



TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 26th March 2026

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Canberra Times \(online\)](#)** reports that a spokeswoman for Health Minister Mark Butler says that the federal government is working with the processed food industry to reduce the amount of sodium, sugar and saturated fat across a range of products as experts call for a tax on junk foods.
- **[Diabetes Australia \(online\)](#)** reports that Federal Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler will deliver the keynote address at the National Diabetes Summit on 31 March at Parliament House in Canberra.
- **[HelloCare \(online\)](#)** reports that Aged Care minister Sam Rae has dismissed claims that some older Australians are losing hours of care, saying that the Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) is doing "a good job".
- **[Western Advocate \(page 5\)](#)** reports that the mother of Kyah Lucas, who sustained burns to almost half her body when she was bathed at a home in Orange by two workers from NDIS provider LiveBetter in February 2022, has said that she was "fatally betrayed" by the NDIS.
- **[The Australian \(page 5\)](#)** reports that rural doctors are holding crisis talks with senior MPs and department officials to "game" contingencies for further fuel shortages, as fears grow that patients will forgo care or delay appointments to reduce costs.

- [The Herald Sun \(page 11\)](#), reports that new research from Monash University has revealed that more than one in five of the children in the study suffered two or more mental illnesses before they started school, and that up to half of Australian preschoolers have a mental health disorder with anxiety most commonly diagnosed.
- [The Adelaide Advertiser \(page 6\)](#) reports that experts are warning that 2026 could be a horror influenza year following January's death toll doubling what is usually expected, largely attributed to the Subclade (Super) K variant.

MINISTER BUTLER

Leaders urged to stomach junk food tax to save lives

Canberra Times, Other, 25/03/2026, William Ton

More than 200,000 lives and billions of dollars in health costs could be saved if political leaders developed an appetite to tax unhealthy foods, according to fresh research. [...] The federal government is working with the processed food industry to reduce the amount of sodium, sugar and saturated fat across a range of products and has exempted fruit, vegetables, and other core foods from the GST, a spokeswoman for Health Minister Mark Butler said.

Widely syndicated across regional outlets [Albany Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Braidwood Times \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

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Australian households to be hit with \$2000 cost crunch from April 1

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 25/03/2026, Lydia Kellner

Where should investors be setting their sights in 2026? Our experts reveal their picks. [...] Adding to the burden, the average health insurance premium is set to increase by 4.41 per cent from April 1, a move announced by Minister for Health Mark Butler last month.

[Read More](#)

Asthma's gender gap lands in Canberra

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, Other, 25/03/2026, Amanda Sheppeard

New national data showing one in five Australian women live with asthma has prompted calls to embed respiratory care across women's health policy and routine clinical assessments. [...] Federal health minister Mark Butler said the government remained committed to improving women's health outcomes and welcomed the insights provided through the campaign.

[Read More](#)

Small changes can still become foundations for the meaningful, but understand how decisions are made

BioPharmaDispatch, Other, 25/03/2026

The 2026-27 Budget process, identified as the implementation platform for the HTA Review, began around six months ago. Minister Mark Butler will have submitted his proposals in late January or early February, and they will be formally considered by Cabinet in late March or early April.

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Health Minister to deliver keynote address at National Diabetes Summit

Diabetes Australia, Other, 25/03/2026

Federal Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler will deliver the keynote address at the National Diabetes Summit on 31 March at Parliament House in Canberra. The Summit will provide a platform for collaboration and innovation, exploring strategies to improve outcomes for people living with diabetes while strengthening Australia's health system.

[Read More](#)

Health insurance hacks: Aussies share their best tactics to save on

cover

Finder.com.au, Other, 25/03/2026, Natascha Kwiet-Evans

More than half of Australians with a health insurance policy (53%) – equivalent to 8.1 million people – are taking matters into their own hands as premiums continue to climb. This comes as Health Minister Mark Butler has approved an average increase of 4.41% to private health insurance premiums, the steepest hike in a decade.

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Channel 7, Seven News First at 4pm, 25/03/2026, Amber Laidler

A high-profile delegation from Myeloma Australia is in Canberra today, appealing for funds to find a cure for the disease. During a meeting with the delegation, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler announced that Elrexfio will be added to the PBS next month for some advanced myeloma patients. Myeloma Australia has recently released a report revealing that the disease costs Australia over \$7.1 billion a year in health expenses.

