



# TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 5th March 2026

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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 8) reports that the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges have published a professionalism framework on ethical billing and informed financial consent. The framework says "every Australian should be able to access affordable, high-quality specialist care without risking financial hardship".
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports that Australian researchers have developed an AI tool able to predict patients at high risk of developing breast cancer in the four years following an all-clear mammogram.
- **[The Courier Mail](#)** (page 3) reports that the Australian Energy Market Commission's new draft determination rules would ensure people using life support equipment are protected from outages and allow doctors to flag vulnerable patients with retailers.
- **[The Courier Mail](#)** (page 3) reports that a Queensland study has found due to the success of the Slip, Slop, Slap sun safety campaign, children born after the year 2000 are four times less likely to get skin cancer than those from the 1980s.
- **[The Hobart Mercury](#)** (page 4) reports that the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch says a staffing crisis resulted in the Launceston General Hospital emergency department experiencing "catastrophic overcrowding and dangerously inadequate staffing levels" on Monday.

## MINISTER BUTLER

### Medical colleges warn specialists over fee fairness

The Australian, General News, 05/03/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 8

The nation's specialist medical colleges have laid down expectations to practitioners on fair and ethical billing practices warning medicos that exploitative charging should never happen amid growing political pressure over out-of-pocket costs to patients. [...] The framework will be launched in Canberra on Thursday at an event to be attended by federal Health Minister Mark Butler, who has made it clear that "all options are on the table" as Labor makes reining in gap fees a key plank of its second-term policy agenda.

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### Tobacco excise sends profits up in smoke

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/03/2026, Theo Foukkare, Page 17

If you wanted to design a policy that guarantees bigger profits for organised crime, you'd start by further blowing out the price gap between legal and illegal cigarettes. [...] We're told by Federal Health Minister Mark Butler that smoking rates are still falling, so everything is fine.

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### Father takes his plea for drug to parliament

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 05/03/2026, Andrew McKaysmith, Page 3

A North Queensland mother has travelled to Canberra to beg the federal government to save her son's life, as a "bureaucratic maze" keeps a vital cancer drug out of reach. [...] Advisers from Health Minister Mark Butler's office met with the pair on Wednesday.

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

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### Australians living with macular degeneration fearful of proposed Medicare change

7news.com.au, Other, 04/03/2026, Madison Stanley

Australians living with macular degeneration fear they could be left thousands of dollars out of pocket — or risk losing their sight — under a proposed Medicare change that would restrict vital eye injections to out-of-hospital appointments. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler says he does not want Australians paying more for treatments they have long received in hospital.

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### Provider found for new bulk-billed Darwin urgent care clinic

National Indigenous Times, Other, 04/03/2026, Dechlan Brennan

A new fully bulk-billed Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) will open in Darwin after it was confirmed a provider had been selected through a competitive tender process led by Northern Territory Health. [...] Minister for Health, Mark Butler, said the clinic will "take pressure off the local hospitals, including the Royal Darwin Hospital, and will fill an important gap in services across extended hours and over the weekend".

[Read More](#)

### My Health Record changes: what specialists need to know

The Limbic, Other, 04/03/2026, Emma Koehn

Patients will be able to access x-ray reports for limbs as soon as they are uploaded to My Health Record, as new reforms geared towards speeding up the transmission of diagnostic information come into effect from this month. [...] The Albanese government first promised to speed up access to diagnostics in 2023, with Health Minister Mark Butler lamenting that only one in five reports were uploaded to the nation's digital health platform, while the others disappeared into the "digital ether".

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## Good reporting requires courageous whistleblowers. We must protect them

Women's Agenda, Other, 04/03/2026, Regina Featherstone

I have been reeling after the explosive Four Corners reporting on the ABC last week detailing the nightmares hundreds of women and people assigned female at birth are living after having a Victorian doctor treat them for endometriosis. [...] In the words of Health Minister Mark Butler MP, how was this doctor "able to continue to practice this on so many young women?"

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## Albanese's child gender-transition time bomb

Spectator Australia, Other, 05/03/2026, Craig Pett

In the Australia of old, a man who was thought to be overly timid might have been denigrated by other men as 'a woman'. [...] However, in January 2025, after Queensland followed the international lead, Albanese and his Health Minister, Mark Butler, confessed it to have been a federal matter all along by commissioning the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to review the matter and to 'develop new clinical practice guidelines'.

