



TODAY'S NEWS

Friday, 27th 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 **[Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 1) reports that Royal Prince Alfred Hospital is investigating a cluster of serious fungal infections in its transplant unit linked to two deaths, with construction work the suspected source. *Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph](#), [Daily Mail](#)*
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports that the Victorian Ambulance Union has demanded a review of laws introduced to protect first responders after charges were dropped against a man who attacked a paramedic because she was not treating a patient at the time.
- The **[Courier Mail](#)** (page 1) reports that aged care providers are charging up to 40 per cent more for basic home care services since Commonwealth aged care reforms took effect. *Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph](#), [Herald Sun](#), [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Hobart Mercury](#), [NT News](#)*
- The **[Hobart Mercury](#)** (page 1) reports that peak health bodies say the Tasmanian Government's proposed 45-minute limit on ambulance transfers will only increase pressure on workers in an under-resourced hospital system.
- The **[Courier Mail](#)** (page 3) reports that Bowel Cancer Australia supports lowering the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program age to 40, with early-onset diagnoses doubling since 2000. *Also reported by: [Herald Sun](#), [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [Hobart Mercury](#)*

- The [Australian Financial Review](#) (page 5) reports that the CEO of a major NDIS provider has called for greater controls on who can charge for services, saying there are more barriers to working behind a bar. NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister said unregistered providers will have to "shape up or ship out" when mandatory registration takes effect on July 1.
- The [Daily Telegraph](#) (page 5) reports that FSANZ has issued a recall for Pinkfong Seasoned Seaweed Flakes after the product was found to contain plastic. *Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser](#), [NEWS.com.au](#)*
- The [Canberra Times](#) (page 7) reports that fourteen people have ended their lives through the ACT's voluntary assisted dying scheme since it took effect last November.
- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 8) reports that Victoria's Health Workers Union has lifted all work bans after members voted to accept a 12.49 per cent wage increase from the state government.

MINISTER BUTLER

Costs warning after Ramsay turnaround

Australian Financial Review, Companies and Markets, 27/02/2026, Michael Smith, Page 19

Ramsay Health Care chief executive Natalie Davis said private hospitals would face significant wage pressures in coming years following public sector pay rises for nurses, and the onus was on insurers to pass on premium increases to hospital operators.

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

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

Thinking safety by appointment

Canberra Times, General News, 27/02/2026, Jenna Price, Page 18

The woman who has been studying our medical regulator for decades just shocked me to my core. [...] Maybe Mark Butler needs to enforce a total overhaul of what is communicated to patients about individual practitioners because we sure as hell won't get any information from private hospitals who will protect their cash cows at all costs – even if that cost is the happiness and safety of patients.

Also reported by: [Ballarat Courier \(Ballarat\)](#), [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Northern Daily Leader \(Tamworth\)](#).

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

Put an end to the aged-care rip-offs

Courier Mail, Editorials, 27/02/2026, Page 24

It would appear the government has learnt nothing from the trouble-plagued NDIS. [...] The relevant ministers, Mark Butler and Sam Rae, need to nip this aged-care service inflation in the bud and ensure that Aussies who have worked hard all their lives do not feel ripped off.

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

New fully bulk-billed clinic opens in Cannington

Canning Examiner, General News, 26/02/2026, Adewunmi Adedayo, Page 3

A new fully bulk-billed medical clinic has opened in Cannington, as more families look for affordable access to a GP. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler attended the opening and said bulk billing rates in the area were rising.

Also reported by: [Examiner Newspapers \(Online\)](#).

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

New bulk-billed urgent care clinic opens in Shellharbour to ease hospital pressure

Region Illawarra, Other, 26/02/2026, Kellie O'Brien

Shellharbour residents now have access to bulk-billed urgent medical care closer to home, with the

Shellharbour Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (Medicare UCC) officially opening its doors in Barrack Heights. Opened by Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and Whitlam MP Carol Berry, the new clinic is operating from Centre Health Medical Centre on Captain Cook Drive and will be open from 8 am to 8 pm, seven days a week, with no appointment required.

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

[Read More](#)

Time to get a grip: just ban them

Newcastle Herald, General News, 27/02/2026, Bradley Perrett, Page 18

When I was a kid and I'd done something dangerous, I'd try to tell my mother that it was OK, because all the other kids were doing it. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler told 7 News this month that e-bikes were "a total menace on the roads."

