



TODAY'S NEWS

Wednesday, 11th March 2026

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 7) reports that lobby group Nuclear Medicines Australia will meet with the Department of Health to urge the Federal Government to create a Radiopharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, alongside the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, to improve access to radiopharmaceutical therapies for cancer patients.
- **[The Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 1) reports that Blue Mountains residents have been told to stop eating homegrown vegetables after official testing found high levels of PFAS in garden soil.
- **[The Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 4) reports that new data from the Bureau of Health Information for the October to December quarter last year found over 79,000 patients across NSW left emergency departments without getting treatment due bed block and wait times.
- **[The Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 4) reports that the SA Liberals are demanding Health Minister Chris Picton resign over the leaking of a patient's personal medical details and another patient's email.
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports that the Australian Border Force has intercepted 150,000 units of melatonin in four months. This comes as the TGA has been warning patients to stop using unregistered imported melatonin due to "significant discrepancies" between the actual melatonin amount and what was on the label.

MINISTER BUTLER

Patients depart without ED help

Daily Telegraph, General News, 11/03/2026, Madeleine Bower, Page 4

A record number of patients are leaving hospital emergency departments without getting treatment as bed block worsens in the state's public health system. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler lashed the NSW government for rejecting funding for aged care services during hospital funding negotiations.

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

Taylor's false start in Farrer

Capital Brief, Other, 10/03/2026

As new Liberal leader Angus Taylor outlined the themes of his leadership in central Sydney this weekend, his rivals were mobilising in regional NSW, preparing to deliver him a blow. [...] While that's still up in the air, there is little doubt Albanese and Health Minister Mark Butler will bang the health drum long and loud for the next few months.

[Read More](#)

Labor funds 50 new university placements to boost GP numbers

CathNews, Other, 10/03/2026, Rebecca Comini

Australian universities will be able to apply for a share of 50 new government-funded medical placements, as Labor doubles-down on its pledge to expand access to primary health care. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said more doctors have joined the health care system over the past two years than in at any point in the past decade, with doctor registrations jumping more than 30 per cent in 2024-25 compared to 2021-22.

[Read More](#)

The Zap: all the latest health and aged care news, plus consultations not to miss

Croakey, Other, 10/03/2026, Melissa Sweet

[...] Ministers and government Health Minister Mark Butler announced the "launch of a refreshed National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions 2026–35 , which sets out a clear and co-ordinated approach to supporting Australians with long term health issues", together with a new Chronic Conditions Prevention and Integrated Care Grants Program "designed to support initiatives that strengthen prevention, improve coordination of care and benefit people with multiple chronic conditions".

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Call for ethical billing and fee transparency in specialist care

Medical Forum, Other, 10/03/2026

Medical colleges across Australia have united to call for ethical billing practices and fee transparency to tackle disparities in access to specialist care. The Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges has warned patients are increasingly concerned about access to specialist care, including out of pocket expenses and unexpected bills. [...] According to Health Minister Mark Butler that number has since risen to 88 individual doctors.

[Read More](#)

Fifty new places funded to train doctors

WEB Newsreel, Other, 10/03/2026

The Federal Government has opened 50 new government-funded university medical places to help lift the supply of General Practitioners (GPs). From today universities can apply for a share of the places that will commence from 2028. Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler said all public universities were eligible to apply, including those looking to establish new medical schools.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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MINISTER RAE

Decline in GP home visits drives vulnerable people into care homes

ABC Online, Other, 10/03/2026, Katherine Gregory

Alyssa Smith was 16 when her mother, Janet Smith, began showing signs of the neurodegenerative disorder Huntington's disease. [...] In November 2025, Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said "Australians want to stay in their homes longer", and the new Support at Home program (which replaced the Home Care Package system) helped meet that demand.

Also reported by: [Your Life Choices \(Online\)](#).

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[...] Ministers and government Health Minister Mark Butler announced the "launch of a refreshed National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions 2026–35 , which sets out a clear and co-ordinated approach to supporting Australians with long term health issues", together with a new Chronic Conditions Prevention and Integrated Care Grants Program "designed to support initiatives that strengthen prevention, improve coordination of care and benefit people with multiple chronic conditions".

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

The Zap: all the latest health and aged care news, plus consultations not to miss

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[...] Ministers and government Health Minister Mark Butler announced the "launch of a refreshed National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions 2026–35 , which sets out a clear and co-ordinated approach to supporting Australians with long term health issues", together with a new Chronic Conditions Prevention and Integrated Care Grants Program "designed to support initiatives that strengthen prevention, improve coordination of care and benefit people with multiple chronic conditions".

