



TODAY'S NEWS

Friday, 1st May 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](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The [Sydney Morning Herald](#) (page 7) reports that Health Minister Mark Butler has stated that the Federal Government are exploring the viability of legislating policy measures to regulate the prices charged by medical professionals for specialist consultations. *Also reported by: [ABC Radio Sydney](#).*
- [ABC Alice Springs](#) (radio) features an interview with Health Minister Mark Butler in which he states that a World Health Organisation announcement has confirmed that the rate of trachoma in Australia has decreased to point that the blindness-causing illness no longer represents a public health problem. *Also reported by: [Royal Australian College of General Practitioners](#), [WEB First Nations News](#)*
- The [West Australian](#) (page 1) reports that 118 public hospital beds will be added to the hospital system of Western Australia after the state government reached an agreement to purchase Mt Lawley Hospital from St John of God.
- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 4) reports that Ambulance Victoria chief executive Jordan Emery has expressed disgust at the continued pattern of violence being perpetrated against emergency health workers following the stabbing of a paramedic in Melbourne. *Also reported by: [The Australian](#), [Sydney Morning Herald](#), [Channel 7](#)*

- The [Courier Mail](#) (page 11) reports that state and territory health ministers will discuss the implementation of a policy, advocated by Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, which would allow for individuals to register as organ donors by ticking a box on the driver licence application form. *Also reported by: [Yahoo! News Australia](#)*
- The [Courier Mail](#) (page 5) reports that shortfalls in a new vaccine distribution model introduced by Queensland Health have led to individuals being unable to access influenza vaccines through a pharmacist, with some locations without vaccines for over a week.
- [The Australian](#) (online) reports that the Australian Medical Association have produced a pre-budget submission advocating for the introduction of a national tax on sugar-sweetened beverages to combat increased rates of preventable diseases associated with obesity.
- [ABC Online](#) (online) reports that further cases have been recorded in an ongoing outbreak of diphtheria in the Northern Territory, with NT Health stating that the number of known cases of respiratory diphtheria has increased to 18.
- The [Daily Telegraph](#) (page 4) reports that Heart Foundation Healthcare Programs Manager, Natalie Raffoul, has encouraged individuals over 45-years-old to conduct regular heart health checks with their GPs, following the release of research which found that 77 per cent of individuals may have an elevated risk of developing heart disease.
- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 6) reports that Victorian Health Minister Harriet Shing has stated that the use of integrated models of health care delivery had reduced the need to construct three previously proposed public hospitals in Victoria.

MINISTER BUTLER

Aged-care giant talks up prospects as private equity circles

The Australian, Business News, 01/05/2026, Bridget Carter, Page 16

Regis Healthcare has rushed out an upbeat trading update just days after speculation emerged that private equity firms were circling the aged-care operator, waiting for share price weakness to pounce. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler announced \$3bn in additional sector funding to address the funding gap for concessional residents and incentivise operators to build more beds to address a chronic shortage.

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

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Doctors accuse Butler of blame game over specialists

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 01/05/2026, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 7

Australian doctors are fighting back against Health Minister Mark Butler's assertion that specialist fees are "out of control" and might require government regulation, accusing him of pumping money into incentives while neglecting real Medicare reform. The Australian Medical Association yesterday said Butler (pictured) was playing a "continuing blame game" about out-of-pocket costs to see specialists, which have gone up by as much as 300 per cent in five years for some procedures.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [The Age \(Online\)](#), [Brisbane Times \(Online\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#).

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Push to reinstate donors

Courier Mail, General News, 01/05/2026, Aden Hill, Page 11

State and territory governments will be urged to reinstate the ability to register as an organ donor through a simple tick of the box during the driver licence process. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler previously urged other states and territories to follow Queensland's lead and commit to adopting the scheme.

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Fast care access

The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) in Whyalla was officially opened on Wednesday, April 22, by Federal Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health Emma McBride. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler emphasised the importance of UCCs in regional areas.

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Care change to save elderly money

Boorowa News, General News, 30/04/2026, Page 2

Ageing Australia has welcomed the federal government's decision to reclassify showering as 'clinical care' under the Support at Home program, calling it a win for the dignity of older Australians. Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler and Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae announced that showering will move from the 'personal care' category, which attracts client contributions of between 5 per cent and 50 per cent to the 'clinical care' category, which is contribution free.