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

Health minister calls for illegal ebikes to be crushed

Australian Motorcycle News, Other, 26/02/2026, Damien Pelletier

Following recent incidents including around 40 e-bikes and e-motorcycles swarmed the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the federal government warned Australia was facing a "real emergency". Health Minister Mark Butler said illegal devices were increasingly putting people at risk.

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

[Read More](#)

Health insurance set for biggest rise in nine years

Canberra Weekly, General News, 26/02/2026, Andrew Brown, Page 54

Private health insurance customers are set to fork out more on their policies after the latest premium increase was locked in. Health Minister Mark Butler said premiums would rise by 4.41 per cent from 1 April, up from a 3.73 per cent increase the year before.

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

Referendum on specialists' fees? Government won't say no

The Limbic, Other, 26/02/2026, Geir O'Rourke

[...] "So you're not ruling out a referendum on doctors' fees," Senator Ruston said, after the government's representative, NDIS Minister Senator Jenny McAllister, repeatedly declined to answer directly. [...] The exchange came on the same day Health Minister Mark Butler tabled the Health Legislation Amendment (Improving Choice and Transparency for Private Health Consumers) Bill 2026, which will force the publication of individual specialists' fees on the Medical Costs Finder website using Medicare billing data.

[Read More](#)

One in 50 young Aussies carries a high-risk genetic variant

Oncology Republic, Other, 26/02/2026, Laura Andronicos

[...] A spokesperson for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing told Oncology Republic that the Government is aware of the DNA Screen pilot study and has received the proposal for further research. They did not comment on when a response to the funding request could be expected, and Health Minister Mark Butler had not responded to OR 's request for comment at time of publication.

[Read More](#)

Medicare unlocks 20 speech therapy sessions for young Aussies

The Medical Republic, Other, 26/02/2026, Amanda Sheppeard

A major expansion of the Medicare Benefits Schedule that takes effect next week will reshape how health professionals manage severe speech and language disorders in children and young people. [...] Federal health minister Mark Butler said the change would ensure more children and young adults could access affordable, life-changing care during critical developmental windows.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC News Day, 26/02/2026, Ros Childs

The Federal Government has announced an expansion of Medicare rebates for people under 25 experiencing severe speech and language disorders. It will allow people to access eight sessions for assessment and 20 for treatment. Health Minister Mark Butler says the expansion will kick in from the 1st of March.

Also reported by: [ABC NewsRadio \(Sydney\)](#).

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER MCALLISTER

'More regulation to pull a beer': NDIS providers under fire

Australian Financial Review, General News, 27/02/2026, Michael Smith, Page 5

The chief executive of one of the NDIS's biggest providers has called on the government to address lax rules over who can profit from the \$50 million scheme, saying it is easier to become an unregistered provider than to get a licence to work in a pub.

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

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

NDIS autism costs blow out to a record \$10b annually

Australian Financial Review, Other, 26/02/2026, Michael Smith and Joshua Peach

The cost of National Disability Insurance Scheme payments to participants with autism has blown out to more than \$10 billion annually after a record 62,500 children and adults diagnosed with the disorder piled into the scheme last year.

[Read More](#)

Referendum on specialists' fees? Government won't say no

The Limbic, Other, 26/02/2026, Geir O'Rourke

[...] "So you're not ruling out a referendum on doctors' fees," Senator Ruston said, after the government's representative, NDIS Minister Senator Jenny McAllister, repeatedly declined to answer directly. [...] The exchange came on the same day Health Minister Mark Butler tabled the Health Legislation Amendment (Improving Choice and Transparency for Private Health Consumers) Bill 2026, which will force the publication of individual specialists' fees on the Medical Costs Finder website using Medicare billing data.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER RAE

Put an end to the aged-care rip-offs

Courier Mail, Editorials, 27/02/2026, Page 24

It would appear the government has learnt nothing from the trouble-plagued NDIS. [...] The relevant ministers, Mark Butler and Sam Rae, need to nip this aged-care service inflation in the bud and ensure that Aussies who have worked hard all their lives do not feel ripped off.

