.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

'Keep politics out of Medicare': doctors on the bulk-bill battle

Newcastle Herald, General News, 24/02/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 10

GPs have called for healthcare funding to be based on evidence not politics, amid a battle in the Hunter over bulk-billing and Medicare rebates. The comments come with the release of pre-budget submissions for the healthcare sector by two key medical groups.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Kids' caffeine hit cause for alarm

Cairns Post, General News, 24/02/2026, Tamara McDonald, Page 25

Kids are consuming alarming amounts of caffeine, with doctors reporting teens drinking up to four cups of matcha a day and primary school aged children having energy drinks before morning classes. And young people often don't even realise they're ingesting the stimulant, which can negatively affect sleep and mental health.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

'Better lifestyle and more money': Barnaby Joyce's own daughter a target of his rural doctor plan

NEWS.com.au, Other, 23/02/2026, Samantha Maiden

One Nation MP Barnaby Joyce's threat to force new doctors to go bush has a surprise target: his own daughter. The former deputy prime minister says metropolitan-based GPs should be barred from participating in Medicare unless they spend a period of time practising in the regions.

[Read More](#)

Record-breaking growth in future GP numbers

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/02/2026, Michelle Wisbey

From Alice Springs to Katherine, Nhulunbuy, Borroloola and Wurrumiyanga – Australia's next generation of GPs has kicked off its training in the Northern Territory. The future GPs join a record-breaking 1772 doctors beginning the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program with the RACGP in 2026, which will also see 56 future GPs beginning training in Tasmania and 359 in Queensland.

Channel 9, Nine News, 23/02/2026, Mark Burrows

One Nation MP Barnaby Joyce calls for all graduate doctors to complete mandatory service in regional Australia, arguing country hospitals sit without enough doctors while communities wait years for reform. PM Anthony Albanese rejects the proposal during a visit to Sussan Ley's electorate of Farrer, where a looming by-election will test One Nation's rising momentum in the polls.

[Play Now](#)

Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 23/02/2026, Tom Connell

Interview with Dr Michael Wright, President of the RACGP, about GP training and funding in regional and rural Australia. Wright says most GP training already occurs in rural areas, and the college works with the government to support trainees with community exposure and programs. He also calls for an independent pricing authority to set evidence-based Medicare rebates.

[Play Now](#)

2AY, Breakfast, 23/02/2026, Matt Griffith

Interview with PM Anthony Albanese about his regional visit and healthcare initiatives. Albanese says he has been engaging with the community and checking on the success of urgent care clinics, which ease pressure on hospital emergency departments. He highlights that the federal government has invested \$25b in the health and hospitals agreement and \$8.5b in bulk billing incentives, while noting public hospitals remain a state responsibility.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Breakfast, 23/02/2026, Ross Stevenson & Russel Howcroft

Interview with Dr Simon Judkins, Vic President, AMA. Compere says doctors' lengthy shifts and excessive workloads are putting public hospital patients at risk and should be urgently addressed. Judkins believes that what has changed regarding doctors are their busyness, the stress they are under, and the complexity of patient care.

[Play Now](#)

4BC, Drive, 23/02/2026, Gary Hardgrave

Interview You're listening to Drive with Gary Hardgrave on Brisbane's 4bc. At 22 past four, we'll get on to the drive-by in a moment or two.

[Play Now](#)

4BC, Afternoons, 23/02/2026, Carla Bignasca

Interview with Dr Michael Wright, President of the RACGP, about establishing an independent Medicare pricing authority. Wright says Medicare rebates fail to keep pace with inflation and rising clinic costs, which drives up out-of-pocket fees and makes it harder for patients to see a GP. He argues an independent body would set rebates based on the real cost of care rather than political cycles.

[Play Now](#)

6PR, Drive, 23/02/2026, Jamie Burnett

Interview with Dr Ramya Raman, VP of the RAGCP WA, about retaining doctors and GPs in rural Australia. Raman says Australia already requires some overseas-trained doctors to complete a rural moratorium, but a blanket rule forcing all graduates to bush before city work does not fix retention. She explains rural GPs develop broader acute skills, stronger community ties and deeper continuity of care, which makes the role professionally rewarding and central to regional communities.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Newcastle, Drive, 23/02/2026, Jenny Marchant

Interview with Dr Fiona Van Leeuwen, GP and Chair of the Hunter General Practitioners Association,

about bulk billing and healthcare access in the Hunter region. Leeuwen says new bulk-billing clinics could make seeing a doctor more affordable but warns that the model encourages “fast medicine,” with short appointments that may compromise comprehensive, patient-centred care. She emphasises that funding issues in Medicare have shifted costs onto patients and GPs.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Melbourne, Drive, 23/02/2026, Ali Moore