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[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER MCALLISTER

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[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER RAE

Govt updates HELF manual

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 25/03/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Following Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae's criticism of a provider's HELF trial, the department has updated its guide. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has made updates to the Higher Everyday Living Fee guidance booklet.

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Rae blames 'misinformation' for complaints about integrated assessment tool

Health Services Daily, Other, 25/03/2026, Caitlin Wright

Aged care minister Sam Rae insists the IAT is doing a good job, despite rising complaints and reports some older Australians are losing hours of care. Aged care minister Sam Rae insists the IAT is doing a good job, despite rising complaints and reports some older Australians are losing hours of care.

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Robo aged care? Minister Sam Rae says assessment tool is "doing a good job"

HelloCare, Other, 25/03/2026, Jakob Neeland

In a radio interview on ABC Melbourne Drive on 24 March 2026, Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae maintained that the Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT), the algorithm-driven system rolled out in November 2025 to determine in-home aged care funding, "is doing a good job".

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ABC's Anne Connolly keeps focus on aged care

The Weekly Source, Other, 25/03/2026, Caroline Egan

After inviting families to contact them with stories about their experiences with the aged care system, the ABC's 7.30 program has aired a feature on the Government's Integrated Assessment Tool. Last month, the national broadcaster received a large response after putting the call out, and investigative

reporter Anne Connolly (pictured below) had confirmed to The Weekly SOURCE that they were considering running a story. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae told 7.30 that under the previous Home Care Package system: "We had \$4 billion of value allocated to people incorrectly", referring to the high number of unspent funds allocated but not used under the former system.

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New aged care algorithm under fire as 800 apply for review

Your Life Choices, Other, 25/03/2026

The computer program deciding the level of care for elderly Australians (Anne Connolly) A new algorithm for determining how much aged care support people can receive to remain living at home is being blamed for reducing care for older Australians. [...] Mr Willcocks believes the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing wanted the advisory group he was part of — comprising clinicians, assessors and providers — to rubber-stamp the new assessment process rather than provide feedback.

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[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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[Back to Top](#)

ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Prevention, innovation, advocacy and workforce feature at CAS meeting

Australian Medical Association, Other, 25/03/2026

Published 25 March 2026 More than 100 medical leaders gathered in Canberra on Monday to discuss wide-ranging issues facing the healthcare sector. The AMA's annual colleges, associations and societies meeting began with a focused discussion on the role of innovation in strengthening prevention across Australia's health system. [...] Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Rebecca White, joined us for the keynote address at the colleges, associations and societies meeting.

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[Back to Top](#)

SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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[Back to Top](#)

DEPARTMENT

Hikes bite for food deliveries

Hobart Mercury, General News, 26/03/2026, Oscar Moodley, Page 1

Meals on Wheels will appeal to the federal government to be recognised as an essential service as spiralling fuel prices threaten the organisation's ability to make vital food deliveries to those in need. [...] Meals on Wheels officials will meet the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing on Friday to discuss the pressure on the essential service created by the fuel crisis.

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TGA not concerned about war-caused drug shortages

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, Other, 25/03/2026

A six month-stockpile is mandated for all PBS medicines, and suppliers must alert the government if they can't meet those obligations. So far, so good. [...] Earlier this week a spokesperson from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing told our sister publication The Medical Republic that the government had introduced measures in 2023 to safeguard against impacts of global medicine shortages by strengthening buffer stock.

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Govt updates HELF manual

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 25/03/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Following Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae's criticism of a provider's HELF trial, the department has updated its guide. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has made updates to the Higher Everyday Living Fee guidance booklet.

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Regulating AI in Australian healthcare: who is accountable when algorithms make decisions?

HealthTimes, Other, 25/03/2026

Artificial intelligence is no longer experimental in Australian healthcare. AI systems are being used to summarise clinical documentation, assist with imaging interpretation, support risk stratification and optimise operational workflows. [...] The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care also publishes information on artificial intelligence in healthcare , including references to national safety and quality frameworks.

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Indefinite referrals – could they work?

Medical Forum, Other, 25/03/2026

Doctors have had their say on a proposal to extend the validity of referrals. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is considering whether to make changes to the current referrals system to extend the period, or even make them indefinite.