Also reported by: [Narrandera Argus \(Narrandera\)](#), [Temora Independent \(Temora\)](#), [Gundagai Independent \(Gundagai\)](#).

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NDIS cuts revealed in pre-budget speech

My Weekly Preview, General News, 30/04/2026, Page 8

Eligibility will be tightened and financial support reduced as part of sweeping measures designed to rein in spending of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Health Minister Mark Butler revealed the changes to the \$50 billion scheme in a major address to the National Press Club recently.

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Controlling Persian Silk Trees

Western Herald, General News, 30/04/2026, Page 18

I'm back off the sick list, tidying up our uptown garden. [...] Great to see the Federal Health Minister Mark Butler talking about reigning in NDIS costs.

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Australia's budget 'sugar hits' are running out, economists warn

The Australian, Other, 30/04/2026, Cameron Micallef

Australia's national debt has likely fallen due to surging cost-of-living and the war in Iran, but economists warn the country's luck is running out. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has previously announced changing the rules for the national disability insurance scheme to reign in the runaway costs.

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

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The dangers of gatekeeping disability support: What does it mean to be 'deserving' of help?

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Elena Filipczyk

There are two things eating away at me. [...] To his credit, Health Minister Mark Butler emphasised that the problem of the NDIS's money woes is not disabled people, but rather "shonks and rorters" along with "the worst elements of organised crime".

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'Double whammy' leaves 4.4 million Aussies paying up to \$815 more a year

9News, Other, 30/04/2026, Yashee Sharma

About 4.4 million Australians could be left paying \$815 more a year under a proposed private health insurance rebate cut and increasing premiums, according to new data. Health Minister Mark Butler last week announced the rebate for those over 65 will be lowered to the same level as everyone else to re-establish "intergenerational equity".

NDIS shake-up to cut children from essential supports

St George & Sutherland Shire Leader, Other, 30/04/2026, Eva Kolimar

Families are bracing for a period of profound uncertainty as the state and federal governments roll out sweeping reforms to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), shifting the goalposts for eligibility and sparking fears that thousands of children will be left without essential support. [...] Health and Disability Minister Mark Butler defended the reforms, stating that the scheme "costs too much, and it's growing too fast."

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Barbecue stopper: Butler says specialist fees are out of control

Australian Doctor, Other, 30/04/2026, Paul Smith

Mark Butler has just been doing the media rounds this week, having declared that specialist fees are out of control. In fact, the issue has become so significant that he says it is now a 'barbecue stopper': a political topic so contentious that it dominates all conversation at social gatherings across the nation.

[Read More](#)

What odds Mark Butler to be next ALP leader?

Health Services Daily, Other, 30/04/2026, Cate Swannell

It was a question out of the blue, which left the federal health minister 'befuddled', but not exactly saying no, either.

[Read More](#)

"i already feel trapped at home": How the NDIS reform impacts women with disabilities

Refinery29 Australia, Other, 30/04/2026

Last week, Health Minister Mark Butler announced major changes coming to Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). His plan aims to fight fraud, slow cost increases, deliver quality services and support, along with clearer eligibility requirements.

[Read More](#)

Australia eliminates trachoma endemic

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 30/04/2026, Michelle Wisbey

In a landmark achievement reflecting decades of community-led effort, the WHO confirmed trachoma is no longer a public health risk. [...] 'Federal Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler said while it is an 'important achievement', the Government will remain vigilant to avoid the re-emergence of trachoma.

[Read More](#)

Specialist fees a 'BBQ stopper': Butler

The Medical Republic, Other, 30/04/2026, Caitlin Wright

"Non-GP specialist fees are out of control, and they genuinely are becoming a barbecue stopper," federal health minister Mark Butler proclaimed this morning. He was speaking on Nine Newspapers' Inside Politics podcast and followed up his thoughts with an ABC News breakfast interview.

[Read More](#)

GPs a 'powerless witness' in NDIS

The Medical Republic, Other, 30/04/2026, Holly Payne

GPs have been a "powerless witness" to the lack of patient and family-centred support in the NDIS for too long – it's now vital to legislate that GP advice must be taken into account for all disability scheme applicants, the RACGP says. [...] Speaking at the National Press Club last week, health and disability minister Mark Butler foreshadowed wide-ranging cuts to the NDIS.

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What's driving Regis Aged Care's earnings upgrade?