Interview with Dr Michael Wright, President of the RACGP, about rural GP workforce incentives. Wright says interest in general practice training is at an all-time high, with many junior doctors now on rural pathways and nearly 300 starting as rural generalists, providing essential skills for regional communities. He warns that mandatory regional placements or “stick” approaches could deter people from entering general practice.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

POPULATION HEALTH

Ampol dials up U-Go as servo sales stubbed out

The Australian, Business News, 24/02/2026, Colin Packham, Page 13

Ampol's counter to the crippling illegal tobacco trade is a network of super-efficient self-service stations with no cigarettes, no snacks and no cashiers. Illegal tobacco's disruptive force has undermined supermarkets, independent grocers, grab-and-go corner shops and even Ampol's convenience network has not been immune, with tobacco revenue dropping 32 per cent last year.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

City flexes its muscles

Cairns Post, General News, 24/02/2026, Rosalee Chapman, Page 1

Research has revealed Cairns is one of Queensland's fittest cities, with residents showing lower chronic disease rates and higher exercise participation than most cities. Research from Net World Sports has found that Cairns is ranked fourth in the state, sitting behind the Gold Coast, Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Once a boozy rite of passage, has university O-Week changed for good?

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 23/02/2026, Nicole Preceel

One-hundred shots of beer in 50 minutes. If you vomit, you drink it. For many former university students, O-Week was about intoxication more than orientation.

[Read More](#)

Emissions from trucks and buses cost Australia \$6.2bn in health effects each year, study finds

The Guardian, Other, 23/02/2026, Petra Stock

Air pollution from trucks and buses is costing Australians about \$6.2bn each year due to the health effects of exposure to vehicle exhaust, a University of Melbourne study has found. Like cigarette smoke, heavy vehicle exhaust is a mixture of tiny toxic carbon particles and gases that cause inflammation when inhaled, and is associated with a wide range of respiratory, heart and other health impacts, according to Dr Clare Walter a health and policy researcher and an author of the study.

[Read More](#)

Endocrinologist: What everyone should know about the rise of 'game-changing' weight loss medications like Ozempic in Australia

A leading endocrinologist has urged Australians to stop viewing 'game-changing' GLP-1 medications as the 'only answer' for weight loss - as private prescriptions continue to increase ten-fold. With more than half a million Australians now taking drugs like Ozempic and Mounjaro every month, Senior Kolling Institute researcher, Professor Sarah Glastras, has called for a shift away from the perception that they're a one-step weight loss solution.

[Read More](#)

Man alarmed after testing urine for increasingly common contaminant: 'Just took the wind out of me'

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 23/02/2026

An Australian man showed that no matter where you're located or how young and healthy you are, plastic is likely finding its way into your body in alarming quantities. What's happening?

[Read More](#)

2GB, Drive, 23/02/2026, Clinton Maynard

New research from Flinders University finds that zero-alcohol drink advertising may actually boost teenagers' interest in full-strength alcohol. The study of 382 adolescents aged 15 to 17 shows that those exposed to and who liked zero alcohol ads report stronger intentions to try the alcoholic versions of the same brands.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Mornings, 23/02/2026, Tom Elliott

Interview with Nicole Lee, Adjunct Professor at the National Drug Research Institute, about rising sobriety among young people. Lee says data show a clear long-term drop in alcohol and illicit drug use since the early 2000s, with young people consuming less overall, though recent increases among young women raise some concern. She attributes the shift to greater awareness of health risks, changing social norms, multicultural influences, and social media.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

What experts want you to know about endometriosis, diagnosis and surgery as treatment

ABC Online, Other, 23/02/2026, Louise Milligan & Kate Ainsworth

Allegations about how surgery is used to manage endometriosis have alarmed medical experts and distressed women living with the chronic inflammatory disease. As part of its seven-month investigation into endometriosis treatment in Australia, Four Corners discovered that updated best practice guidelines based on the latest medical research and evidence were not always followed and could lead to devastating outcomes for patients.

[Read More](#)

Games Prostate cancer patients in Mackay get dedicated support from new specialist nurse

Daily Mercury News, Other, 23/02/2026

A dedicated specialist nurse has arrived to guide Mackay's prostate cancer patients through treatment after the region recorded some of Australia's highest incidence and mortality rates. Mackay Hospital and Health Service has welcomed its first prostate cancer specialist nurse to help patients navigate the uncertainty and stress of a cancer diagnosis.