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

4CA AM, Breakfast, 26/02/2026, Murray Jones

Interview with Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae. Rae says Australia does have an ageing population today, with the aged care system now trying to meet the needs of many elderly people. He says the Federal Government has been implementing a generational reform program of the aged care

system, which was "neglected" when Labor was elected. He says they have been working with older people and the sector to ensure that older Australians receive safe, dignified, and high-quality aged care.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Indigenous-led trial seeks to attract more health professionals to regional Queensland

National Indigenous Times, Other, 26/02/2026, Callan Morse

A new Indigenous-led training initiative is aiming to attract more health professionals to regional Queensland. [...] Federal Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health, Rebecca White, said more doctors need to be attracted to rural and regional Queensland to provide high quality and essential primary healthcare services in the area.

[Read More](#)

Effort to tackle men's health crisis in regional Tasmania

WEB Pulse Tasmania, Other, 26/02/2026

Federal politicians have visited Tasmania to tackle the state's men's health crisis, meeting workers at a paper mill to encourage early help-seeking. Special Envoy for Men's Health Dan Repacholi joined Assistant Minister for Health Rebecca White for visits across the Midlands and Southern Tasmania.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

Effort to tackle men's health crisis in regional Tasmania

WEB Pulse Tasmania, Other, 26/02/2026

Federal politicians have visited Tasmania to tackle the state's men's health crisis, meeting workers at a paper mill to encourage early help-seeking. Special Envoy for Men's Health Dan Repacholi joined Assistant Minister for Health Rebecca White for visits across the Midlands and Southern Tasmania.

[Read More](#)

ABC Northern Tasmania, Drive, 26/02/2026, Sunshine Wood

Interview with Special Envoy for Men's Health Dan Repacholi. Repacholi says he has been in Tasmania for four days now as part of his tour to talk with organisations and stakeholders about men's health in the state. He says suicide is the largest killer of young men aged from 15 to 44 in Australia and hopes that their work can help save the lives of Australian men.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

DEPARTMENT

Concerns over Medicare changes restricting rural mental health treatment

ABC Online, Other, 26/02/2026, Philippe Perez

When the Covid pandemic began, Sarah*, a country Victorian vet, urgently needed mental health support. Her demanding job led her to seek help for depression and burnout. [...] Ms Clayton has asked the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to reinstate the exemption for rural and remote patients accessing a mental-health-trained GP.

[Read More](#)

Uralba navigates reform, secures \$1.9M grant in challenging year

Gundagai Independent, General News, 26/02/2026, Helen Castles, Page 3

The past 12 months have marked a period of significant change and challenges for Gundagai's Uralba Hostel, as the facility adapts to the introduction of new aged care standards. [...] Uralba's exceptional approach to ensuring residents enjoy high quality meals saw the facility nominated as one of the top aged care facilities for food quality in the Department of Health and Aged Care's national residents' experience survey an accolade based on feedback from over 30,000 residents.

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

Government extends deadline for first Support at Home claims

The Weekly Source, Other, 26/02/2026, Caroline Egan

Listening to industry concern, the Department of Health Disability and Ageing has given providers an extra 30 days to submit their first claims under the new in-home aged care program. Providers will now have until 31 March 2026 to submit claims for services delivered under Support at Home between 1 November 2025 to 31 December 2025 - without the usual requirement for "late-claim documentation".

[Read More](#)

One in 50 young Aussies carries a high-risk genetic variant

Oncology Republic, Other, 26/02/2026, Laura Andronicos

[...] A spokesperson for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing told Oncology Republic that the Government is aware of the DNA Screen pilot study and has received the proposal for further research. They did not comment on when a response to the funding request could be expected, and Health Minister Mark Butler had not responded to OR 's request for comment at time of publication.

[Read More](#)

Referendum on specialists' fees? Government won't say no

The Limbic, Other, 26/02/2026, Geir O'Rourke

[...] "So you're not ruling out a referendum on doctors' fees," Senator Ruston said, after the government's representative, NDIS Minister Senator Jenny McAllister, repeatedly declined to answer directly. [...] The exchange came on the same day Health Minister Mark Butler tabled the Health Legislation Amendment (Improving Choice and Transparency for Private Health Consumers) Bill 2026, which will force the publication of individual specialists' fees on the Medical Costs Finder website using Medicare billing data.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

The great aged care rip-off

Courier Mail, General News, 27/02/2026, Julie Cross, Page 1

Aged care providers are charging older Australians up to 40 per cent more for basics showers, cleaning, gardening and nursing since Labor's reforms took effect in November. The price hikes are fuelling a surge in distress calls, with a major advocacy service reporting a doubling in the number of people contacting them.