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2026, Caroline Egan

The ASX-listed aged care provider issued a three-page statement before the market opened this morning, saying earnings will be at the top end of earlier guidance. [...] The Government's \$3 billion aged care package, announced by Health Minister Mark Butler earlier this month, will support "sector sustainability", Regis said, though further analysis is needed once the final details are released at the 12 May Federal Budget.

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Australia eliminates trachoma endemic

WEB First Nations News, Other, 30/04/2026, Peter Rowe

The World Health Organisation has confirmed Australia has eliminated trachoma as a public health problem, a landmark achievement for people and communities and a significant step in preventing avoidable vision loss. [...] "The elimination of trachoma in Australia marks a major milestone for the eye health of our communities," Health Minister Mark Butler said.

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Queensland reports highest number of NDIS-related GoFundMe accounts

WEB InQueensland, Other, 30/04/2026

As the Federal Government pushes ahead with plans to overhaul the National Disability Insurance Scheme meaning more than 160,000 people now face losing funding – many in the scheme are already turning to public fundraising for assistance. [...] Federal Health and NDIS Minister Mark Butler this month announced eligibility changes and cracking down on "rorters" and "lowlives" were part of an overhaul of the national scheme that is currently on track for a \$13 billion cost blowout.

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Sky News Live, AM Agenda, 30/04/2026, Laura Jayes

Interview with Tanya Plibersek, Minister for Social Services. Plibersek defends the NDIS reforms as necessary to curb unethical providers and bring the program under control after years of rapid cost growth and weak oversight. She says Minister Mark Butler's work on stronger checks and tighter administration helps shift the NDIS toward greater transparency.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Mornings, 30/04/2026, Hamish Macdonald

Interview with Health Minister Mark Butler. Compere mentions that according to Butler, specialist fees are now out of control. Butler says specialist fees have been relatively slow over the last several years, but they have seen a spike in the period since COVID in non-GP specialist fees. He recalls that they have spent lots of time and taxpayer money in working with the GP Gap Fees.

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ABC Alice Springs, Breakfast, 30/04/2026, Stewart Brash

Interview with Health Minister Mark Butler. Compere says that according to the World Health Organization [WHO], the Trachoma endemic has now been eliminated in Australia. Butler clarified that this is the case, and WHO made the announcement yesterday afternoon while they were at Congress. He explained that what this means is that Trachoma rates across the population have dropped below a particular threshold, making WHO consider it as "eliminated" in the country.

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3AW, Afternoons, 30/04/2026, Tony Moclair

Interview with Ben Harris, Director of Policy at Private Health Care Australia, about specialist medical fees and transparency. Harris says the Health Minister Mark Butler focuses on rising out-of-pocket costs and argues patients often face unpredictable specialist charges because pricing varies widely and referrals do not lock in fees. He supports greater transparency through tools like a government Medical Finder website that lists individual doctors' fees.

2MCE, 12:00 National Radio News, 30/04/2026

Australia becomes the 30th country to eliminate trachoma, the world's leading infectious cause of blindness, after more than 20 years of coordinated prevention work. Health Minister Mark Butler credits Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, community effort, and sustained investment for reaching the milestone.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

ABC Radio Darwin , 13:00 News, 30/04/2026

The federal government plans tougher penalties for disability providers exploiting Indigenous NDIS participants, following reports of inducements and misuse of funds in remote NT communities. NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister says the government will increase monitoring and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to crack down on sharp practices.

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MINISTER RAE

Care change to save elderly money

Boorowa News, General News, 30/04/2026, Page 2

Ageing Australia has welcomed the federal government's decision to reclassify showering as 'clinical care' under the Support at Home program, calling it a win for the dignity of older Australians. Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler and Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae announced that showering will move from the 'personal care' category, which attracts client contributions of between 5 per cent and 50 per cent to the 'clinical care' category, which is contribution free.

Also reported by: [Narrandera Argus \(Narrandera\)](#), [Temora Independent \(Temora\)](#), [Gundagai Independent \(Gundagai\)](#).