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## MINISTER MCALLISTER

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

### Channel 9, Nine News, 04/03/2026, Peter Overton

For the first time, Australian women have access to a free, independent online tool to estimate their chances of success when freezing eggs. The new government-funded calculator aims to reverse common misconceptions about it as a guaranteed path to conception. Assistant Health Minister Rebecca White says the government is committed to improving transparency for women who are making decisions about freezing their eggs. Elective egg freezing now accounts for 13 per cent of all IVF cycles performed in Australia.

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## DEPARTMENT

### Medical colleges warn specialists over fee fairness

The Australian, General News, 05/03/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 8

The nation's specialist medical colleges have laid down expectations to practitioners on fair and ethical billing practices warning medicos that exploitative charging should never happen amid growing political pressure over out-of-pocket costs to patients. [...] The framework will be launched in Canberra on Thursday at an event to be attended by federal Health Minister Mark Butler, who has made it clear that "all options are on the table" as Labor makes reining in gap fees a key plank of its second-term policy agenda.

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### 2026 influenza vaccine advice

cesphn.org.au, Other, 04/03/2026, Amy Donato

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing have released several key materials relating to the 2026 influenza vaccination program. The program advice provides key details regarding 2026 influenza vaccinations, including:

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### Healthcare gender pay gap progress stalls, but still better than most

Health Services Daily, Other, 04/03/2026, Cate Swannell

Things could be worse – it's not construction, mining or banking – but with the exception of a slight improvement at the DoHDA, we're running up and down on the same spot.

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### Support at Home Summit: Positioning your organisation for long term resilience

HelloCare, Other, 04/03/2026, Jakob Neeland

Four months into the national rollout of the Support at Home reforms, the initial scramble to implement new rules and systems has given way to a far more complex challenge: turning policy into sustainable, high performing operations that keep your organisation financially viable, compliant, and truly responsive to older Australians. [...] The Government: senior voices from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing sharing the long term policy vision and reform roadmap.

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### Reporting shows several federal departments lack formal policy to tackle gender pay gap

The Mandarin, Other, 04/03/2026, Melissa Coade

While most Commonwealth agencies who have reported the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Australia have undertaken a pay gap analysis, several still have no formal policy or strategy in place to deal with the issue. [...] The Department of Health and Aged Care has a 7,541-strong workforce, comprised 71% of women, and an average total remuneration gender pay gap of 4%.

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### July-December 2025 Aged Care & Retirement Living Sector Review: Consolidation, capacity constraints and a tighter reform envelope

The Weekly Source, Other, 04/03/2026, Lauren Broomham

If the first half of 2025 was defined by expectation – of reform, capital reallocation and sector reshaping

– the second half tested how much strain the system could absorb. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's Shared Care trial – pooling Home Care Package funding for shared resources such as 24/7 nursing in community settings, including retirement villages – is set to commence in 2026 and is expected to further integrate care into retirement living environments.

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## Anglicare opens specialist dementia care services

WEB The Redland City Minute, Other, 05/03/2026

Last Friday, 27 February, Anglicare Southern Queensland officially opened its third Specialist Dementia Care Program unit at E.M. Tooth Residential Aged Care. The program was supported by the Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### Could a \$4000 test help save your brain?

Australian Financial Review, Other, 04/03/2026, Luke Benedictus

When it comes to my health, I've always feared the day of reckoning. A bleak conversation in a doctor's surgery where my youthful indiscretions finally catch up with me.

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### Australian aged care facilities unprepared for bushfire evacuations, union warns

ABC Online, Other, 04/03/2026, Tamara Clark

Australian aged care homes are inadequately prepared to evacuate in a bushfire, according to a union representing aged care workers. In January, more than 30 residents and staff at Natimuk Aged Care in western Victoria were unable to evacuate as a fast-moving bushfire got as close as the back door and garden beds.

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### When bushfires hit aged care homes, who decides to stay or go?

Your Life Choices, Other, 04/03/2026

When minutes matter, preparation is everything. Picture a fast-moving bushfire bearing down on your loved one's nursing home.

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## DISABILITY AND CARERS

### Spending 'entrenches higher inflation'

Australian Financial Review, Wrap, 05/03/2026, John Kehoe, Page 3

Wasteful government spending on the \$52 billion National Disability Insurance Scheme and other social programs is hurting productivity and hampering the Reserve Bank of Australia's efforts to tame inflation, business leaders have warned.