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Chronic fatigue over chronic fatigue reform

The Medical Republic, Other, 10/03/2026, Euan Kielly

A parliament hearing has heard from ME/CFS advocates on where and how healthcare needs to step up to address the under-recognised field. [...] Members of parliament were also in attendance, with both Independent MP Dr Monique Ryan and assistant minister for health and aged care Rebecca White also pushing for reforms.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Life through the lens

Busselton Dunsborough Mail, General News, 11/03/2026, Kim Seidler, Page 1

Busselton Fringe is back and it's ready to show what regional arts can do. [...] The show is proudly supported by Deafblind West Australians, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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K-Life breaks ground on accommodation

Warwick Today, General News, 12/03/2026, Page 10

A new staff accommodation project in Killarney aims to ease workforce pressures and help secure the future of aged care services across the Southern Downs. [...] Funded through the federal Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's aged care capital assistance program, the development will include one one-bedroom unit, three two-bedroom units and two three-bedroom units for local aged care staff.

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Decline in GP home visits drives vulnerable people into care homes

ABC Online, Other, 10/03/2026, Katherine Gregory

Alyssa Smith was 16 when her mother, Janet Smith, began showing signs of the neurodegenerative disorder Huntington's disease. [...] In November 2025, Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said "Australians want to stay in their homes longer", and the new Support at Home program (which replaced the Home Care Package system) helped meet that demand.

Also reported by: [Your Life Choices \(Online\)](#).

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Health insurance price rise letters land: how to outsmart the hike

Canstar, Other, 10/03/2026, Belinda Williamson and Meagan Lawrence

Australians are being urged to review their private health insurance as the April 1 price hike letters start to land in people's inboxes. [...] However, people are migrating to lower levels of cover, with the proportion of insured people with gold hospital insurance dropping from 40% right before COVID to 28% in December 2025, according to the latest data from the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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Pricing risk assessments coming for residential aged care providers

Health Services Daily, Other, 10/03/2026

According to the DoHDA the assessments won't affect compliance but will help subsequent funding policy.

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Government to introduce pricing risk assessments for residential aged care

Hello Leaders Australia, Other, 10/03/2026, Jakob Neeland

The federal government will begin pricing risk assessments for residential aged care from the April to June 2026 quarter, aiming to better understand how inconsistencies in financial reporting may be influencing national aged care pricing. Led by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, the assessments will review a sample of providers' Aged Care Financial Reports (ACFR) to examine how variations in financial reporting may influence national aged care pricing and funding decisions.

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GM's access call gets personal

Pharma In Focus, Other, 10/03/2026

AbbVie Vice President and General Manager ANZ, Nathalie McNeil, has shared her father-in-law's struggle to access funded treatment after a prostate cancer diagnosis, to illustrate the urgent need for PBS reform. In an op-ed on LinkedIn, McNeil laid out the brutal truth that for many patients the wait for treatment can take years "and for some, they face the real possibility of not getting the medicine they need or die waiting.

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ANAO finds Health flying blind on \$990m suicide-prevention investment

The Mandarin, Other, 10/03/2026, Tom Ravlic

The Australian National Audit Office has slammed a federal department for spending nearly \$1 billion on suicide-prevention programs without a way to measure their effectiveness. The ANAO's performance audit of suicide prevention programs under the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing found the absence of evaluation criteria was a fundamental failure in administering one of the government's most critical funding streams.

[Read More](#)

More test results available sooner in My Health Record

The Medical Republic, Other, 10/03/2026, Caitlin Wright

The latest My Health Record changes have gone online, with patients now able to access limb x-ray reports as soon as they're uploaded into the system. [...] According to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, they're designed to: provide increased access to key health information for consumers, their representatives and healthcare providers; empower consumers to participate in their own healthcare decisions; support healthcare providers to coordinate care across different healthcare settings and providers, helping reduce duplicate tests, and support clinical decisions.

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Deaf Connect says 30,000 Deaf Aussies at risk of losing Auslan90 news platform

WEB Hearing Practitioner Australia, Other, 10/03/2026, Helen Carter

Deaf Australians may soon lose access to the nation's only news bulletin delivered in Auslan (Australian Sign Language), according to Deaf Connect. [...] The Federal Government Department of

Health, Disability and Ageing funds the news service which Deaf Connect delivers in partnership with SBS.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC Late News , 10/03/2026

After being diagnosed with a neurodegenerative disorder, Huntington's disease, 15 years ago, Janet's daughter, Alyssa, could no longer care for her without medical support at home. [...] The Federal Health Department says it is currently reviewing the Medicare benefit schedule for primary care.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Older Australians are right to raise concerns

Hobart Mercury, General News, 11/03/2026, Allyson Warrington, Page 25

We know that Australia is ageing rapidly. We know that demand for home care and clinical support will increase substantially over the next two decades.