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

Fast care access

Whyalla News, General News, 30/04/2026, Jack 'Halloran, Page 1

The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) in Whyalla was officially opened on Wednesday, April 22, by Federal Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health Emma McBride. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler emphasised the importance of UCCs in regional areas.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Taking Australia's story of ending RHD to the global stage

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), Other, 30/04/2026

On 28 April 2026, Snow Foundation and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) co-hosted Every Heart, Every Voice: Lessons for Ending Rheumatic Heart Disease, an official side event at Women Deliver 2026 in Melbourne (Naarm). [...] The session concluded with a video message from Assistant Minister Rebecca White, who acknowledged the disproportionate impact of RHD on First Nations women and children, reaffirmed the Australian Government's commitment to prevention and elimination, and recognised the importance of partnership — including the leadership of NACCHO, community-controlled health organisations and philanthropic collaborators — in driving progress.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Support at Home Pooled Funding trial grant applications open

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2026, Ian Horswill

The Australian Government's Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has released the details of the proposal touted to transform care. Up to 10 eligible Support at Home providers will be selected to participate in the trial to test how flexible pooled funding models can support high-quality, person-centred in-home care.

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McLean Care's CHSP services find new operator

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2026, Caroline Egan

Australia's largest home care operator will take on McLean Care's CHSP services, after the Inverell, NSW-based operator announced in February that it would exit aged care. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has appointed Australian Unity to take on McLean Care's CHSP services from 1 June 2026. Australian Unity will contact clients, who will enter into new service agreements with the operator.

[Read More](#)

How Health Department defends Support at Home assessment tool

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2026, Caroline Egan

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has replied to SA Senator Anne Ruston's questions on notice from a snap hearing held on 1 April 2026. The hearing of the Senate Inquiry into Support at Home was held at short notice in the evening, just before Parliament broke for the Easter break. The Department was the only witness.

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Hobson-Powell resigns from allied health chief role

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 30/04/2026

Anita Hobson-Powell has stepped down from her role as chief allied health officer with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. Ms Hobson-Powell was appointed to the role in June 2024.

[Read More](#)

Support at Home foundations are strong

Community Care Review, Other, 30/04/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

After a big day discussing various Support at Home failings, StewartBrown audit partner Siobhain Simpson used the final session on day one of last week's Invox Support at Home National Conference

2026 to applaud the sector's resilience and adaptability. [...] "This is another level of challenges, and you've weathered those storms when the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing wasn't ready for those changes," she said.

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PBAC reverses plan to cut GP eye-drop prescribing rights

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 30/04/2026, Jolyon Attwooll

A decision to limit the prescribing of preservative-free eye drops to eye specialists has been rescinded after opposition from the RACGP. [...] After the original PBAC decision in November to cut GP prescribing rights on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), which followed an analysis of usage and costs, the college wrote to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing expressing its opposition.

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Call for free flu jabs to stop SA deaths

WEB InDaily SA, Other, 30/04/2026

Sixteen people have died of influenza in South Australia this year, according to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data, with data also showing fewer people had received their flu jab from March 1 to April 19 compared to 2025. [...] Data also showed that fewer people have received a flu jab – with 203,210 South Australians rolling up their sleeves from March 1 to April 19 compared to 256,340 in 2025, according to the federal Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Win for retiree village people

Herald Sun, General News, 01/05/2026, Nathan Mawby, Page 9

Victorian retirement villages will get their biggest shake-up in decades as a raft of regulatory changes take force for the sector today. But it's already prompted a warning from the industry, who say while they will "hit the ground running", they're expecting a "lot of lumps and bumps" as a result of limited notice on the changes.

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Aged care home's \$29M expansion one step closer

The Weekly Source, Other, 30/04/2026, Caroline Egan

Melbourne's Manningham council has proposed 28 changes to Opal HealthCare's plans to double the capacity of its Templestowe Grove Care Community. The Council has proposed screening for ground-floor windows, the removal of two beds, and additional plantings, among the changes.

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Sector responds to new \$3bn aged care package

Aged Care Insite, Other, 30/04/2026, Stefanie Schultz

In response to Labor's \$3 billion aged care investment, industry leaders are urging the government to ensure that workforce planning, staffing protections and clinical capability remain at the heart of any reform. A central feature of the package is the construction of 5,000 new residential aged-care beds each year (supported by new targeted capital subsidies), an increase to the Accommodation Supplement, and structural changes that introduce new funding tiers, such as additional payments for facilities with more than 60 per cent supported residents.

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Aged care funding misses one key point

Aged Care Insite, Other, 30/04/2026, Tracy Comans

Last week, we learned older people in home-based aged care will no longer have to pay out-of-pocket for showering, dressing and continence care. This backflip will provide relief for those currently receiving services under the Support at Home program and the 100,000 or so people on the waiting list for home care.