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

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### Rip offs of NDIS hit real victims

Daily Telegraph, General News, 05/03/2026, Julie Cross, Page 20

NDIS participants are selling plans to the highest bidder, with one asking a provider for \$50,000 in

return for signing up to their service. The scam was revealed by a director of a disability business, shocked after a call from one who "wanted to do a deal".

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

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## NDIS ordered to pay up in 'significant' court battle

Canberra Times, Other, 04/03/2026, Nick Wilson

Three years after he was denied funding for a mobility scooter, Lee Eastham remains limited in his travel options despite winning a lengthy court battle against the national disability insurer. The 60-year-old lives with hearing and visibility impairments in the rural township of Castlemaine, in central west Victoria.

[Read More](#)

## NDIS ordered to fund mobility scooter in 'extremely significant' federal court ruling

ABC Online, Other, 04/03/2026, Evan Young and Nas Campanella

The Federal Court has made an "extremely significant" ruling by ordering the agency that runs the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to fund a participant's mobility scooter. Experts say the decision could expand the number and of types of supports available to people with multiple disabilities.

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## Mosman Park murder family friend speaks of 'harrowing' reality raising child with severe autism

ABC Online, Other, 04/03/2026, Andrea Mayes

A friend of a family found dead in their Perth home after an apparent double murder-suicide says it is difficult for people not impacted by severe disability to understand what it is like. The entire family were found dead in their Mosman Park home last month — brothers Otis, 14, and Leon, 16, and their parents Jarrod Clune, 50, and Maiwenna Goasdoue, 49.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Proton petition tabled in Senate

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 05/03/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 17

A petition of almost 30,000 signatures presented to federal parliament calling for the planned proton therapy unit to be based in South Australia may not be enough to keep the troubled program in Adelaide. Adelaide mother Billie Tuckerman, who had to take daughter Evelyn overseas for the treatment for rare bone cancer, started the petition.

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### Gratitude for doctors amid a call for spirit of collaboration

Border Mail, General News, 05/03/2026, Chelsea Wilson, Page 2

A former cancer centre oncologist says he is glad he made the decision to resign but remains positive about cancer care in the region. Dr Richard Eek resigned from the Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre as it transitioned to an entirely public model managed by Albury Wodonga Health.

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### 'Time is up': Mounting calls for Medicare rebate to cover longer GP visits which are 'essential' for complex care

7news.com.au, Other, 04/03/2026, Hayley Taylor

The average patient spends 20 minutes in their GP's office — a timeframe doctors say can be too brief to catch subtle signs of illness. That standard consultation can offer barely enough time to scratch the surface of concerns for patients with comorbidities, or the more than 13 million Australians who have chronic or complex health issues.

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## Seizure emergency met with taxi as health system buckles under pressure

Your Life Choices, Other, 04/03/2026, Abigail Abrugar

When a medical crisis strikes, most of us expect urgent help to arrive without hesitation. But what happens when the system decides your situation is not the most critical?

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### Nuclear emergency centre 'on alert' after Iran attack

Age, General News, 05/03/2026, Annika Smethurst, Page 9

Australia's nuclear safety watchdog has put its emergency centre "on alert" as fighting escalates between Israel, the United States and Iran, with radiation experts monitoring for potential risks to Australians. The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) confirmed the precautionary move to activate the centre for around-the-clock operations, as the United Nations' nuclear watchdog warned of the potential for mass evacuation across the Middle East if nuclear sites were targeted.

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### Tobacco war may reignite

Herald Sun, General News, 05/03/2026, Regan Hodge, Mark Buttler and Gerald Lynch, Page 13

An AK-47 assault rifle was among five weapons seized by police who fear the tobacco war will again escalate amid the destruction of the Hamad crime syndicate. Rivals of the sprawling Hamad empire are understood to be making a serious play for control of the illicit tobacco trade as key figures from the kingpin's crew are locked up.

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### Support to curb ads

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/03/2026, Page 10

New polling shows overwhelming public support to curb pervasive gambling, alcohol and unhealthy food advertising in Australia. Four in five Australians want to see less advertising for gambling, alcohol and unhealthy foods, and the same number are concerned about the harm these ads cause, according to Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education-commissioned research.