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

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

Glen Eira council seeks exemption to rates cap

Age, General News, 27/02/2026, Lachlan Abbott, Page 15

The City of Glen Eira has moved to sell off the last council-run aged care home in Victoria and will seek a rare rate cap exemption to avert a cash crisis. In an 8-1 vote on Tuesday night, councillors endorsed applying for Essential Services Commission approval to raise rates by 5 per cent in the coming financial year almost double the 2.75 per cent cap set by the state government in December.

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

The first 120 days of the New Aged Care Act: from intent to evidence

The Weekly Source, Other, 26/02/2026, Caroline Egan

The first 120 days of the new Aged Care Act have delivered a clear message to providers: evidence now matters more than intent. That was the central theme of yesterday's Weekly SOURCE webinar, The First 120 Days of the New Aged Care Act, which drew strong attendance from CEOs, board directors, quality leaders and operational executives across the sector.

[Read More](#)

New Aged Care Act and Rules upset the "operator of last resort"

The Weekly Source, Other, 26/02/2026, Caroline Egan

A nine-page submission by the Australian Local Government Association to the Senate's Review of the Aged Care Rules 2025 and the Aged Care (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Rules 2025 states requirements of the new Aged Care Act duplicate regulations already in place for local government, creating confusion and added administrative and regulatory burden.

[Read More](#)

Budget blitz: Aged care enters its no-money winter

The Weekly Source, Other, 26/02/2026, Lauren Broomham

We said it in December – aged care is entering a no-money decade. Now the pre-Budget mood music from the fiscal gatekeepers suggests May will confirm it. The Sydney Morning Herald reported on Wednesday Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has ordered ministers to find "significant savings" ahead of a belt-tightening Budget.

[Read More](#)

Aged and Home Care earnings slashed: Australian Unity 1H26

The Weekly Source, Other, 26/02/2026, Caroline Egan

The ASX-listed mutual organisation, also Australia's largest home care provider, has reported lower earnings across all its businesses. Revenue rose 3.6% from the previous corresponding period (pcp) to \$1,130.6 million in 1H FY26, mainly reflecting the acquisition of the mobile allied health service provider Plena Healthcare in July 2025.

[Read More](#)

Sustained pressure and governance risk in aged care

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 26/02/2026, Mark Jeffery

The aged care sector does not lack commitment. It does not lack compassion. It does not lack regulatory scrutiny. And it certainly does not lack reform.

[Read More](#)

AI companies promise to 'fix' aged care, but they're selling a false narrative

HelloCare, Other, 26/02/2026, Barbara Barbosa Neves, Alexandra Sanders and Geoffrey Mead

Australia's Royal Commission into Aged Care found a broken system. Now, technology companies are

promising artificial intelligence (AI) will fix everything, from staff shortages to older people's loneliness.

Also reported by: [Aged Care Insite \(Online\)](#)

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

DISABILITY AND CARERS

Australia's first Deafblind class created in a mainstream public school

ABC Online, Other, 26/02/2026, Nas Campanella and Mary Lloyd

Ari Bennett uses touch to understand the world around him. The four-year-old, who is Deaf and blind, feels his mum kiss his cheek at school drop off, reads books through raised pictures, and learns through signs his teacher forms on his hands and body.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

HMR caps lead to dire medicine review gaps in regional Australia

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 26/02/2026, Joe Ennis

This in-demand credentialed pharmacist can't adequately service her community due to restrictions on the Home Medicines Review (HMR) service. As a credentialed pharmacist in regional Victoria, Kelly Abbott MPS provides medicines reviews to patients with complex health needs.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

POPULATION HEALTH

Kids' weight a worry

Hobart Mercury, General News, 27/02/2026, Page 14

Body size in younger children does not necessarily lead to higher rates of obesity in adulthood, landmark new Australian research shows. But a child's weight at age 10 could raise a red flag for illness in later life.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#)

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

I was a walking 'time-bomb'

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 27/02/2026, Jacinta Round, Page 21

A young speedway driver from Murray Bridge is navigating the most challenging ride of her life after a medical episode turned her world upside down at 23. Cheyanne Richter suffered a stroke while saying goodnight to her one-year-old daughter Amelia on January 28, 2023.