[Read More](#)

Goodbye 1800Medicare: it was brief, but nice knowing you

The Medical Republic, Other, 25/03/2026, Jeremy Knibbs

The trend of patient-side AI agent disruption overseas strongly suggests that 1800Medicare, as launched only two months ago, has to be entirely rethought now. If our government is still wondering just how seriously we should be taking AI healthcare disruption then they need look no further than their recently launched grand national triage service 1800Medicare, which, based on overseas trends, looks set to be redundant in its current format, possibly as early as the end of this year. [...] It would be hard to think of an institution with more customers, data swirling around, complexity and daily transactions than Medicare so you'd have to think that the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing would have some leverage to get a seat the table sooner rather than later.

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Six big AI things doctors and policymakers could get caught out on

The Medical Republic, Other, 25/03/2026, Jeremy Knibbs

Doctors and government departments responsible for building out our healthcare system can't hope to change at the speed of AI, so what can they do? [...] Mr Paradis doesn't have a full grasp of the Australian healthcare system set-up yet but when I explain the basics he suggests that organisations like the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, the Australian Digital Health Agency, the RACGP and all the doctor colleges, should all have some sort of skunk works in play now to look at how the obvious changes coming their way could be managed.

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New aged care algorithm under fire as 800 apply for review

Your Life Choices, Other, 25/03/2026

The computer program deciding the level of care for elderly Australians (Anne Connolly) A new algorithm for determining how much aged care support people can receive to remain living at home is being blamed for reducing care for older Australians. [...] Mr Willcocks believes the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing wanted the advisory group he was part of — comprising clinicians, assessors and providers — to rubber-stamp the new assessment process rather than provide feedback.

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Channel 9, Nine Afternoon News, 25/03/2026, Will McDonald

As petrol prices continue to rise, charities relying on vehicles like Meals on Wheels are now being impacted. Meals on Wheels Acting CEO Julie Bonnici says she has already written to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, asking to classify Meals on Wheels as an essential service if petrol restrictions were to come into place.

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[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

'Tipping point': Research exploring link between menopause treatment and dementia risk

Adelaide Now, Other, 25/03/2026, Bek Day

Researchers are exploring a link between Australia's biggest killer and a potential "tipping point" that will hit every Aussie woman. Ladies, it's time to Fire Up!

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

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One Nation backs push to let pensioners work unlimited hours without welfare penalties

4BC, Other, 25/03/2026, Jason Matthews

National Seniors Australia and One Nation are pushing a policy that would allow aged pensioners and veterans to work unlimited hours without losing their welfare benefits. Chris Grice joined Jason Matthews on 4BC Mornings to argue this move will relieve cost-of-living pressures for seniors while injecting desperately needed workers into the economy.

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We live in dread of the diagnosis but dementia transforms families — not always tragically

Australian Doctor, Other, 25/03/2026, Rod Watson

I have been reflecting on the role of GPs in the lives of patients with dementia. It's partly the result of awarding Australia Day honours to Professor Henry Brodaty, recognising his lifetime work with dementia research.

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[Back to Top](#)

DISABILITY AND CARERS

Disabled woman 'fatally betrayed' by NDIS provider, says mum

Western Advocate, General News, 26/03/2026, Adelaide Lang, Page 5

A broken mother has described the nightmare she has endured since the death of her beloved

daughter, who was severely burned in a bathtub while unable to alert her carers. Kyah Lucas sustained burns to almost half her body when she was bathed at a home in Orange by two workers from NDIS provider LiveBetter in February 2022.

Also reported by: [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [7News.com.au \(Online\)](#), [National Indigenous Times \(Online\)](#).

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NDIS participants work more, feel better after accessing scheme, report finds

ABC Online, Other, 25/03/2026, Tom Crowley

People who access the NDIS fare better in the workforce and feel healthier within four years of entering the scheme, a new report finds. The finding is based on data that tracks the same individuals over more than a decade.

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[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

Doctors fear costs brake on rural care

The Australian, General News, 26/03/2026, James Dowling, Page 5

Rural doctors have held crisis talks with senior MPs and department officials to "game" contingencies for further fuel shortages, with the peak body concerned patients will forgo care or delay appointments to reduce costs. Fuel shortages at service stations sparked by the Middle East conflict prompted warnings from the regional medical fraternity on Wednesday.