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### Energy retailer rules overhaul

Courier Mail, General News, 05/03/2026, Jessica Wang, Page 3

The energy regulator will seek to tighten rules to ensure people using life support equipment are protected from outages and allow doctors to flag vulnerable patients with retailers. The Australian Energy Market Commission's new draft determination rules released on Thursday will allow doctors and specialists to share information to ensure patients are prioritised and protected during outages, and call on retailers to conduct annual check ups on customers who require life support equipment.

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

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## On the vape trail to improve health

Canberra Times, General News, 05/03/2026, Lucy Arundell, Page 3

A new service to help young Canberrans stop vaping and quit nicotine has launched in the territory, as one community worker warns of a growing health problem. The ACT's first vaping cessation and nicotine dependence support service dedicated to supporting young people has opened at Anglicare's The Junction Youth Health Service in Civic.

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

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## Are tax hikes a smoke screen?

The Nightly, General News, 04/03/2026, Andrew Hedgman, Page 32

Australia's position as home to the world's most expensive legal cigarettes has been reinforced, with another six-monthly excise increase pushing prices even higher. From March, tobacco excise has risen by a further 2 per cent in line with wage growth, taking the tax on a single cigarette to about \$1.52.

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

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## Retailers close their doors after crackdown

Daily Advertiser, General News, 05/03/2026, Taylor Dodge, Page 6

Riverina retailers have been forced to close their doors as NSW Health intensifies a statewide crackdown on the illicit tobacco trade. Enforcement officers targeted regional hubs in late February, issuing immediate 90-day closure orders to businesses in Gundagai and Tumut found to be operating outside the law.

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## No laughing matter

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 05/03/2026, Mark Murray, Page 1

Potentially deadly nitrous oxide canisters known as "nangs" can be hand-delivered to Geelong youths in less than an hour, according to a brazen website at the centre of a coronial investigation into a man's death. Nang Wizard, which openly exploits loopholes in Victoria's drug laws, has a dedicated Geelong-based website promising to get "nangs" into people's hands at the drop of a hat.

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## More than 220m children will be obese by 2040 without drastic action, report warns

The Guardian, Other, 04/03/2026, Anna Bawden

Without drastic action more than 220 million children could have obesity by 2040, an international report has warned. Globally, in 2025 about 180 million children were obese.

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## CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

### AI in breast cancer death reduction

Age, General News, 05/03/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 1

An artificial intelligence tool that can predict who is at high risk of developing breast cancer in the four years following an all-clear mammogram has been heralded as "the most significant step in reducing deaths" in decades. The tool, known as BRAIx, works by searching for patterns in breast mammograms to detect signals for risk the human eye can't see.

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## Sun ads saved our skin

Courier Mail, General News, 05/03/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 3

Children born after the year 2000 are four times less likely to get skin cancer than those from the 1980s due to the roaring success of the Slip, Slop, Slap sun safety campaign. The finding comes from a long-running and intensive Queensland study by QIMR Berghofer researchers of nearly 4000 people living in the state's South East.

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

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## Sweet spot for sleep

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/03/2026, Page 3

Sleeping for seven hours and 18 minutes every night may be the sweet spot for warding off the risk of insulin resistance, the precursor to type 2 diabetes. Nantong University researchers in China add that catching up on sleep at the weekend is linked to heightened risks.

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## AI for breast cancer risk

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/03/2026, Page 3

Artificial intelligence (ai) could help predict women's risk of developing breast cancer over the next four years from their mammograms, Australian research has found. The University of Melbourne researchers were involved in the study that found the Albased risk score, called BRAIx, estimated breast cancer risk more accurately than the factors doctors have traditionally relied on, such as breast density and family history.

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## Artificial intelligence detects high breast cancer risk in women given all-clear

ABC Online, Other, 04/03/2026, Paige Cockburn and Stephanie Dalzell

An Australian-made artificial intelligence tool can detect women with a high likelihood of breast cancer who were otherwise missed in normal screening, according to new research. The AI tool identified women that were at the same or greater risk of breast cancer as those with the deadly BRCA gene mutations.

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## Government rejects heartbroken family's request for life saving cancer treatment for two-year-old girl

7news.com.au, Other, 04/03/2026, Jennifer Bechwati

The Albanese Government is facing mounting criticism after rejecting a family's request to send their seriously ill toddler overseas for life saving cancer treatment while Australia continues to lag behind much of the world in delivering the advanced therapy. Layla Davis, 2, has already endured months of gruelling treatment after being diagnosed with a rare cancer.