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Productivity with purpose

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 11/03/2026

Aged care providers need productivity gains and client-centric strategies using technology. The Australian aged care sector is one of the most dynamic in the country.

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Continuity of care key to better outcomes

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 10/03/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Rosa finds aged care residents receiving preventative allied health services have lower mortality, while those seeing the same GP experience fewer unplanned hospitalisations. Aged care residents have 8 per cent fewer emergency department presentations when they continue seeing their regular general practitioner after entering a facility, according to a national study led by the Registry of Senior Australians Research Centre at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute.

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Working group looks to boost nurse readiness

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 10/03/2026

The second industry roundtable on nurse graduate readiness focused on confirming priorities, identifying shared responsibilities, and shaping next steps. South Australian aged care provider ACH Group has hosted a second industry roundtable on nurse graduate work readiness in caring for older people – which chief executive officer Linda Feldt said marked a critical shift toward solution-focused collaboration.

[Read More](#)

Unexpected spike in aged care room prices surprises industry analysts

HelloCare, Other, 10/03/2026, Jakob Neeland

In a surprising turn for the Australian aged care sector, February has witnessed an unanticipated spike in room price activity, bucking typical quarterly trends and signalling potential shifts in market dynamics. According to the latest monthly industry data from Mirus Australia, which samples approximately 90,000 beds—nearly one-third of the nation's residential aged care sector—this uptick in price adjustments has exceeded even the levels seen in January.

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Four leaders, four fixes for aged care

The Aged Care Act and new funding models are creating the framework for change. What happens next will determine whether reform becomes a genuine redesign or just a more complex version of the system that already exists.

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2CC, Breakfast, 10/03/2026, Stephen Cenatiempo

Interview with Craig Gears, CEO, Older Persons Advocacy Network. Compere mentions that the Older Persons Advocacy Network welcomed the Albanese Government's investment of an additional \$115m through the Aged Care Capital Assistance Programme. Gears mentions that this is the start and its using a capital grants programme which traditionally has been for more regional and remote areas.

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Radio National, AM, 10/03/2026, Isabella Higgins

Aged care and disability workers report that more people are struggling to get the health care they need at home, which means that they end up in hospital or residential care.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Diagnostic focus is behind NDIS blowout

Australian Financial Review, Letters, 11/03/2026, Dr Amanda Mazzoni, Page 35

Steven Schwartz is right: the NDIS autism bill has blown past \$10 billion because diagnosis, not disability, has become the gateway to funding. Recent policy changes risk worsening this.

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Blind woman's fight for dignity highlights hidden cost of living in south-west

Warrnambool Standard, Other, 10/03/2026, Jessica Greenan

Living regionally means up to half of a south-west woman's National Disability Insurance Scheme funding disappears before she even receives support. The 65-year-old woman, who asked not to be named, is blind and lives about 30 minutes west of Colac in a home she has owned for 30 years.

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PRIMARY CARE

Geraldton Medicare Urgent Care Clinic has busy first weekend, with 40 patients needing urgent medical care

West Australian, Other, 10/03/2026, Imogen Wilson

The demand for Geraldton's new Medicare Urgent Care Clinic, which officially opened its doors to those in need of urgent medical attention last Thursday, exceeded expectations during its first weekend. The bulk-billing clinic had about 40 patients needing urgent care for non-life-threatening matters at the weekend — higher than expected.

[Read More](#)

Urgent care clinics – are they working as intended?

Medical Forum, Other, 10/03/2026, Cathy O'Leary

With six new Medicare urgent care clinics opening in Western Australia this year, they are becoming an indisputable part of the health care landscape – whether all doctors like it or not.

Expanded pharmacy access to contraception in Victoria

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 10/03/2026

Victorian women will soon have expanded access to contraception through community pharmacies under new reforms announced by the Victorian Government. From July 2026, appropriately trained Victorian pharmacists will be able to prescribe oral contraception for women aged 18 and over.

[Read More](#)

ABC, ABC News, 10/03/2026, Guy Stayner

There is a dramatic decline in doctors conducting home visits, raising concerns it leaves vulnerable people in potentially dangerous situations. The RACGP is calling on the Federal Government to increase the Medicare rebate for home visiting GPs. The Federal Health Department says it is currently reviewing the Medicare benefit schedule for primary care.