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The missing middle: Bridging Australia's aged care gap with lessons from China

HelloCare, Other, 30/04/2026, Jakob Neeland

Between independence and institutionalisation, there's a gap, and that's where many older Australians fall through. For decades, the Australian aged care narrative has been a binary struggle.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Budget leak: Jim's productivity centrepiece

The Australian, General News, 01/05/2026, Matthew Cranston & Greg Brown, Page 1

Jim Chalmers is firming towards making the instant asset write-off for business a permanent incentive and a centrepiece of a productivity package in the May 12 federal budget that will include slashing red tape. [...] Deloitte's forecasts assume the savings from the NDIS reforms are fully banked, rather than spent elsewhere in the budget.

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

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'Flawed' finances are longstanding

West Australian, General News, 01/05/2026, Matt McKenzie, Page 6

Pressure is mounting for Jim Chalmers to sharpen the axe in his upcoming Federal Budget as economists warn that years of revenue windfalls have "papered over" structural flaws in the nation's finances. [...] The National Disability Insurance Scheme is already in the Federal Government's sights with a promise to save \$22b over four years by cracking down on access

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

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Treasurer downplays tax windfall

Canberra Times, Business News, 01/05/2026, Page 46

The treasurer has downplayed expectations the government will reap a tax bounty from changes in the upcoming budget as he reassured property investors past investment decisions would be respected. [...] The government has announced major changes to the NDIS, which it claims will save \$35 billion over four years.

Also reported by: [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#), [Bendigo Advertiser \(Bendigo\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#).

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'Solid start': Australian small businesses coping with Middle East crisis despite warning worst is yet to come

The Australian, Other, 30/04/2026, Cameron Micallief

Australian small businesses are currently weathering the storm from the Middle East crisis and back-to-back rate hikes, but experts warn the worst is yet to come. [...] Meanwhile, the healthcare sector has mainly been driven by the National Insurance and Disability Scheme (NDIS).

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Pensioner wants compensation after being stripped of support for four years

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Nikki Sorbello

Queensland man Ray Noakes says navigating Australia's social welfare system has made the chronic pain he lives with even worse. The 64-year-old former shearer and fisherman said a leg injury from a snapped wire he sustained while working as a haul out driver in 1990 was the last in a series of injuries that included broken bones, bulging discs and pinched nerves.

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Technology should make life easier – but it doesn't always for people with disability

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Nas Campanella

When was the last time you had to call your neighbours to put a movie on for you in your own home? For me, it was only last week.

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Limiting capital gains tax changes to new investments would 'severely delay' budget reforms, Deloitte says

The Guardian, Other, 30/04/2026, Patrick Commins

Only applying changes to the CGT discount and negative gearing rules to new investments would "severely delay" desperately needed reforms required to repair a "structurally flawed" budget and boost the economy, Deloitte says. [...] Savings from Labor's NDIS reforms would then deliver a further benefit across following years, Smith said, though he described the budget as "structurally flawed".

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Channel 9, A Current Affair, 30/04/2026, Allison Langdon

The NDIS grows into a \$50b scheme facing criticism for rapid expansion, fraud, weak oversight and complex bureaucracy that fails some of the most vulnerable participants. Cases like Zac Bryant's highlight gaps in provider accountability, poor coordination and funding disputes, even as demand and costs surge far beyond original projections. While the government plans major cuts and reforms to improve sustainability, advocates warn that changes may target the wrong areas and risk leaving participants without adequate support.

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PRIMARY CARE

Can PM hold his nerve as Boomers reel?

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 01/05/2026, James Massola, Page 27

The 2026 budget is shaping up to be one of the most unusual Australia has seen in two decades.[...] . "If you look at what we've done during the year [since the election], we've ticked off all the things that we promised. You know, the aged-care reforms, the guaranteed childcare, the Medicare Urgent Care clinics are open, the cheaper beer excise, freezing the student debt everyone has received that payment the work we've done in health across the board."

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#).

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Sugary drinks in GP sights

West Australian, General News, 01/05/2026, Page 11

A tax on sugary drinks and a sweeping overhaul of Australia's health system have been put squarely on the Federal Budget agenda, as doctors warn preventable disease is pushing hospitals towards breaking point. The Australian Medical Association has unveiled its 2026/27 pre-Budget submission,

calling for a national tax on sugar-sweetened beverages alongside billions in funding to reform general practice, public hospitals, private health insurance and the medical workforce.