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## New study links loneliness and social isolation to increased risk of developing multiple deadly cancers

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 05/03/2026, Zoe Hardy

People who have little social contact, especially women, are at an increased risk of developing cancer, concerning new research has found. Mounting research has suggested that loneliness can be extremely detrimental to our health, increasing the risk of depression, heart disease and even dementia.

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## Time to act on chronic musculoskeletal conditions

Medical Forum, Other, 04/03/2026, Prof Andrew Briggs and Prof Helen Slater

Chronic musculoskeletal conditions, which can start in childhood and increase in prevalence over the life course, are often difficult to treat. They can also impose a substantial burden on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and health systems.

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## **New clinical guidelines for bowel cancer are on the way**

Medical Forum, Other, 04/03/2026

Age-specific clinical practice guidelines are set to be developed to provide specific advice around early-onset bowel cancer. Australia has the highest rates of early-onset bowel cancer in the world with one in eight new bowel cancer cases occurring in people under age 50.

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## **Channel 7, Seven News, 04/03/2026, Max Futcher and Katrina Blowers**

Weight-loss drugs like Ozempic and Wegovy could soon help treat heart attacks. Researchers say the injections may protect heart tissue by improving blood flow, potentially cutting dangerous complications that affect up to half of patients. Experts say the drugs could one day be given by paramedics at the scene of a heart attack, but more study is needed.

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## **Channel 7, Seven News, 04/03/2026, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson**

The Federal Government has been accused by the Opposition of ignoring sick kids by failing to deliver life-saving cancer treatment, putting Australia decades behind the rest of the world. A petition with 27,000 signatures is now demanding the government deliver the long-promised proton therapy treatment.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Sydney\)](#).

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## **2CC, Canberra Live, 04/03/2026, Leon Delaney**

Australians are being reminded of the importance of regular screening for cervical cancer. Almost all cases of the disease are caused by HPV infections. Angelina Belluomo from Cancer Council says it is one of the most preventable forms of cancer.

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## **ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 04/03/2026, Thomas Oriti**

Interview with St Vincent's Hospital breast screen clinical director Helen Fraser. An Australian-made artificial intelligence tool can estimate a woman's risk of developing breast cancer more accurately than other methods doctors rely on. Fraser says the new technology can enable them to personalise the population screening program according to an individual's risk of developing breast cancer.

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## **FIVEAA, Afternoons, 04/03/2026, Stacy Lee**

A new study has found deaths related to breast cancer in Australia have dropped by more than 40 per cent in the last 30 years. Experts say a drop in the number of deaths is thanks to better screening and earlier diagnosis.

Also reported by: [2GB \(Sydney\)](#).

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## **MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION**

### **How did another pair go on run?**

Daily Telegraph, General News, 05/03/2026, Madeleine Bower, Page 4

Two patients removed a bedroom window and escaped from the locked mental health ward of a northern Sydney hospital last month, in the latest abscondment to rock the state's mental health system. Staff from Hornsby Ku-ringgai Hospital's mental health ward, speaking under the condition of anonymity, told The Daily Telegraph a shortage of staff had resulted in the two men able to go unnoticed while they disassembled a bedroom window before climbing out on February 15.

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## Activity for mental care

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/03/2026, Page 10

Physical activity should be considered a core component of psychiatric care, according to a review by Australian and international researchers. The team, including Deakin University scientists, says adults with severe mental illness face a 10 to 20-year reduction in life expectancy, largely due to heightened heart and metabolic diseases, sedentary lifestyles and low levels of physical activity.

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## Counting the losses

Canberra Times, General News, 05/03/2026, Steve Evans, Page 1

Marlene Kasurinen fronted the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal yesterday to give evidence about the addiction to pokies which she is adamant pushed her husband, Ray, to take his own life. The 75-year-old was there because the Hellenic Club is disputing a fine of \$1.2 million for breaching gambling laws.

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## Mental health patients faced early discharge as mould closed hospital beds

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 04/03/2026, Madeleine Bower

A mental health unit at a regional hospital sought to discharge patients early because part of the ward was shutdown for three months by a major mould infestation. The Daily Telegraph revealed this week that Bloomfield Hospital in Orange was forced to close a quarter of its 20 mental health beds from November last year after a water leak caused "a serious mould infestation" in the structure of the building. The ward was reopened in February after remediation works.