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Breakfast, 10/03/2026, Sonya Feldhoff and Jules Schiller

Interview with Associate Professor Peter Subramaniam, President, Australian Medical Association, about an incident where a patient was used as a case study by the Liberal Party by emailing several journalists. Subramaniam says using patient-level data either to demonstrate that the system is not working or to try to use it in a way that counters that are all inappropriate.

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ABC South East SA, Rural Report, 10/03/2026, Elsie Adamo

The RACGP is calling for an increase in the Medicare rebate for GPs doing home visits, amid a decrease in the number of GPs doing home visits. A spokesperson for the Federal Health Department says a review of the Medicare benefits schedule for primary care will examine different consultation methods including home visits by GPs, to consider if current remuneration tiers are working.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Ice explosion's giant strain on health staff

Daily Telegraph, General News, 11/03/2026, Madeleine Bower, Page 4

An ice epidemic is putting the NSW mental health system under huge strain with more than a third of inpatients suffering drug-related disorders. Clinicians warn staff are not properly equipped to manage the methamphetamine users flooding the system.

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Novel drug death spike

Courier Mail, General News, 11/03/2026, Page 14

Poisoning deaths from "novel" benzodiazepines (NBZDs) designed to mimic brand-name drugs such as Valium and Xanax with greater potency have spiked in six years. Of nearly 260 fatal NBZD-related toxicity cases reported since 2013, about 87 per cent were between 2020 and 2025, according to the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney.

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Be armed to the teeth

Courier Mail, General News, 11/03/2026, Page 18

With collisions or falls accounting for 66 per cent of sports injury hospitalisations, dentists are urging

parents and amateur athletes to use mouthguards to help avoid nasty injuries. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data suggests 19 per cent of participants experienced an injury while playing sport, with collision-heavy codes such as AFL and rugby having more than double the hospitalisation rate of any other recreational sport.

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Leading the world

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 11/03/2026, Olivia Shying, Page 1

A world-leading Geelong treatment for life-threatening lung clots is saving lives at unprecedented rates and being adopted around the world and Lara woman Jackie Sawyer is living proof. Barwon Health's Pulmonary Embolism Response Team has achieved a mortality rate of just 2.5 per cent compared with international rates of 15-30 per cent.

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Why one in four women are quitting their jobs

Northern Territory News, Other, 10/03/2026, Bek Day

She would wake up every morning "in agony" and struggled to remember basic words. Before this TV host figured out what was wrong, she thought her career was over.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 10/03/2026, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Victoria is found to have the highest rate of survival rates for cardiac arrest in the country, thanks to Good Samaritans and nearby defibrillators. GoodSAM responder Jacob Wilson, Ambulance Victoria CEO Jordan Emery and Ambulance Victoria's Dr Ziad Nehme comment on the milestone and the importance of being able to quickly respond to cardiac arrests.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Melbourne, Breakfast, 10/03/2026, Bob Murphy and Richelle Hunt

Interview with Ambulance Victoria's Director of Research and Evaluation Dr Ziad Nehme, about Victoria having the highest chance of surviving cardiac arrest in Australia. Nehme says Victorian paramedics attended 7,500 cases of cardiac arrest in the state in the last financial year, and the community has prepared to step in to use CPR and AED before paramedics arrive.

Continuing interview on: [ABC Radio Melbourne \(Melbourne\)](#).

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Mission to prevent kids' suffering comes of age

The Australian, General News, 11/03/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 7

Archer Anson was a little over four months old when his mum, Emma, noticed a strange twitching in his hand. "I thought: 'This is really odd,'" Ms Anson, 33, says.

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Fast endometriosis test

Courier Mail, General News, 11/03/2026, Page 19

A simple five-minute test of major endometriosis diagnostic delays and treatment has been developed by University of Queensland researchers. The simplified adolescent factors for endometriosis score uses a questionnaire to identify at-risk patients and fast-track specialist referrals.

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Fertility help not hindrance

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 11/03/2026, Page 4

Women who used fertility treatments had no higher overall risk of invasive cancer than other women, a large Australian study led by researchers from UNSW Sydney has found. The study analysed health records of more than 417,000 women and found some specific cancers were slightly more common, while others were less common.