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

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

Strength training a 'magic pill'

Newcastle Herald, General News, 27/02/2026, Maeve Bannister, Page 14

Women who are embracing strength training in their 40s, 50s and beyond are aiming to prevent physical decline that often leads to requiring aged care services. [...] In 2023/24, Australian federal, state and territory governments spent \$36.4 billion on aged care with the largest proportion on residential care services, according to data compiled by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Also reported by: [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Launceston Examiner \(Launceston\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Central Western Daily \(Orange\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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

FNQ leaders battle a surge in liquor applications

Cairns Post, General News, 27/02/2026, Samuel Davis, Page 3

A Far North political alliance is mounting a challenge to Queensland's liquor licensing regime, labelling the current process "out of touch" with community expectations and damaging to the region. A surge in bottle shop applications and approvals has prompted Member for Cairns Michael Healy and Cairns Mayor Amy Eden to call for stronger involvement from councils and community leaders in assessing new licences.

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

Sharp decline in tobacco sales linked to illegal sales, not people quitting, says researcher

ABC Online, Other, 26/02/2026, Victoria Ellis

Business managers and researchers are concerned that a sharp decline in tobacco sales in Alice Springs could mean more people are taking up smoking illegal tobacco. Mark Higginbottom, who oversees several retail outlets in Alice Springs, said tobacco sales had declined quite rapidly at his stores over the past six months, compared to a steady decrease over previous years.

[Read More](#)

Public health advocates say more transparency needed in debate over illicit tobacco as industry links questioned

The Guardian, Other, 26/02/2026, Melissa Davey

A former Australian Border Force officer who has positioned himself before government inquiries as Australia's "foremost law enforcement expert" on illicit tobacco also advises nicotine industry-linked organisations – leading public health advocates to argue more transparency is needed. Rohan Pike, who spent more than two decades in law enforcement and now runs a consultancy, has become a prominent media commentator on the illicit tobacco trade, promoting policies that align with those supported by the tobacco industry.

[Read More](#)

'Blindsided': This mum's daughters were removed after going to hospital, an outcome new AbSec resources seek to change

National Indigenous Times, Other, 26/02/2026, Jarred Cross

Sabrina, which is not her real name, thought she was doing the right thing by taking her daughter to hospital following innocent injuries. Soon after, it would mean her two two daughters were separated from one another, their mother and family. [...] As of 30 June 2024, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) outlined 20,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (50 per 1,000 children) were in out of home care nationwide.

[Read More](#)

National award for Wollongong cancer treatment that targets deadly tumours at their source

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 26/02/2026, Kate McIlwain

Pancreatic cancer is notoriously hard to treat and often diagnosed at such a late stage that patients have one of the worst survival rates of all cancers. [...] In the Illawarra, nearly 220 people died from pancreatic cancer between 2018 and 2022, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, making it one of the region's 20 most prevalent causes of death.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Gut instinct to drop age

Courier Mail, General News, 27/02/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 3

Australia's peak bowel cancer prevention body would support lowering the screening age for the deadly illness to 40 as part of a push for new guidelines amid a large rise in cases. The nation has the highest rate of early-onset bowel cancer in the world, shock data shows, with the risk of diagnosis before the age of 40 more than doubling since 2000.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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

Channel 9, Nine News, 26/02/2026, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Younger Victorians are being urged to take advantage of expanded access to bowel cancer screening. The Cancer Council says only 11 per cent of people aged between 45 and 49 have ordered free test kits in the first year of the broadened campaign. It's now trying to convince more people to take part in this renewed push for preventative health action.

[Play Now](#)

Fourteen people have used VAD

Canberra Times, General News, 27/02/2026, Lanie Tindale, Page 7

Fourteen people have died by voluntary assisted dying (VAD) in the first three months of the ACT scheme. Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith updated the ACT Legislative Assembly on the scheme yesterday, which came into effect on November 3, 2025.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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

[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Seven Rockhampton, Seven Local News, 26/02/2026, Joanne Desmond and Nathan Spurling

The Rockhampton Medicare Mental Health Centre is expanding after treating more than 2,500 patients since opening early last year. An \$11.8 million upgrade is now underway to grow free walk-in mental health services without the need for a referral.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

IMMUNISATION

Without vaccines, this is how measles kills a child

Australian Financial Review, Review, 27/02/2026, Elizabeth Bruenig, Page 4

Most infected children will survive, but 30 per cent of cases lead to complications, and it is nearly impossible to predict who will be affected, writes Elizabeth Bruenig.