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

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## Footy season in Australia means betting season – time to recognise gambling as a 'public health matter'

The New Daily, Other, 04/03/2026, Monique Ryan

The 2026 football season is upon us, that means that, once again, our screens and stadia will be polluted with wall-to-wall gambling advertising. Not that you would know it from the narrative broadcast by AFL HQ.

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## ABC Radio Darwin , Territory-wide Mornings, 04/03/2026, Lara Stimpson

The Federal Government is under pressure to boost funding to train more psychiatrists to help reduce the pressure on the mental health system. Mental health professionals say the system is failing those who need it most, with people waiting too long to access appropriate care. President-elect of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, Dr Angelo Virgona, says they want to see the current training programs expanded.

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## 2GB, Drive, 04/03/2026, Clinton Maynard

NSW Mental Health Minister Rose Jackson will meet with the nurses' union tomorrow over operational challenges at Cumberland Hospital as the mental health facility faces a security review.

## IMMUNISATION

### **Victoria announces vaccine push as measles outbreak grows**

9News, Other, 04/03/2026, Maddison Leach

Victorians are being urged to get a free measles vaccine if they're not already vaccinated, amid an outbreak of the highly infectious disease. Measles is a serious medical issue and can cause pneumonia, eye problems and blindness, and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).

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### **Rise in measles cases prompts urgent vaccination push**

The New Daily, Other, 04/03/2026

A worrying increase in measles cases in Victoria and New South Wales has prompted health authorities to urge people to ensure they are vaccinated against the highly contagious disease. The Victorian Department of Health said on Wednesday that measles had recently spread in the state among people who had not travelled overseas or visited known exposure sites.

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### **Mystery patient spreads disease through city**

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 04/03/2026

Health professionals have confirmed one person in Western Sydney has contracted measles from a source which is currently still unknown, meaning it is "likely" measles is currently circulating across the city undetected. An alert released by NSW Health on Tuesday said the person had visited several locations across Western Sydney while they were "unknowingly infectious," including healthcare facilities.

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### **Pat Turner to stand down as NACCHO chief executive**

National Indigenous Times, Other, 04/03/2026, Dechlan Brennan

Pat Turner has announced she will step down after nearly a decade as chief executive of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. "Everything we have achieved has been driven by communities and by a sector that has always known its own strength," she said.

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## 'She made us feel comfortable': how trusting and safe pharmacy services improve First Nations health

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 04/03/2026

Aunty Mary stands reluctantly back from the busy counter at her local community pharmacy, not quite sure how to get some help. She notices a colourful poster on the wall that shows all the language and cultural groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia and relaxes a little.

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## PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

### ED's 'unsafe' staffing levels are risking lives

Hobart Mercury, General News, 05/03/2026, Nick Clark, Page 4

The Launceston General Hospital emergency department experienced "catastrophic overcrowding and dangerously inadequate staffing levels" on Monday, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch says. ANMF Branch Secretary Emily Shepherd said a staffing crisis was unsafe for patients and staff.

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

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### Breaking the mould

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 05/03/2026, Fiona Ferguson, Page 1

The issue of mould and leaks in operating theatres and in the intensive care unit at Tamworth hospital will require "a longer-term remediation plan", according to health minister Ryan Park. During questioning at budget estimates on Monday, the minister was grilled by his opposition health spokeswoman Sarah Mitchell MLC about several issues at the hospital including mould and an ongoing pigeon infestation.

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### Heavy rains blamed for Wollongong Hospital's pigeon, mould problems

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 04/03/2026, Nadine Morton

Severe weather and heavy rain have been blamed for a string of health and safety issues including mould and pigeons living inside Wollongong Hospital. Wollongong, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Milton Ulladulla hospitals were among numerous facilities to have "maintenance" issues including fungus, maggots, beetles and pigeons that have affected patient care and caused two deaths.

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

## ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 04/03/2026, Lucy Breaden and Kylie Baxter

Panel discussion with Icon Cancer Center Associate Professor Louise Nott and lung cancer patient Stephen Crump. For the first time, the needed immunotherapy treatment options will be available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Nott says ipilimumab and nivolumab will now be added to the PBS for people suffering from metastatic cancer. Crump says this move has been monumental and life-saving to him.