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Sicker for going to the bush

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/05/2026, Page 17

Medicare is failing regional and remote Australians, with rural people getting sicker and dying younger than their city counterparts, according to new The Australia Institute research. Compiled as part of a submission to a federal parliamentary inquiry, the research reveals that non-urban Australians are hospitalised for preventable conditions at up to triple the rate of those living in urban areas.

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Beware the sugar hit of a new tax

Courier Mail, Editorials, 01/05/2026, Page 32

Imposing new taxes is rarely a good thing. But the call from the Australian Medical Association (AMA) to introduce a tax on sugary drinks is an interesting point of discussion.

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A mixed response to 'walk' advice

Cairns Post, General News, 01/05/2026, Samuel Davis, Page 18

A call by a Far North MP for drug users to take up physical activity rather than consume dangerous narcotics has been met with a lukewarm response from one of her LNP colleagues. [...] Last week, Barron River MP Bree James said Queenslanders contemplating using drugs should "go for a walk" instead, prompting criticism from within her electorate and from the Australian Medical Association Queensland.

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Doctors push sugary drinks tax as obesity overtakes tobacco in disease burden

The Australian, Other, 30/04/2026, Andrew Hedgman

A tax on sugary drinks and a sweeping overhaul of Australia's health system have been put squarely on the federal budget agenda, as doctors warn preventable disease is pushing hospitals towards breaking point. The Australian Medical Association (AMA) has unveiled its 2026–27 pre-budget submission, calling for a national tax on sugar-sweetened beverages alongside billions in funding to reform general practice, public hospitals, private health insurance and the medical workforce.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#)

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Thousands of Australians face going blind amid soaring cost of eye injections

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2026, Ita Buttrose

Australia prides itself on fairness. On looking after one another. But each year, when a federal budget is handed down, I find myself asking a simple question: who are we forgetting? [...] It is about recognising that the current system is heavily reliant on private delivery with limited access to bulk billing.

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

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'I saved \$600': The health battle highlighting a mass bulk billing surge

The Senior, Other, 30/04/2026, Carla Mascarenhas

It started with a swollen throat. [...] Ms Walford's story comes as new data suggests bulk billing access is improving significantly across Australia following expanded Medicare incentives.

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Scope to deliver 20m services to pharmacy: TWC

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 30/04/2026

Expanded scope of practice is set to drive patients to community pharmacy, with significant economic benefits to those delivering services. Service-focused pharmacies are set to benefit from the opportunities created by the profession's expanding scope of practice, EBOS general manager of retail pharmacy brands, Nick Munroe says.

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Biosimilars: "Now is the time to act"

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 30/04/2026

Health leaders at the recent Sandoz Medicines Access and Biosimilar Policy Summit in Canberra have united in the call for practical reform around biosimilar medicines that reduces costs for patients, simplifies administrative complexity for clinicians and pharmacists, and supports broader access to medicines.

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POPULATION HEALTH

We can't win tobacco war without cutting the tax on smokers

Australian Financial Review, General News, 01/05/2026, Chris Richardson, Page 33

Australia's tobacco tax disaster now rivals the Western Australia GST deal as our worst policy this century.

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

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Illegal tobacco traders pull back

Canberra Times, General News, 01/05/2026, Petlee Peter, Page 5

A few weeks ago it was simple and oh-so-easy. All over Canberra you could whip out a \$10 note, name the brand, and a secret drawer would slide open to reveal an assortment of illicit cigarettes.

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

Man on a mission

Ballarat Courier, General News, 01/05/2026, Nick Powell, Page 1

Inspirational mental health advocate Alan Thorpe is walking away from national charities to start his own. [...] There were 782 suspected or confirmed suicide deaths in Victoria for 2025, up from 776 in 2024, but down from 796 in 2023, according to the latest data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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

Aussies' \$39m a day drug habit

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 30/04/2026, Stephen Drill, Page 4

Australians are spending \$39m a day on drugs, as cocaine use surged almost 20 per cent, despite the cost of living crisis. [...] ACIC chief executive Heather Cook said the data showed why Australia's hospitals were overflowing with people suffering from the impacts of drug use.