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

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Libby Mettam slams State Government over healthcare, with up to five-day waits in ER for mental health

West Australian, Other, 25/03/2026, Madelin Hayes

Vasse MLA Libby Mettam is calling for more support and services in the South West for regional healthcare. Credit: Justin Benson-Cooper The West Australian Concerns over regional healthcare boiled over in Parliament last week, with Vasse MLA Libby Mettam accusing the State Government of failing the South West's most vulnerable patients.

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'Without them, we wouldn't have Huxley': a Jindera family's hospital journey

The Border Mail, Other, 25/03/2026, Jodie Bruton

A Jindera boy with a rare genetic disorder knows The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne far better than most. Now three, Huxley Atkin spent the first five months of his life in the hospital, and periodically for his first 14 months.

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First look at our hospital redevelopment revealed, but major questions remain

Warrnambool Standard, Other, 25/03/2026, Sophia Baker

The government has released images of what Warrnambool's \$396.1 million hospital redevelopment may look like but questions about what exactly is included in the work remain. The Victorian Health Building Authority has revealed several artist renderings of the completed Warrnambool Hospital redevelopment, showing the inside and outside of the building, as major construction works have begun.

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Your baby's communication signals, explained by a child development expert.

Mamamia, Other, 25/03/2026, Valentina Todoroska

You're playing with your baby and notice the tiny sounds and movements — a coo, a wiggle, a smile. Occasionally, they make a noise that's not quite a cry but not completely calm, and you can't help but wonder, What are you trying to tell me?

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Pharmacists want to prescribe Schedule 8 medications – GPs urge caution

Medical Forum, Other, 25/03/2026

Pharmacists are calling for more prescribing powers – including Schedule 8 medications – but GP leaders are urging caution. In the latest instalment of the to and fro over scope of practice and who should prescribe what, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has pushed for pharmacists to have greater prescribing powers.

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How could fuel price rises impact GP care?

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 25/03/2026

Some GPs already report more requests for telehealth consults, as concerns rise for equity of care – particularly in rural areas. Rising fuel prices are already affecting clinics and patient care, GPs have said.

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GP plan to combat 'completely unsustainable' NSW hospital costs

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 25/03/2026

The RACGP has urged the New South Wales Government to rein in spiralling public hospital costs by investing in 'the most efficient and effective part of the health system' – general practice. In a pre-Budget submission to the Government, RACGP NSW&ACT outlined a range of initiatives centred around 'well-connected general practice' to support long-term patient health through primary care.

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Record intake of future GPs strengthens Victoria's primary care pipeline

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 25/03/2026

Patients in Victoria will soon find it easier than ever to see a GP, with a strong cohort of future specialist GPs commencing training in the Commonwealth-funded Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program with Australia's leading medical training college, the Royal Australian College of GPs (RACGP).

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Unwell? Why tens of thousands are side-stepping the GP for the pharmacy

The Senior, Other, 25/03/2026, Phoebe Loomes

Tens of thousands of Australians are skipping the doctor and heading directly to pharmacies to seek treatment when they are sick, in a shift that has been labelled dangerous by doctors, as treatments for more than 20 conditions are rolled out across the country.

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[Back to Top](#)

Shortcut exercise fix really snacks up

West Australian, General News, 26/03/2026, Angela Pownall, Page 3

Evidence is growing that "exercise snacks" can have significant health benefits for people who think they are too busy to work out. Exercise snacks are short bursts of vigorous activity maintained for as little as one minute at a time and spread throughout the day.

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Australia's illicit tobacco market labelled 'worst in the world'

3AW, Other, 25/03/2026

The illicit tobacco market in Australia continues to worsen, with international tobacco companies potentially being forced out of the country. Global Chief Corporate Officer of British American Tobacco Kingsley Wheaton joined 3AW Breakfast and says Australia has the "worst illicit market in the world".

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Gary is part of the super-rich. He believes wealthy Australians should be paying more tax

SBS, Other, 25/03/2026, Edwina Storie

Billionaires are multiplying fast — Australia's count has doubled in a decade. Is it time to tax the super-rich? [...] By 2024, this had risen to 44 per cent, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's 2025 reporting on housing affordability.