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Simple test could speed up endometriosis diagnosis

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 10/03/2026

A simple 5-minute test addressing major endometriosis diagnostic delays and treatment has been developed by University of Queensland researchers. The Simplified Adolescent Factors for Endometriosis (SAFE) score uses a questionnaire to identify at-risk patients and fast track specialist referrals for further investigation.

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

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6PR, Drive, 10/03/2026, Jamie Burnett

Interview with Ainslie Sartori, Cancer Council WA Food and Movement Programmes Manager. Sartori calls on WA Government to restrict the advertising of fast foods to combat rising rates of cancer among young people. She notes fast food advertisement is relentless as there is a big food environment that is stacked against health.

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ABC Radio Perth, Breakfast , 10/03/2026, Mark Gibson

Cancer Council WA is calling for restrictions to fast food advertising to combat rising rates of cancer in young people. This follows a study by the group revealing four out of the five major fast food companies offer a children's menu and three offer free toys with meals.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Ice explosion's giant strain on health staff

Daily Telegraph, General News, 11/03/2026, Madeleine Bower, Page 4

An ice epidemic is putting the NSW mental health system under huge strain with more than a third of inpatients suffering drug-related disorders. Clinicians warn staff are not properly equipped to manage the methamphetamine users flooding the system.

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Diagnosing depression

Courier Mail, General News, 11/03/2026, Page 10

Researchers may have found a new way to diagnose and treat major depression at the earliest stage of the condition. University of Queensland researchers, with the University of Minnesota, found patterns in the levels of adenosine triphosphate in the brain and blood cells of young people with depression.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#).

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Mental health in political life vital to democracy

Hobart Mercury, General News, 11/03/2026, Ruth Forrest, Page 20

Politics is demanding work. Not just intellectually, but emotionally, psychologically, and personally.

National Indigenous Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Conference returns in 2026

National Indigenous Times, Other, 10/03/2026, Joseph Guenzler

The Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association and Avertededge will host the 2026 National Indigenous Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Conference on Kurna Country in Tarntanya (Adelaide), South Australia. The fifth national conference will take place from 24 to 26 March at the Stamford Grand Adelaide, bringing together community members, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, mental health practitioners, lived experience advocates, researchers and policymakers from across Australia.

[Read More](#)

Go slow when cutting opioids

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 10/03/2026

Experts from Monash University have warned against rapidly reducing or abruptly stopping prescription opioids after finding it significantly increases the risk of mental health or substance use-related emergency presentations. In research published in the journal *Pain*, the team analysed data from nearly 1,500 Victorian adults on long-term opioid therapy who presented to emergency departments for mental health or substance use-related conditions between 2018 and 2022.

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FIVEAA, Afternoons, 10/03/2026, Stacy Lee

Panel discussion with Garry Putland, founder of Sophie's Legacy, and Sarah Game, Leader of the Fair Go For Australians party. Putland and Game discuss the Parliamentary inquiry into mental well-being of veterinarians in South Australia.

Continuing interview on: [FIVEAA \(Adelaide\)](#).

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IMMUNISATION

Health is everyone's business

Daily Telegraph, General News, 11/03/2026, Paul Nicolaou, Page 12

Sydney has had another alert that vaccinepreventable measles could again be on the loose in our city. You might wonder why a business advocacy group would be concerned about this.

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Australia's 2026 influenza vaccine rollout and the Super-K strain

ABC Online, Other, 10/03/2026, Lauren Roberts

Experts say they are feeling "nervous" as Australia approached this year's flu season, with a new, fast-moving strain of influenza dubbed "Super-K" circulating as vaccine uptake dwindles. Immunisation Coalition chairman Rod Pearce, who is a practising GP in South Australia, is urging Australians to roll up their sleeves as soon as they can to protect themselves.

[Read More](#)

Vax warning for Super-K flu

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 10/03/2026

Influenza vaccinations in the US this season have been less effective against a particularly fast-moving flu strain that is now spreading in Australia, according to research published in *JAMA* today. Influenza A (H3N2) subclade K (J.2.4.1) - known as 'Super-K' - is highly infectious, spreading faster and earlier in Australia than during typical flu seasons.

[Read More](#)

3AW, Drive, 10/03/2026, Jacqui Felgate

Interview with Dr Elise Davey, Director of the Kensington Hill Medical Centre, about a new strain of influenza called Super K. Davey says Super K is spreading more easily, and notes there is an uptake of cases over summer. She notes most people probably could not get a vaccine at the moment due to supply issues, but she expects vaccines to arrive later this March.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

SAHMRI in secret takeover talks with merged Adelaide University after scandal of cancer bunker project collapse

Adelaide Now, Other, 10/03/2026, Andrew Hough

The state's flagship medical research institute faces an imminent "takeover" by the new taxpayer-funded merged university, under official plans to save the embattled facility. The South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute opened 13 years ago in the \$200m "cheesegrater" building within the CBD's northwest \$3.6bn biomed city precinct.