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

### 'Hundreds' of safety problems

Northern Territory News, General News, 05/03/2026, Lottie Hood, Page 11

A claim made by senior NT Health executives that the Acacia patient record system had not caused "any direct patient safety issues" has been "wholeheartedly" rejected by the Australian Medical Association NT. Within the first two minutes of his address to the NT parliament's public accounts committee on Tuesday, AMA NT president Dr John Zorbas slammed the statement made to the committee.

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### Budget blowouts, patient safety and 'toxic' workplace claims raised in inquiry into NT's Acacia patient record system

ABC Online, Other, 04/03/2026

An inquiry into a controversial health patient record system has heard the Northern Territory health department regards its rollout as a "resounding success", despite medical staff raising serious concerns about its impact on patient care. The NT parliament's Public Accounts Committee concluded an inquiry into the Acacia Digital Patient Record System on Tuesday, which also covered the project's huge cost blowouts and claims of a "toxic" workplace culture.

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## ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 04/03/2026, Lucy Breaden and Kylie Baxter

Interview with Services Australia general manager Hank Jongen. Services Australia is currently holding \$272 million in unpaid Medicare benefits owed to nearly one million Australians. Jongen says they cannot make refunds from unpaid Medicare rebates because they do not have people's bank account details. He encourages people to update their bank account details to get their Medicare refund.

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### The real fall out of an endo surgeon's alleged unnecessary procedures

Mamamia, Other, 04/03/2026

A bombshell Four Corners investigation has sent shockwaves through the endometriosis community, revealing allegations of "unnecessary and excessive" surgeries performed by a prominent Melbourne surgeon. With claims that organs were removed from patients whose pathology showed no trace of disease, the Victorian Government has now referred the matter to the police.

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### Standards review kicks off

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 04/03/2026

Work on reviewing and updating the National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia has now started, with the first program advisory group meeting taking place yesterday. Commissioned by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), through the Pharmacy Board of Australia, the review is critical to modernising the standards that underpin safe, ethical, and effective pharmacist practice.

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## 'Modernising the standards': Review begins on National Competency Standards Framework

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 04/03/2026

A review and update of the National Competency Standards Framework is now underway, a process described as "critical to modernising the standards that underpin safe, ethical and effective pharmacist practice". Review comes at a critical time Last reviewed in 2016, this project, commissioned by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), comes at a critical time, with rapid changes in the health landscape, including the evolving scope of practice, advances in digital health and technology, and an increasing focus on sustainable healthcare.

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## AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Quickie test detects STIs

West Australian, General News, 05/03/2026, Page 13

Australian researchers have developed a world-first portable test that detects four common sexually transmitted infections at once in under an hour. The Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity test, which detects syphilis, a highburden infection, could significantly reduce transmission and improve access to timely treatment.

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### Measles cases surface in Western Sydney with source yet to be confirmed

NEWS.com.au, Other, 04/03/2026, Jack Nivison

Health professionals have confirmed one person in Western Sydney has contracted measles from a source which is currently still unknown, meaning it is "likely" measles is currently circulating across the city undetected. An alert released by NSW Health on Tuesday said the person had visited several locations across Western Sydney while they were "unknowingly infectious," including healthcare facilities.

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

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

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## OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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## FOOD STANDARDS

### **Aldi recalls three varieties of Hillcrest Bubble Bars due to potential presence of black rubber pieces**

9News, Other, 04/03/2026, Emily Bennett

A popular lunchbox snack sold in Aldi stores across Australia has been taken off the shelves due to the potential presence of black rubber pieces. The supermarket giant is recalling Hillcrest Bubble Bars in the choc rainbow, birthday cake and choc chip flavours with the best before date 08 Sep 2026. [...] Consumers can also visit the Food Standards Australia New Zealand website.

Also reported by: [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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### **Aussie dairy farmers want to reclaim the word 'milk' from plant-based competitors**

9News, Other, 04/03/2026, Yashee Sharma

Australian dairy farmers are calling for stricter labelling laws so that their plant-based competitors cannot use the word "milk". [...] The federal government put \$1.5 million in the 2024-25 budget towards a review of plant-based and alternative protein labelling and commissioned Food Standards Australia New Zealand to conduct a rapid review, market survey, and a consumer survey.

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## AICIS

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