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[Back to Top](#)

CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Hearing loss common, but still has a stigma

Age, General News, 26/03/2026, Lauren Ironmonger, Page 20

Goulburn cattle farmer John Bell spent years exposing his ears to high decibel levels: riding a tractor, using a chainsaw or removing vermin with a gun. But it was away from the herd, in an office job, that he realised something wasn't right.

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A hairy ride in a car made of skin

Daily Telegraph, General News, 26/03/2026, Harry Clifton and Olivia Lancuba, Page 19

Normally leaving your car in the sun causes the paint to wear, but this sedan's skin begins to peel after only a few minutes under UV exposure. The "Sunburnt Car" upholstered in synthetic skin was created to bring attention to the lack of UV protection inside a car, with research revealing 70 per cent of Australians wrongly believing they are protected from UV while behind the wheel.

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Cancer cells identified

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 26/03/2026, Page 22

Prostate cancer affects one in five Australian men, making it the most common cancer in the country. Now, researchers at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research have produced the world's most detailed cellular "atlas" of early-stage prostate cancer, revealing the earliest changes internally that lead to the disease.

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Cancer clues in blood test

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 26/03/2026, Page 12

Small bubble-like particles released by cells into the bloodstream may help detect early-stage cancers thanks to the proteins they contain. Researchers including scientists from the Peter MacCallum Cancer

Centre compared proteins in particles from healthy cells and cancer cells and found a pattern of four proteins linked to cancer.

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Purple Day to increase epilepsy awareness

Kalgoorlie Miner, General News, 26/03/2026, Neil Watkinson, Page 4

Kalgoorlie-Boulder's Eastern Goldfields Community Centre and William Grundt Memorial Library will be among a record 63 landmarks across WA that will be lit up for the Purple Day of epilepsy awareness on Thursday. March 26 is the global day for epilepsy awareness, and Epilepsy WA says there are 30,000 West Australians living with epilepsy, with one in 25 people in the State expected to receive a diagnosis in their lifetime.

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Eerie skin-covered car reveals the hidden sun damage drivers face

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 25/03/2026, James Chung

Aussie drivers have been confronted by a car wrapped in realistic human-like skin. Take a look.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

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Terminally ill 'disadvantaged' by law blocking phone access to assisted dying

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 25/03/2026, Kate Kyriacou

A cruel law that makes it illegal for doctors to use the phone or internet to speak to their terminally ill patients about voluntary assisted dying will be raised in ACT's legislative assembly this week as its Attorney-General and Health Minister call for change. It comes after a but were too unwell or lived too far away to attend mandatory face-to-face appointments with qualified doctors.

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Australian research discovers new cell in prostate cancer that could open new ways for early detection

Kalgoorlie Miner, Other, 26/03/2026, Claire Sadler

Australian researchers have produced the world's most detailed cellular map of early-stage prostate cancer, revealing the earliest changes that lead to the deadly disease. Prostate cancer affects one in five Australian men, making it one of the most common cancers in the country.

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Women more likely to survive cancer, but with more side effects

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 25/03/2026

International research led by Adelaide University has found that women are more likely to survive cancer than men, but face a higher risk of serious and adverse side effects from treatment. The research identified consistent differences between male and female cancer patients in both survival and treatment toxicity, with female patients having a 21% lower risk of death compared with male patients, but a 12% higher risk of severe side effects.

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Data helps target skin cancer screening

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 25/03/2026

A new AIHW report shows how linked data is being used to shape the national skin cancer screening program 'roadmap'. Australia's new Roadmap for Targeted Skin Cancer Screening Program is due in 2028.

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Younger Victorians urged to take life-saving bowel cancer test

Shepparton News Online, Other, 25/03/2026, Hailey Wight

Cancer Council has relaunched a screening campaign after data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare revealed only 11 per cent of Victorians aged 45 to 49 ordered a free bowel cancer test kit in the first year of expanded access. Bowel cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in Victoria, with 3780 people diagnosed and 1269 deaths recorded in 2024.

[Read More](#)

Self-test health kits promise quick results. But what do doctors think of them?

The Guardian, Other, 26/03/2026, Emma Joyce

Convenient, discreet and offering results in minutes, rapid health and wellness tests are popping up on pharmacy shelves across Australia. There are pinprick blood tests for vitamin D and iron levels, urine tests for perimenopause and menopause, and multi-health kits covering urinary tract infections and a cocktail of metrics such as glucose, ketones and pH.