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

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

'Awful': widow slams health minister over identity bungle

The Australian, General News, 11/03/2026, David Penberthy, Page 8

The Malinauskas government has been rocked by an election eve scandal after admitting it used a private letter from a public hospital patient to discredit the complaints of a widow whose husband died of cancer. In what some Labor figures concede is the biggest embarrassment of its four years in office, the South Australian government's bungled handling of the matter is made worse by the fact that the patient whose letter was released was not even the woman's late husband, but another person with the same name.

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

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Losing patience with patient leak scandal

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 11/03/2026, Brad Crouch and Ruby Stewart, Page 4

The Liberals are demanding Health Minister Chris Picton resign over the leaking of one patient's personal medical details and another's email in a misidentification bungle but Premier Peter

Malinauskas is standing by him. Opposition leader Ashton Hurn called on Mr Picton to step aside pending an investigation into the use of private patient information for political goals, a call dismissed by Premier Peter Malinauskas.

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

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\$60k boost delivers new hope for latest arrivals

Northern Territory News, General News, 11/03/2026, Matilda McDermott, Page 3

A new infant resuscitation unit has arrived at the maternity and birth suite of Royal Darwin Hospital after a generous donation from the Humpty Dumpty Foundation and Santos. The donation of a Panda Warmer ResusView and a symphony breast pump, valued at almost \$60,000, has been made by the Humpty Dumpty Foundation and Santos in their first charitable collaboration.

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

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Time to go public

Border Mail, General News, 11/03/2026, Hana Humboldt, Page 1

Victoria's peak doctors group has gone public with its concerns about the situation at Albury Wodonga Health, including "the suspension" of a senior doctor. Australian Medical Association Victoria (AMAV) released a statement on Tuesday, saying it had worked with staff at Albury Wodonga Health in recent months regarding "issues involving staff and hospital executive".

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Rising demand placing strain on emergency departments

Newcastle Herald, General News, 11/03/2026, Dylan Nicholson, Page 8

Newly released hospital activity and performance data has revealed mixed fortunes for the Hunter's two largest hospitals. The number of patients in imminently life-threatening conditions seen on time at Calvary Mater Newcastle has fallen by 5.8 per cent compared to last year, data from the Bureau of Health Information has revealed.

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

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Health Minister Chris Picton shuts down resignation calls after cancer widow email blunder

Adelaide Now, Other, 10/03/2026, Sam Lowe

Health Minister Chris Picton has made an "unreserved complete apology" to the victim of an email blunder that prompted calls for his resignation. "Hi Bronwen. Just one more thing, sorry," is the text message a grieving widow received from Health Minister Chris Picton after he tried to discredit her for claims the health system had failed her partner.

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

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Bunbury ramping drops while State numbers skyrocket in worst February on record

West Australian, Other, 10/03/2026

While ambulance ramping hours across WA have soared, making last month the worst February on record, Bunbury's regional hospital has shown a continued decline. In February, WA hit its all-time February ramping record of 4892.6 hours, up from 4840.6 hours recorded last year.

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Patient information should not be used as 'political tool', peak doctors body says

ABC Online, Other, 10/03/2026, Evelyn Manfield

On the cusp of an election, Labor has been forced to explain why and how it sent the media a glowing email from the wrong Stephen King, shortly after ABC News spoke to Bronwen Paterson, the partner of another Stephen King, who died shortly after being ramped outside the Royal Adelaide Hospital last year.

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Sharing of wrong patient's email provides rare public glimpse into the cunning world of political spin

ABC Online, Other, 10/03/2026, Kathryn Bermingham

"That's not a story." It's a line every reporter has heard at some point, and one most have had thrown at them scores of times throughout their career.

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Leaked documents reveal Hunter hospital operator fined 'tens of millions'

Newcastle Herald, Other, 10/03/2026

The private operator of a Hunter hospital plagued by deadly mould, maggots and leaks has been fined "tens of millions of dollars" by the state government, leaked documents reveal. The state government has repeatedly refused to reveal the total cost of fines levied at NovaCare for breaching its obligations under the Calvary Mater Newcastle public-private partnership (PPP).