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

[Read More](#)

'Smart T-shirt' could detect hidden heart conditions and save hundreds of thousands of people from an early death

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 23/02/2026, Xantha Leatham

Hundreds of thousands of people could benefit from a 'smart T-shirt' that can detect hidden heart conditions, scientists have announced. Currently, people suffering from symptoms like chest pain or dizziness take home a portable device that measures their heart's electrical signals.

[Read More](#)

5CC, 06:00 Regional News , 23/02/2026

Young-onset dementia cases are rising in Australia, projected to reach 41,000 by 2054, with over 1100 people currently living with dementia on the Eyre Peninsula. Dementia Australia CEO Tanya Buchanan calls for increased federal investment to implement the National Dementia Action Plan and launch a national brain health campaign.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Man dies in psych unit incident

Herald Sun, General News, 24/02/2026, Mark Murray, Page 13

A man has been killed at a Geelong psychiatric unit, with homicide detectives holding another patient in custody. It is understood emergency services were called to the Swanston Centre about 2am yesterday, with officers finding a man dead inside a room.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

One man dead, another under guard at mental health facility

Ballarat Courier, General News, 24/02/2026, Allannah Sciberras & Melissa Meehan, Page 2

A psychiatric patient is dead and another is under police guard after an incident at a mental health facility plagued with controversy. Homicide detectives are investigating the alleged altercation at Barwon Health's Swanston Centre, on the corner of Myers and Swanston streets in Geelong, about 2am yesterday.

Also reported by: [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [Central Western Daily \(Orange\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Security boost call as mental health patients escape care

Newcastle Herald, General News, 24/02/2026, Alex Mitchell, Page 8

Security arrangements at mental health facilities are not good enough, the NSW Premier has conceded, as six patients abscond from his state's care each week. Mental health care across NSW was thrust into the spotlight when Cumberland Hospital patient Setefano Mooniai Leaaetooa, 25, absconded care and allegedly mounted a murderous stabbing spree on Tuesday.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#).

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Tammy Shipley drank 67 glasses of water before her death in custody from water intoxication, inquest hears

The Guardian, Other, 23/02/2026, Sarah Collard

Tammy Shipley was recorded on CCTV drinking at least 67 cups of water in 12 hours before she died in custody of water intoxication, a coronial inquest has heard. The 47-year-old mother of five died while being held on remand at Silverwater women's correctional centre in New South Wales on 20 December 2022, after being arrested on minor shoplifting charges.

2GB, Mornings, 23/02/2026, Mark Levy

Interview with Rose Jackson, Minister for Mental Health in NSW, about a third patient absconding from Cumberland Hospital. Jackson says the man had approved leave signed off by two psychiatrists as part of his reintegration plan, failed to return, and police immediately began searching with primary concern for his safety. She urges the public to contact Parramatta Police with information and stresses clinicians only grant leave when they assess no risk to the community.

[Play Now](#)[Back to Top](#)

IMMUNISATION

NSW government launches new vaccine tracking tool amid surging cases of measles cases

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/02/2026, Abisha Sapkota

The NSW government has launched a personalised childhood vaccination schedule tool for parents amid a sudden surge in the highly-infectious disease measles across the state. Health Minister Ryan Park said it was important for parents to be aware and proactive with their children's vaccination schedules.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

One important form can protect your child

Adelaide Now, Other, 24/02/2026

SA Health's School Immunisation Program delivers free immunisations to all year 7 and year 10 students at high schools across the state. Trained and qualified immunisation teams visit schools to administer vaccines that can help protect against serious diseases – but they can only do so with your consent.

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

[Read More](#)

NSW launches personalised vaccination schedule tool amid measles spike

7news.com.au, Other, 23/02/2026, Katharina Loesche

A spike in measles cases has prompted a roll out a new personalised vaccination schedule tool for parents, as authorities warn of rising infections and local transmission. The online tool, launched by NSW Health on Sunday, allows parents to enter their child's date of birth to generate a customised immunisation schedule with practical reminders and calendar alerts.

[Read More](#)[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Bulwul Balaang nurtures lifelong health for young Indigenous women, study shows

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 23/02/2026, Becca Whitehead

Leaders at the Waminda Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) in Nowra, NSW, have partnered with researchers at Charles Darwin University (CDU) to evaluate the Bulwul Balaang program for young Indigenous women. Outcomes included increased access to health checks, but researchers say that more importantly, the program lays the foundations for lifelong health.