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

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

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Private hospital giant says it's missing out on fair share of premiums

West Australian, Business News, 27/02/2026, Adrian Black, Page 47

Australia's biggest private hospital operator has posted a bumper first half, but its boss says the sector is starved of private health insurance premiums. Ramsay Health Care recorded a bottom-line net profit after tax of \$160.7 million in the six months to December, swinging from a loss of \$104.9 million a year earlier.

Also reported by: [The Nightly \(Australia\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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

Search is on to save grandson

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 27/02/2026, Bella Munro, Page 7

Seb Stockdale was living his dream, working at a high-class restaurant on the ski slopes of Japan and snowboarding in his free time. [...] Stem Cell Donors Australia head of engagement Kate Levy said Australia's registry was a long way behind other nations with similar transplant rates.

Also reported by: [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#).

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

Urgent call for WA community to register as bone marrow donors for one-year-old Jamori

National Indigenous Times, Other, 26/02/2026, Giovanni Torre

Family and community members are urgently calling on eligible Western Australians to register as bone marrow donors for one-year-old Jamori Jones Wheatley, who currently has less than 10 per cent bone marrow remaining in his body. Jamori was born prematurely on 21 July 2024, weighing just 957 grams, and spent the first months of his life in intensive care.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

ADHD comes in threes

Herald Sun, General News, 27/02/2026, Page 13

Brain scans may help doctors divide people with ADHD into three distinct subtypes, each with unique clinical profiles. A study involving Monash University and Chinese researchers found that people with ADHD could be divided into the subtypes: severe-combined with emotional dysregulation, predominantly hyperactive/impulsive, and predominantly inattentive.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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

Vaxxas CEO warns needle-free vaccine tech could go overseas without federal support

The Australian, Other, 26/02/2026, Stella McKenna

A Brisbane-based biotechnology company behind a needle-free vaccine patch has warned it could take its technology offshore after securing a multimillion-dollar funding boost from European authorities, as its chief executive urges the Albanese government to invest more in Australia's biotech sector. Vaxxas chief executive David Peacock said the company's vaccine technology, originally developed at the University of Queensland, has attracted significant backing from the United States and Europe, but not enough from Canberra.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 26/02/2026, Brenton Ragless

A team of experts led by the University of Sydney has carried out the world's largest review of the

evidence relating to opioids. The review has found that opioids only provide small short-term help for some conditions and don't work at all for others, prompting a major rethink on treatment. Experts say regular use of opioids is inappropriate.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Two dead in fungus cluster at hospital

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 27/02/2026, Angus Thomson, Page 1

Two people have died and another four have fallen seriously ill as a result of a fungus cluster linked to construction work at one of Sydney's largest hospitals. Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) Hospital in Camperdown is investigating a cluster of fungal infections in patients receiving treatment at its transplant unit between October and December.

Similar coverage: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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

Two dead from fungus

Daily Telegraph, General News, 27/02/2026, Anna Shreeves, Page 1

A "deeply disturbing situation" in which two patients died and four more were infected by a fungal outbreak at one of Sydney's busiest hospitals requires an urgent explanation after authorities stayed silent on the issue for months, the state's opposition has said. On Thursday, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital revealed six vulnerable patients contracted fungal infections while receiving treatment in the organ transplant ward between October and December last year an outbreak which could be linked to construction work.

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

ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 26/02/2026, Manny Tsigas

Two people have died and another four have been infected after a cluster of fungal infections was found at one of Sydney's biggest hospitals. It has been revealed that several patients fell ill in the liver and kidney transplant ward at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital late last year. The hospital says they each contracted a fungal infection caused by *Aspergillus*. Authorities are investigating whether construction on a major redevelopment of the hospital is the source of the contamination.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 26/02/2026

The Sydney Local Health District has extended its deepest condolences to the families of two patients at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital who died after contracting fungal infections. Six patients were caught up in a fungal outbreak at the hospital late last year. Additional patient safety measures have now been implemented, including a deep clean of the transplant ward, review of air intake points and upgrades to air infiltration systems.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 26/02/2026, Sandra Sully

Two people have died and four have fallen ill at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital due to fungal infections. Authorities are investigating whether the fungus came from construction work that is being done at the

hospital. Sydney Local Health District CEO Deb Willcox says they are now investigating how the infections occurred.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 26/02/2026, Thomas Oriti

Interview with Sydney Local Health District CEO Deb Willcox regarding the two people who died from fungal infections at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

[Play Now](#)

2GB, Drive, 26/02/2026, Clinton Maynard

Interview with Sydney Local Health District CEO Deb Willcox regarding the two people who died from fungal infections at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. She says people undergoing organ transplants are often at risk of serious infection due to immunosuppression.