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

'Overstretched': Surgeons stood down amid staffing 'crisis' at major Perth hospital

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 10/03/2026, Holly Thompson

Internal documents have shone light on a raft of issues in the cardiothoracic surgery department of one of Perth's major public hospitals. The documents, released to this masthead under Freedom of Information laws, detail severe staffing shortages, contentious recruitment decisions and operational challenges – including two surgeons being stood down – at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, largely throughout 2024 and 2025.

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My 'difficult' patient made my heart sink. But what happens when doctors are part of the problem?

The Guardian, Other, 11/03/2026, Ranjana Srivastava

I once cared for a patient for 10 years, which is a pleasingly long time in oncology. Alas, the years didn't bond us.

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Push for national reproductive leave

Nursing Review, Other, 10/03/2026, Stefanie Schultz

The Health Services Union (HSU) is calling on the federal government to introduce reproductive health leave as a new National Employment Standard, arguing the change is overdue and economically sound. The union used its submission to the federal Inquiry into the operation and adequacy of the

National Employment Standards (NES) to push for 12 days of paid reproductive health leave for all workers.

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Nurses union to fight Bupa staff changes

Nursing Review, Other, 10/03/2026, Dominic Jones and Peter Breadon

Australians are living longer, but we're also living longer with disease and disability. Half of us now have at least one chronic condition.

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Peak medical body speaks out against hospital's treatment of health staff

The Border Mail, Other, 10/03/2026, Hana Humboldt

Victoria's peak doctors group has gone public with its concerns about the situation at Albury Wodonga Health. Australian Medical Association Victoria (AMAV) released a statement on Tuesday, March 10, saying it had worked with staff at Albury Wodonga Health in recent months regarding "issues involving staff and hospital executive".

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Hindley Street chemist's drug ban

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 11/03/2026, Lucy Rutherford, Page 12

An "experienced" pharmacist turned drug trafficker has been banned after an undercover sting exposed his illegal side hustle. The SA Civil and Administrative Tribunal disqualified Hartley Davis from applying for registration as a health practitioner for five years.

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Drug-fix doctor is a 'serious risk'

West Australian, General News, 11/03/2026, Ben Harvey, Page 12

Perth doctor George O'Neil, whose pioneering work with naltrexone transformed addiction treatment in this country is being torpedoed by the Medical Board of Australia. The board has deemed Dr O'Neil a "serious risk" and has rescinded his right to prescribe two medications critical to the treatment of people hooked on a range of prescription and illicit drugs.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

\$50m bill for Covid hotel debacle

The Australian, General News, 11/03/2026, Lily McCaffrey and Anthony Galloway, Page 8

Taxpayers are likely to be slugged more than \$50m after the Allan government settled a class action brought by business owners over its botched Covid-19 hotel quarantine program. The government refused to confirm the outcome on Tuesday but Labor sources said it had been settled subject to court approval.

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\$50m Covid court hit

Herald Sun, General News, 11/03/2026, Shannon Deery and James Campbell, Page 1

Victorian taxpayers are set to foot a bill of more than \$50m after the Allan government settled a massive class action linked to the state's controversial hotel quarantine program. The decision effectively shuts down a process that might have forced senior officials to publicly explain their pandemic decision-making.

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Sixth case of flesh-eating Buruli ulcer appears on NSW South Coast

ABC Online, Other, 10/03/2026

In February this year, the Southern NSW Public Health Unit was notified of a person with the Buruli ulcer infection. Tracing indicates that all six cases reported since 2021 have been acquired from the region, with the latest three cases emerging in the last year.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Patients miss out on locally produced cancer treatments

The Australian, General News, 11/03/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 7

Will McDonald has managed his aggressive stage 4 prostate cancer for six years now, although he knows the intensive drug regime he is on, while doing the trick for now, won't last forever. [...] The Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia were among the 50 industry stakeholders that contributed to the report, which argues the system, where new RPTs have to move through the Therapeutic Goods Administration, the Medical Services Advisory Committee and not the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, is simply taking too long and does not take into consideration the investment in research and large-scale manufacturing and supply costs.

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Australian Border Force intercepts 150,000 units of melatonin amid crackdown on unregulated products

ABC Online, Other, 10/03/2026, Stephanie Dalzell and Caitlyn Gribbin

The Australian Border Force (ABF) has intercepted the equivalent of thousands of bottles of melatonin in four months, as health authorities crackdown on unregulated imports of the sleep hormone. [...] Once it receives a referral from the ABF, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) assesses the product to determine whether it was lawfully imported before notifying border force officials to either seize or release the goods.