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

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

Don't want to leave familiarity? Stay home longer and thrive

Newcastle Herald, General News, 01/05/2026, Susannah Hardy, Page 52

While some older Australians look to downsize and move into lifestyle retirement villages, there are

increasing numbers who prefer to stay put, and the advantages to their wellbeing are huge. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, about 800,000 Australians aged 65 and over turned to at-home support from 2021 to 2022.

Also reported by: [Warrnambool Standard \(Warrnambool\)](#).

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Townsville community called on to create sea of purple for domestic violence awareness

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2026

The Townsville community is being called on to transform a local community centre into a sea of purple to mark Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. [...] "It is one of the most serious health and welfare issues facing Australia and affects more than 80 per cent of the people Act for Kids helps every year."

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

[Read More](#)

Record regional nicotine use exposes the growing black-market tobacco trade

Canberra Times, Other, 30/04/2026, Ben Smyth

Flying in the face of claims the current approach to curbing smoking is the best way forward, nicotine consumption in regional NSW is the highest it has been in years. The latest National Drug and Alcohol Wastewater survey shows national nicotine consumption increased by 4 per cent between August 2024 and August 2025, with levels now reaching historic highs across both capital cities and regional Australia.

Also reported by: [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Victorian bottle shops awash with illicit alcohol, researchers find

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Bridget McArthur

The National Drug Research Institute says illicit alcohol is "taking off" in Victoria, with bottle shops across Melbourne and regional areas stocking it. Police are investigating whether illegal alcohol is linked to a recent spate of attacks on Melbourne hospitality venues and an alcohol distribution centre.

[Read More](#)

Wastewater data suggests meth use is at a record high. Here's why we don't need to panic

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Nicole Lee

Data from Australia's wastewater drug monitoring program suggests methamphetamine use, also known as speed, ice or crystal meth, is at a record high. Cocaine is also up. MDMA may be levelling off.

[Read More](#)

Aussie meth use surges, ranks second globally after doubling in a decade

9News, Other, 30/04/2026, Tilli Andrew

Australians are consuming record amounts of illicit drugs, with new data revealing the country now ranks among the highest users of methamphetamine in the world. Fresh wastewater data shows Australia sits second out of 34 countries for per capita meth use, behind the United States.

[Read More](#)

Online trial helps older adults cut risky drinking

Aged Care Insite, Other, 30/04/2026, Stefanie Schultz

A University of NSW (UNSW) study has found that an online self-help program designed specifically for older adults can significantly reduce risky alcohol use. "High-risk alcohol use in older adults is increasing, but there are few effective treatments tailored to this life stage, despite clear links with serious health conditions like dementia," lead researcher and program lead in Lifespan and Brain Health Research at the University of Sydney's Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use Dr Louise Mewton said.

[Read More](#)

Pharmacy supply of vapes accelerates

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 30/04/2026, Kate Cowling

Eighteen months after pharmacy-only reforms were introduced, Freedom of Information figures reveal how many therapeutic vapes have been supplied. Close to 136,000 therapeutic vapes have been supplied to patients under Special Access Scheme (SAS) category C since the Federal Government introduced reforms in late 2024.

[Read More](#)

Research news in brief

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 30/04/2026, Cate Swannell

Researchers from South Australia have proposed "a few simple changes" to Australia's Health Star Rating system to improve the rating of non-dairy drinks. Published in the Health Promotion Journal of Australia, the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute scientists surveyed labels from 762 single-serve, non-dairy drinks sampled from 17 supermarkets across Adelaide's metropolitan area.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, News Breakfast, 30/04/2026, Emma Reballato and James Glenday

Australia's illicit drug consumption has soared to an all-time high, with the latest national wastewater analysis revealing a record 27 tonnes of narcotics were consumed in a single year. The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission report shows a 21% surge in the use of meth, cocaine, MDMA, and heroin leading up to August 2025.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 30/04/2026, Sandra Sully

Australian teenagers increasingly consume protein shakes, powders and bars while reducing carbohydrates, driven by misconceptions about healthy eating, according to new findings. The RCH National Child Health Poll also shows 90% of young people lack understanding of what constitutes a balanced diet.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, A Current Affair, 30/04/2026, Allison Langdon

Clinton James, who lives with a rare and aggressive cancer, gains renewed hope after his life-saving drug selpercatinib receives a recommendation for listing on the PBS, which will slash its \$8,000 monthly cost. Public donations raise about \$40,000, allowing him to keep treatment going while he waits months for subsidised access.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 30/04/2026, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Border Force says it is regaining control in the fight against illegal tobacco and vape imports, seizing a record amount of contraband since Operation PRINTWALL began last December. Despite intercepting about 786m cigarettes and 3.6m vapes linked to overseas cartels and fuelling violent gang conflict in Australia, officials admit the trade cannot be eliminated.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 30/04/2026, Mel Bush