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4BC, Afternoons, 25/03/2026, Carla Bignasca

Interview with Bowel Cancer Australia spokesperson Dr Penelope De Lacavalerie. Bowel cancer is now Australia's second deadliest cancer for Australians aged 25 to 54, claiming over 100 lives every single week. De Lacavalerie says it is now becoming common in people younger than 50. She notes that people aged 45 and above can request a cancer screening test, but it will not be paid for or sponsored by the government.

Interview continues on: [4BC \(Brisbane\)](#).

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4BC, Breakfast , 25/03/2026, Dean Miller and Sofie Formica

The Heart Foundation is urging Australians to vaccinate against flu and RSV ahead of the 2026 winter season. Health experts warn that these common respiratory viruses can trigger or exacerbate cardiovascular disease, making immunisation a critical preventative measure for heart health.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Perth, Statewide Mornings, 25/03/2026, Nadia Mitsopoulos

Interview with Bowel Cancer Australia medical director Associate Professor Graham Newstead. Newstead says Australia has the world's best screening program for cancer after years of lobbying from various governments. He warns that young people are now getting bowel cancer, noting that it is the greatest killer in 20-year-olds in the country.

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[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Rate of mental illness in preschoolers on rise

Herald Sun, General News, 26/03/2026, Mary Papadakis, Page 11

Up to half of Australian preschoolers have a mental health disorder with anxiety most commonly diagnosed, according to a new study. The shock Monash University research also reveals more than one in five of the children in the study suffered two or more mental illnesses before they started school.

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

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Emyria set for Victorian expansion with new mental health clinic

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 25/03/2026

Emyria, a clinical services provider developing and delivering regulated mental health treatments, is preparing to open its first Victorian Empax clinic. Emyria's first Victorian-based Empax clinic on track to provide first patient treatments in Q2 2026 31 Victorian therapists contracted and trained, with four psychiatrists on the Authorised Prescriber path and two more completing training in Q2, 2026

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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Guidelines to prevent mining industry suicides

Kalgoorlie Miner, General News, 26/03/2026, Isabella Davis, Page 2

The national peak body for the suicide prevention sector has released a framework to help the WA mining industry recognise and respond to suicidal distress and reduce risk. There is one suicide every second day in the Australian mining, construction and energy industries, Suicide Prevention Australia says.

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Psychiatrists condemn Govt plan to use acute mental health beds for patients awaiting aged care

Australian Doctor, Other, 25/03/2026, Ciara Seccombe

Leading psychiatrists have urged the WA Government to abandon a plan to divert a third of beds at a women's mental health facility to patients awaiting aged care placement. The Department of Health has confirmed it will allocate 25 of the 75 beds at Perth's Cockburn Health inpatient facility for women to other hospital patients who are waiting for a place in an aged care home.

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AusSuper to lift insurance premiums by up to 40pc

Australian Financial Review, Other, 25/03/2026, Lucas Baird

Nearly 3.6 million Australians will see their insurance premiums jump by 40 per cent from June when AustralianSuper, the country's largest pension fund, passes on price increases driven by a dramatic rise in mental health and disability claims from [...]

[Read More](#)

Early intervention key for teen mental health

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 25/03/2026

While a landmark study identifies risks and protective factors, mental health 'cannot be solved with a prescription', says a GP expert. Survey results of more than 6000 high school students demonstrate the importance of 'early, proactive and supportive discussions'.

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[Back to Top](#)

IMMUNISATION

4BC, Drive, 25/03/2026, Gary Hardgrave

Interview with AMA Queensland president Dr Nick Yim. Medical professionals are warning of the flu season ahead as flu vaccines start to become available for this year. Yim says the immunisation rates in Australia have declined. He notes that the flu vaccine will be free for all Queenslanders, including a new vaccine called FluMist for children.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Canberra, Mornings, 25/03/2026, Saskia Mabin

Interview with AMA ACT president Dr Kerrie Aust. Aust says it is still a little bit early to get a flu vaccine, since most GP clinics are still waiting for vaccine supplies from the government programs.

She discusses a new vaccine called FluMist that is sprayed into the nose to help protect against flu in people ages 2 through 18 years.