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Pharmacy-only vapes linked to 'popcorn lung'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 10/03/2026

Testing of pharmacy-only nicotine vaping products reveals breaches of therapeutic standards "Legal vapes" sold through community pharmacies could be exposing users to dangerous chemicals, despite strict regulations, research funded by the tobacco industry reveals. The Australian reported that five out

of five vaping products listed by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) as being compliant with rules governing

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ABC Radio Hobart, Breakfast, 10/03/2026, Tracey Strong

Melatonin is popular with some parents as a sleep aid for children, but the medicine's watchdog, the Therapeutic Goods Administration has been cracking down on unregulated imported melatonin. That's because testing in its laboratories indicated significant discrepancies between the actual melatonin amount and what was on the label.

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ABC Radio Perth, Breakfast , 10/03/2026, Mark Gibson

Interview with Dr Tim Jones, Chair of Child and Young Persons Health, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Compere says the TGA is warning people to stop using these unregistered imported Melatonin products after testing revealed significant discrepancies between the percentage of Melatonin in the drugs compared with the percentage advertised on the label. Jones points out that the melatonin they are talking about is a synthetic form of a natural hormone ,and it doesn't put people to sleep, but it can change the time at which people can feel sleepy.

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Radio National, Breakfast, 10/03/2026, Sally Sara

Australian border officials have intercepted thousands of units of Melatonin as health authorities crack down on unregulated imports. The Therapeutic Goods Administration has been cracking down on unregulated imported Melatonin, as they have been tested in laboratories, indicating significant discrepancies.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

Cannabis legalisation debate reopens as South Australian party claims major revenue potential but garners political opposition

7news.com.au, Other, 10/03/2026, Madison Stanley

The Legalise Cannabis South Australia Party has unveiled what it says a regulated cannabis dispensary could look like if the drug is legalised — but medical leaders remain firmly opposed. The party staged a mock retail setup to demonstrate how a licensed store would operate, with entry restricted to customers over 18 who present ID.

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Relaxing of state drug-driving laws proposed for medicinal cannabis users – report

7news.com.au, Other, 10/03/2026, Ben Zachariah

Users of medicinally prescribed cannabis products could soon be allowed to drive in New South Wales, under a new proposal from the state government. A new bill has received some support from Premier Chris Minns, according to AAP, which could see those with THC in their system offered a medical exemption if caught driving.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 10/03/2026, Rosanna Mangiarelli and Will Goodings

The Legalised Cannabis South Australia Party has revealed what a regulated dispensary could look like if the drug is legalised. The Australian Medical Association recognises the importance of cannabis in the treatment of certain conditions, but it will not change its mind on recreational use.

Channel 9, Nine News, 10/03/2026, Brenton Ragless

The Legalised Cannabis Party has set up a live cannabis dispensary to show what a tightly controlled cannabis market could look like if the sale of the drug was legalised. Meantime, the Australian Medical Association's Dr Peter Subramaniam says they do not support the unregulated use of cannabis.

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FOOD STANDARDS

10 Victorian restaurants convicted and fined in 2025 for food safety breaches

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 10/03/2026, Himangi Singh

Ten Victorian restaurants have been hit with hefty fines for exposing diners to serious risks. Health inspectors last year convicted and fined 10 Victorian restaurants with a combined total of \$180,500 in court fines after they breached food safety regulations.

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Government says dairy funds will be retained in proposed regulatory reforms

Shepparton News Online, Other, 10/03/2026, Nicholas Spandler

The Victorian Government has told Country News that over \$6 million in assets will be protected during proposed reforms to food safety regulators in Victoria. The proposed reforms would dismantle the long-standing Dairy Food Safety Victoria, and combine it with several other industry bodies, forming a multi-industry regulator, Food Safety Victoria.

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AICIS

PFAS warning to residents over vegies

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 11/03/2026, Caitlin Fitzsimmons, Page 1

Blue Mountains residents near the site of a 1992 tanker crash site have been told to stop eating homegrown vegetables after official testing revealed their garden soil was laced with high levels of dangerous forever chemicals. It comes as Water NSW said phase two of its investigation into the source of the Blue Mountains PFAS contamination would take about 12 months due to its complexity.

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Residents need PFAS assurance not hindrance

Sydney Morning Herald, Editorials, 11/03/2026, Page 18

The vexed and continuing issue of water contamination in the Blue Mountains looks like being kicked down the road until well past next year's NSW state election as government agencies appear to hasten slowly towards coming to grips with the problem. Others, however, have a greater sense of urgency.

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