[Play Now](#)

Transfer time 'not the cure'

Hobart Mercury, General News, 27/02/2026, David Killick, Page 1

The government's plan to cut ambulance ramping times is no substitute for a comprehensive strategy to fix chronic problems in Tasmania's hospitals, health unions say. A new protocol across the health system from next month will mandate a maximum 45-minute window for all patients arriving by ambulance to be transferred to the care of Emergency Department staff, down from the present 60-minute deadline.

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

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

Ambo anger as loophole sinks work assault case

Age, General News, 27/02/2026, Grant McArthur, Page 1

A man who hospitalised a paramedic will escape a mandatory jail term for assaulting an emergency service worker because she was not treating a patient when she was attacked. A decision yesterday to drop the charge against a 58-year-old Seaford man on a legal technicality has raised questions about the suitability of the much-vaunted Victorian laws, which have failed to protect first responders since they were introduced more than a decade ago.

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

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

ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 26/02/2026, Lucy Breaden/Kylie Baxter

Interview with ANMF Tasmania secretary Emily Shepherd. The ANMF has accused the Tasmanian Government of attempting to rush ambulance patients into hospital care despite ongoing negotiations around transfer of care protocols. Shepherd says the proposed protocol has created significant workloads and safety concerns for nurses, doctors and patients. She says the dispute is set down for arbitration in March this year.

[Play Now](#)

Gas fitter gets jail for fatal hospital bungle

Daily Telegraph, General News, 27/02/2026, Steve Zemek, Page 15

When gas fitter Christopher Laurie Turner was subcontracted to carry out works at a Sydney hospital more than a decade ago, he was required by law to conduct a series of cross checks to safeguard against tragedy. Some of those checks would have taken mere seconds and would have prevented a disastrous 2016 gas bungle which shocked the state.

Also reported by: [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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

Second health headache adds to Beattie government's 'Dr Death'

scandal

The Australian, Other, 26/02/2026, Kristen Amiet

The Queensland Labor government led by Peter Beattie concealed the true length of the state's hospital waiting lists from taxpayers and political opponents. The revelation – made during a multimillion-dollar Commission of Inquiry into the two-year tenure of killer surgeon Dr Jayant Patel at Bundaberg Base Hospital – cost Beattie two by-elections and threatened to sink his government.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

Health workers strike pay deal

Herald Sun, General News, 27/02/2026, Shannon Deery and Ryan Bourke, Page 8

The Allan government has struck a deal to end a bitter industrial dispute that has wreaked havoc across the state's public health system. Health workers on Thursday accepted a new pay deal of a 12.49 per cent wage increase over two-and-a-half years, with 91.3 per cent of Health Workers Union members backing the offer.

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

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

Alison's legacy lives on

Border Mail, General News, 27/02/2026, Jodie Bruton, Page 1

A new GP teaching clinic in Wodonga has opened, honouring the legacy of medical trailblazer Alison Green. Central Medical Group opened the Alison Green GP Training Centre in her memory on Monday.

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

Plan to force GPs to work in the bush could have 'unintended consequences'

Medical Forum, Other, 26/02/2026

One Nation MP Barnaby Joyce said the party is considering measures to attract doctors to rural Australia, including a "quid pro quo" approach for investment in their training. But health leaders have hit back at the suggestion, warning that it risks worsening Australia's GP workforce shortage in rural and remote areas.

[Read More](#)

2GB, Drive, 26/02/2026, Clinton Maynard

Interview with NSW Health Minister Ryan Park about concerns of understaffing and lack of resources and Wollongong Hospital. Park says staffing in state hospitals remains a challenge. He says the state government has increased staffing by around 21 full-time places.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Weight-loss jabs lift Chemist Warehouse

Chemist Warehouse says booming demand for weight-loss drugs is driving double-digit sales growth at its pharmacies and demand will only accelerate if cheaper pill versions of the weekly injections hit the Australian market this year as expected.