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[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Channel 9, Nine News, 25/03/2026, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Australian and South American researchers have found that 11 minutes more snoozing and some other small changes in behaviour can reduce the risk of suffering a heart attack. The study of 53,000 middle-aged people has also found that an extra four and a half minutes of walking and an extra 50 grams of vegetables each day also helps to live a longer life.

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[Back to Top](#)

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services tackling RHD in Yarrabah and beyond with creative new programs

National Indigenous Times, Other, 25/03/2026

In 2026, Gold Coast public health worker Renee Grosso is proving the most powerful medicine in remote Indigenous communities isn't found in a clinic, it's in a craft room. The mum-of-two is a Public Health unit manager at Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services in Yarrabah, one of Australia's most disadvantaged communities 55km east of Cairns.

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Aboriginal-owned business subsidises healthy food in Kimberley communities

National Indigenous Times, Other, 25/03/2026, Natasha Clark

Families living in remote towns in Western Australia's north will now have access to affordable nutritious food at local supermarkets and butcheries through a new community-led initiative. The Gudwan nutrition program is being introduced through Leedal, an Aboriginal-owned business group in Fitzroy Crossing, which is subsidising the cost of selected healthy foods at Fitzroy Crossing's IGA and Derby's Sampey Meats Butcher.

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[Back to Top](#)

PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

'Extremely disappointed': decision on Mater 'mess' shelved pending inquiry

Newcastle Herald, Other, 25/03/2026

Debate about the Calvary Mater Newcastle hospital "maintenance mess" has been put on the backburner as councillors instead chose to wait for the outcomes of a parliamentary inquiry. Greens

councillors Siobhan Isherwood, Joel Pringle and deputy lord mayor Charlotte McCabe called on the council to advocate for the public-private partnership (PPP) between the Mater and the state government to end.

[Read More](#)

Channel 7, Seven News, 25/03/2026, Rosanna Mangiarelli and Will Goodings

Chris Picton has been removed as health minister under a major post-election cabinet reshuffle in South Australia. For four years, Picton held the health portfolio, failing to deliver on the promise to fix ambulance ramping. He has now been replaced by Blair Boyer.

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[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

ED doctor Kim Mullaley has medical licence suspended for three years after inappropriate touching of patient

West Australian, Other, 25/03/2026, Hannah Cross

A senior emergency doctor who inappropriately touched a vulnerable young patient is banned from practising until at least 2028 after his medical licence was suspended. Kim Mullaley, who until recently was an ED consultant at Joondalup Health Campus, must also cough up \$175,000 to contribute to the Medical Board of Australia's legal costs.

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Fund honours speech pathologist killed saving kids from runaway truck

ABC Online, Other, 25/03/2026

A fund created in honour of speech pathologist Eleanor Bryant who died while saving children at a preschool near Melbourne has named the inaugural recipients. Her husband says the establishment of the fund has been a form of 'positive grieving'.

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Doctor Mohammed Alizzi pleads guilty after being barred from Boxing Day flight

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 25/03/2026, Nicola McNamara

An "exceptional" Queensland doctor, who was barred from a Boxing Day flight to Townsville because he was plastered, has been warned not to test a magistrate's patience as he faced court. Mohammed Alizzi, 29, spent an "embarrassing" night in the watchhouse on December 26 after he drunkenly mouthed off at police officers as they escorted him from the terminal.

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

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Bundaberg nurse who deceived patients for 18 months is fined \$10,000

Townsville Bulletin, Other, 25/03/2026, Tiffany Torrie

A Bundaberg nurse has been fined \$10,000 after working unregistered for 18 months and providing fake certificates to convince her employer she was qualified. Janette Marie Slater, 55, pleaded guilty

via telephone in the Bundaberg Magistrates Court on Tuesday afternoon and was fined \$10,000.

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

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Chiropractor avoids criminal record, clinic stays shut after 'sexual violation'

Warrnambool Standard, Other, 25/03/2026, Jessica Howard

A Hamilton chiropractor will avoid a criminal record, but his practice remains shut, following allegations he sexually violated a 13-year-old girl during a one-on-one appointment. Stephen Hehir, 80, faced Hamilton Magistrates' Court on March 25, 2026, charged with assaulting the girl at his practice in June 2024.

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RANZCOG eyes splitting obstetrics and gynaecology into two specialties

Australian Doctor, Other, 25/03/2026, Jamie Thannoo

Limited training opportunities for gynaecological surgery have creating a registrar bottleneck, Dr Nisha Khot says. RANZCOG is in the early stages of potentially separating obstetrics and gynaecology as specialties, the college president says.