[Read More](#)

Appointment strengthens cancer care for Gold Coast First Nations community

National Indigenous Times, Other, 23/02/2026, Giovanni Torre

Cancer Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the Gold Coast will be strengthened by the appointment of McGrath Cancer Care Nurse, Kayalia Marks, a proud Yuwaalaraay woman and experienced oncology nurse, as the state's first First Nations (identified) McGrath Cancer Care Nurse. Based at Gold Coast University Hospital, Ms Marks provides free, culturally safe cancer care and support for First Nations patients diagnosed with any type of cancer.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

ALP's burn burn plot

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 24/02/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 1

Labor will announce major plans for a new hospital near Gawler which ferociously targets Liberal Leader Ashton Hurn in her Barossa Valley seat. The uncosted plan has no timeline to open.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Deadly postcode gap: New centre will help

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 24/02/2026, Page 4

A new cancer centre and oncology unit has been unveiled for the people of the Darling Downs. St Vincent's Private Hospital reported on Friday the inclusion of the new centre, which includes a 12-chair oncology unit with a team of experienced cancer care specialist doctors and support staff.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Four years after an election defining promise, practitioners say the SA health system is still struggling

ABC Online, Other, 23/02/2026, Sophie Holder

"Today, I start announcing our plan to fix the ramping crisis." Met by rousing applause from party faithful, that was the promise then-opposition leader Peter Malinauskas made as he launched the 2022 SA Labor campaign.

[Read More](#)

Channel 7, Seven News, 23/02/2026, Peter Mitchell

Homicide squad detectives investigate the death of a 31yo inpatient found inside a room on the mental health ward at University Hospital Geelong Swanston Centre just after 2am, with another patient

placed under police guard. The incident marks the third sudden death at the centre in 22 months, as Barwon Health describes the man's death as unexpected.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Adelaide, 16:00 News, 23/02/2026

SA ED doctor Daniel Haustead says ramping in SA now tracks worse than in 2022 when Labor promised to fix it, despite significant investment in the system. He mentions regularly leaving a shift only to return to the same patients still waiting in emergency, as new hospital beds fill almost immediately under relentless pressure.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

ANMF appoints Catelyn Richards new Federal Assistant Secretary

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 23/02/2026, Anmj Staff

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation's Federal Executive (ANMF) has appointed Catelyn Richards as its new Federal Assistant Secretary, marking a significant step in strengthening national leadership of the country's largest union.

Ms Richards is a Registered Nurse who commenced her career in paediatrics at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

Slain paramedic's father slams NSW Attorney-General over 'inaction' on new laws

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 23/02/2026, Kaitlyn Hudson-O'Farrell

The father of slain paramedic Steven Tougher has slammed inaction from NSW officials on increasing penalties for those who abuse or assault frontline workers. Almost three years after the 29 year-old was stabbed to death by a mental health patient while on a break from his shift, Jeff Tougher has taken aim at NSW Attorney-General Michael Daley for a lack of action on protecting paramedics while they work.

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

[Read More](#)

Meet the new doctors preparing for lifesaving missions in Far North Queensland

Cairns Post, Other, 23/02/2026, Emma Cam

Demand for aeromedical services is rising across Queensland, with LifeFlight responding to almost 9,000 missions last year, a 4.2 per cent increase statewide. Cairns-based critical care doctors helped 914 people during that period, slightly down from 920 in 2024 but well above 526 in 2023 (data available from Q2 – Q4).

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Victorian doctors could strike if negotiations over pay and conditions aren't resolved soon

9News, Other, 23/02/2026, Eleanor Wilson

Victorian doctors in the public sector have warned they may be forced to strike if negotiations on pay

and conditions, including a ban on shifts over 12.5 hours, are not resolved soon. Almost half of junior doctors have reported concerns about fatigue-related clinical errors, according to data from the Australian Medical Association (AMA).

[Read More](#)

New tool to help health professionals improve medication management

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 24/02/2026, Anmj Staff

Researchers have released a new guide on how to establish and lead a quality improvement collaborative (QIC) to support senior healthcare professionals, managers and leaders across healthcare settings who are seeking to improve medication management practices. A QIC uses an evidenced based approach to bring healthcare professionals together from different sites to learn, share and implement best practice in a measurable and sustainable way. QICs have successfully been used in a range of different fields and settings to improve the quality of healthcare.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 23/02/2026, Sandra Sully

LifeFlight welcomes Dr Bassim Jebeili to its Brisbane crew, one of eight new critical care doctors joining the service in a role that holds deep personal meaning for him. He joins 33 Qld doctors undertaking intensive mission-ready training, including helicopter underwater escape drills, sea survival, rescue winching and complex clinical scenarios.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Pharmacy at the heart of fertility care

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 23/02/2026, Chloe Hava

Morag Horton works alongside clinicians and nurses to ensure seamless IVF medicines supply and patient support. [...] In 2015, funding for the supply of IVF medicines changed to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) in the S100 category – meaning all supply now involved a pharmacist.