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

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

[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

'Unbelievably dangerous': experts sound alarm after ChatGPT Health fails to recognise medical emergencies

The Guardian, Other, 27/02/2026, Melissa Davey

ChatGPT Health regularly misses the need for medical urgent care and frequently fails to detect suicidal ideation, a study of the AI platform has found, which experts worry could "feasibly lead to unnecessary harm and death". OpenAI launched the "Health" feature of ChatGPT to limited audiences in January, which it promotes as a way for users to "securely connect medical records and wellness apps" to generate health advice and responses.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 26/02/2026, Kate Freebairn

Children with severe speech and language disorders will soon have greater access to speech pathology services as the Federal Government invests almost \$75 million to make sessions cheaper. Currently, Medicare only covers five sessions from allied health professionals a year. The new Medicare rebates mean that from Sunday, eligible patients will be entitled to up to eight assessments and 20 treatment sessions every year.

[Play Now](#)

[Back to Top](#)

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

I was 10 when I started feeling the pain, but well into adulthood before anyone believed me

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 26/02/2026, Hannah Kennelly

One hundred and twenty-seven. That's precisely how many grey speckled dots are on the ceiling of my primary school sickbay. [...] Victorian Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas criticised the regulatory body earlier this week, saying: "What is clear to me through this investigation is that AHPRA have been too slow to act, and that they have not taken the complaints of women seriously."

[Read More](#)

Support options for those who receive inappropriate medical treatment for endometriosis

ABC Online, Other, 26/02/2026, Hanan Dervisevic

The ABC this week revealed serious complaints about a surgeon who undertook laparoscopic procedures to treat endometriosis — a condition pathology reports show some of his patients never had. [...] They are also voicing their frustrations with the complaints process and lack of action from Australia's medical regulator, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), which received complaints from patients regarding Dr Gordon almost four years ago.

[Read More](#)

Hundreds of former patients of gynaecologist Simon Gordon join support group

ABC Online, Other, 26/02/2026, Rachel Carbonell and Amy Roil

More former patients of Melbourne gynaecologist Simon Gordon have come forward to express distress over their treatment with many joining a newly-formed private support group. A Four Corners investigation revealed Dr Gordon's patients were repeatedly operated on for what they were told was severe endometriosis despite that diagnosis not being seen in pathology results.

[Read More](#)

'Practitioners have a duty to speak up'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 26/02/2026, Megan Haggan

Ahpra has reminded health professionals to notify it if they believe another practitioner is putting the public at risk – including if an NDA has been signed.

[Read More](#)

Queensland Health nurse remains suspended after misconduct ruling confirmed

The Courier Mail, Other, 26/02/2026, Judith Kerr

A Queensland Health nurse, found to have engaged in sexual misconduct with a vulnerable aged care resident, remains suspended following a ruling by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission this week. Industrial Commissioner Roslyn McLennan confirmed that the Queensland Health disciplinary decision against enrolled nurse Steven Hill was fair and reasonable.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

AUSTRALIAN CDC

Traditional owners sue Western Australia government for \$1.5bn to clean up toxic asbestos at Wittenoom

The Guardian, Other, 26/02/2026, Donna Lu

A group of Indigenous Australians whose traditional lands have been contaminated for decades by asbestos waste have launched a \$1.5bn legal claim against an Australian state government. The Banjima people are traditional owners of land in Western Australia's Pilbara region, including Wittenoom, the site of one of Australia's worst industrial disasters.

[Read More](#)

Record flu deaths for 2025

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 26/02/2026

Figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) have revealed that the number of deaths involving influenza during 2025 was the highest recorded for any year this century. There were 1,701 deaths where influenza was the direct cause or a contributor registered for 2025, compared to 1,045 in 2024 and 611 in 2023.

[Read More](#)

[Back to Top](#)

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

New GLP1 pill helps patients lose up to 8% of body weight, trial shows

The Guardian, Other, 26/02/2026, Anna Bawden

A new daily pill could be a more effective GLP-1 tablet for weight loss, according to a trial that may pave the way for a non-injection alternative to Wegovy and Mounjaro. The drug, called orforglipron and manufactured by Eli Lilly, is prescribed for type 2 diabetes and targets the same GLP-1 receptors as oral semaglutide.

[Read More](#)

OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

FOOD STANDARDS

Seaweed snack alert

Daily Telegraph, General News, 27/02/2026, Georgia Palgan, Page 5

Consumers have been warned not to eat a popular seaweed snack over fears it could contain plastic. Kagro NSW Pty Ltd's Pinkfong Seasoned Seaweed Flakes 40g have been recalled by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) due to the detection of plastic.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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

[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](#)