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[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Scope legislation: pushing the government

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 25/03/2026, Ajp Staff

"Legislation and practice aren't necessarily keeping up with the universities," says a leading pharmacy student, discussing the future of the sector Sebastian Harper, national president at the National Australian Pharmacist Students Association, chats with AJP Podcast host Carlene McMaugh about scope of practice, the importance of making pharmacy friends and placement poverty.

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Wholesalers focused on med supply as fuel prices surge

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 25/03/2026, Geoffrey Timbs

Rising transport costs and concerns of fuel shortages have wholesalers on alert Pharmaceutical wholesalers are engaging with stakeholders to ensure "uninterrupted distribution" of medicines as fuel crisis hits. A spokesperson for the National Pharmaceutical Services Association (NPSA), which represents Community Service Obligation (CSO) wholesalers, told the AJP that its members were working to maintain access

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Re-elected SA gov't's plan for pharmacy welcomed

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 25/03/2026, Megan Haggan

The Malinauskas government is set to increase pharmacist training and scope, especially in rural areas, following its re-election The South Australian Branch of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has congratulated premier Peter Malinauskas and the South Australian Labor Party on their re-election.

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[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

AUSTRALIAN CDC

Alarm as flu kills 60 in a month

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 26/03/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 6

Twice the number of Australians died of the flu in January than usual, with a leading infectious disease expert warning 2026 is shaping up to be a horror influenza year. In 2025, 1700 Australians died from the flu 400 more than the national road toll.

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

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

Dangers of drug cocktails

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 26/03/2026, Andrew McKaysmith, Page 3

Self-proclaimed shamans are increasingly promoting ayahuasca and similar psychedelics, despite lacking the cultural lineage or clinical expertise to ensure participant safety. A Townsville-based spiritual therapist has warned that "quite damaged souls" are being put at risk by inexperienced facilitators who lack the training to manage complex emotional trauma.

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Medicinal cannabis has gone mainstream. But Australia's struggling to cope

Crikey, Other, 25/03/2026, Christine Mary Hallinan

Today, medicinal cannabis is increasingly delivered through a variety of avenues. But our health system was not designed for this demand, nor for the shift in prescribing practices.

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Medication safety standards mark JPPR's 60th

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 25/03/2026

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has released a special issue of its flagship Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research (JPPR), dedicated to medication safety, including the formal release of the Advanced Pharmacy Australia Medication Safety Standards. Marking the Journal's 60th anniversary, this milestone edition reinforces AdPha's leadership in medication safety in Australian pharmacy, while celebrating six decades of JPPR's contribution to evidence-based pharmacy practice.

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FOOD STANDARDS

Urgent recall of lux ham

Herald Sun, General News, 26/03/2026, Page 11

Fears over possible listeria contamination have forced a safety recall for supermarket ham sold in Victoria and NSW. Food Standards Australia and New Zealand issued a recall of Barkly Smokehouse lux ham joints sold in both states after a batch of the ham joints might have been infected with listeria, putting people who eat it at risk.

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Urgent recall notice issued as dangerous bacteria detected in popular ham product sold at IGA in NSW and Victoria

7News.com.au, Other, 25/03/2026, Freddy Pawle

'Consumers should not eat this product.' An urgent recall notice has been issued for a popular ham sold in NSW and Victoria Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) on Tuesday issued the alert for Barkly Smokehouse's 1.9kg Lux Ham.

[Read More](#)

Barkly Smokehouse ham recalled over listeria contamination risk

Adelaide Now, Other, 25/03/2026, David Hannant

A common Aussie product sold across multiple states is being recalled over fears of a serious bacterial contamination. [...] Food Standards Australia and New Zealand is carrying out a recall of Barkly Smokehouse lux ham joints sold in NSW and Victoria.

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[Back to Top](#)

AICIS

Unexploded WWII Bombs leak toxic chemicals that threaten the health of local residents

ABC Online, Other, 25/03/2026, Kyle Evans

Landmines, munitions and unexploded ordnance left over from the second world war pose major safety risks to communities in the Pacific. But now new research has proven they don't need to explode to threaten lives.

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[Back to Top](#)

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