[Read More](#)

DVA brings in dosage cap for medicinal cannabis

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/02/2026

Dosage caps and stricter prescriber requirements have been introduced by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) for funding medicinal cannabis prescriptions. Only medical practitioners who have a specialist registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) can prescribe following changes to the DVA's Medicinal Cannabis Framework this month.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Vital facts doctored

Herald Sun, General News, 24/02/2026, Sarah Booth, Page 1

Victorian hospitals have been caught editing reviews into the care of patients who suffered serious, potentially fatal harm before giving the victim, or their family, their copy. Some health services investigating a "serious adverse patient safety event" gave victims a shorter, "abridged" review but told them it was the original report.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Heat on surgery 'spree'

Herald Sun, General News, 24/02/2026, Craig Dunlop, Page 13

Dozens of women who have come forward with "strikingly similar" claims about renowned gynaecologist Dr Simon Gordon could soon end up suing the Epworth hospital for failing to halt allegedly excessive and unnecessary surgeries he performed on them. Margalit Injury Lawyers is one of two firms considering class actions over allegations on Dr Gordon's surgeries including his allegedly unnecessary removal of reproductive organs over more than a decade.

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

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

Class action looms over allegations against endometriosis doctor

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 23/02/2026, Liam Mannix & Henrietta Cook

A major law firm is considering launching a class action against Melbourne gynaecologist Dr Simon Gordon after being contacted by more than 120 women, including many who allege he performed unnecessary surgery on them. This masthead this month revealed Gordon was under investigation by the medical regulator over allegations he had performed unnecessary endometriosis surgeries on women, including removing their ovaries and uterus, despite no clinical evidence justifying the procedures.

Also reported by: [The Age \(Online\)](#), [Brisbane Times \(Online\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#)

[Read More](#)

Pharmacist cancelled for professional misconduct after selling ice, MDMA

The Mercury, Other, 23/02/2026, Amber Wilson

A former Tasmanian pharmacist has had her registration cancelled after she was convicted of selling the drugs ice, cannabis, MDMA and prescription medications. Cindy Maree Strachan, who was first registered as a pharmacist in Australia during 2007, was caught with the drugs when she was intercepted by Tasmania Police while driving in April 2020.

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

[Read More](#)

DVA brings in dosage cap for medicinal cannabis

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 23/02/2026

Dosage caps and stricter prescriber requirements have been introduced by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) for funding medicinal cannabis prescriptions. Only medical practitioners who have a specialist registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) can prescribe following changes to the DVA's Medicinal Cannabis Framework this month.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

AUSTRALIAN CDC

Alert over drug-resistant superbug outbreak in NSW

The Courier Mail, Other, 23/02/2026, Kate Schneider

Australians have been warned that a drug-resistant STI is spreading across New South Wales, amid concerns the superbug may not be able to be controlled with oral antibiotics. There have been 11 cases reported so far this year of multidrug resistant gonorrhoea (MDR), and 41 cases last year.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Brisbane, Evenings, 23/02/2026, Philip Clark

Panel discussion with A/Prof Katherine Gibney, Deputy Director of the Victorian Infectious Diseases Service at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, and Dr Michael Wright, President of the RAGCP, about Australia's COVID-19 vaccine rollout and pandemic response. Gibney highlights the rapid development of vaccines, effective government and public health strategies, and strong public compliance as key achievements that allowed Australia to limit the spread and reopen safely.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

What's involved in dispensing prescribed psychedelics?

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 23/02/2026, Helen Hawkes

A Canberra-based pharmacy has become the first to manage MDMA and psilocybin capsules for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and treatment-resistant depression in accordance with Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) regulations. For Louise McLean FPS, co-owner of Capital Chemist Southlands, the milestone followed a lengthy approval process.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

ABC Gippsland, Regional Statewide Mornings, 23/02/2026, Nic Healey

Interview with Dr Adam Straub, Addiction Medicine Physician at Grampians Health & Orticare, about stolen poppy plant heads in Ballarat and associated risks. Straub explains that poppies contain dangerous compounds like thebaine and warns that illicit use may produce unpredictable and dangerous reactions. He notes that Australia's real-time prescription monitoring systems, like SafeScript, help manage pharmaceutical opioid risks, though naloxone only reverses the opioid effects.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

FOOD STANDARDS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

AICIS

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

Prepared by Isentia

Subject to copyright. For internal use only.
See [Copyright Terms of Use](#)