Interview with Dr Jackie Hallam, CEO of the Alcohol and Other Drugs Council of Tasmania, about their latest report from the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring. Hallam highlights that population surveys show relatively stable amphetamine use at about 1–2%, while alcohol use and harm affect a far larger share of the population. She stresses the need to combine multiple data sources for accurate conclusions.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Perth, Mornings, 30/04/2026, Nadia Mitsopoulos

Interview with Dr Cory Dugan, Researcher in Women's Health at Louisiana State University, about iron deficiency in women and its health impacts. Dugan explains that iron supports oxygen transport, immunity, and physical function, and says deficiency occurs when iron stores drop too low, affecting about one-third of the global population.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Perth, Statewide Mornings, 30/04/2026, Nadia Mitsopoulos

Interview with Shane Neilson, Principal Advisor for Drugs at the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, about rising illicit drug use in WA. Neilson says wastewater data shows record or near-record consumption of methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine in both Perth and regional areas, with meth use particularly high and reflecting national and global trends. He explains drug supply adapts through changing import routes and concealment methods.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 30/04/2026, Mel Bush

Interview with Dr Renee Ireland, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology at UniSQ, about the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program's latest report on illicit drugs. Ireland explains that financial stress can drive people toward drugs as a fast, accessible form of self-medication, especially for coping with chronic pressure and social disadvantage. She calls for a more compassionate, support-focused approach rather than relying mainly on criminalisation.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Drive, 30/04/2026, Jacqui Felgate

Interview with Rowan Pike, Founder of the Australian Border Force Tobacco Strike Team, about the rise in illicit alcohol and tobacco markets. Pike draws parallels between tobacco and alcohol smuggling, arguing that high excise taxes and weak federal enforcement create profit opportunities for criminal groups who undercut legal prices through large-scale imports. He predicts the illicit alcohol trade will escalate unless policy or enforcement changes.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Mornings, 30/04/2026, Tom Elliott

Interview with Chris Christoforou, CEO of the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association, about rising illicit drug use and drug policy in Vic. Christoforou says the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission's wastewater data shows record levels of drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine, and argues demand across the community drives the issue rather than enforcement gaps alone. He supports treating drug use primarily as a health issue while also agreeing Vic should expand roadside testing to include cocaine.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

AI do-or-die call to corporate Australia

The Australian, General News, 01/05/2026, Matthew Cranston, Page 1

The Albanese government will demand the private sector dramatically lift its rate of investment in

Australian AI or risk a near-term hollowing out of industry and an exodus of data overseas. [...] He will call out how I-MED Radiology Network one of the world's largest private radiology companies based in Sydney took a chance on Harrison.ai, an Australian company founded in 2018 and now used in healthcare facilities across more than 40 countries, including powering every public emergency department CAT scan in Hong Kong.

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

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Most of US have 'older hearts'

Daily Telegraph, General News, 01/05/2026, Taylor Penny, Page 4

Three-quarters of Aussies have a heart age at least four years older than their real age, a major analysis of 1.6 million people has found. New data from the Heart Foundation collected between 2020 and 2026 found that three in four people - about 77 per cent - may have a higher risk of developing heart disease because their hearts are "older" than they should be.

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

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Plea to help sick kids with school

Daily Telegraph, General News, 01/05/2026, Will Paige, Page 28

More than one million children at risk of chronic school absence should be formally recognised as a distinct group, a children's charity says, warning education policy is failing those kids who cannot attend school for medical reasons. Up to 1.2 million students are at risk of chronic absence linked to conditions like cancer, asthma and trauma, according to MissingSchool, with the charity calling for policy reforms and additional funding to support affected children.

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Vixens' big hearts for breast cancer

Herald Sun, General News, 01/05/2026, Jackie Epstein, Page 15

Melbourne Vixens stars Hannah Mundy and Emily Mannix are honoured to get their pink on for a cause close to their hearts. The netballers met a super fan - breast cancer sufferer and The Amazing Race winner Toni Hilland - ahead of Sunday's match against the Giants at John Cain Arena in aid of breast cancer.

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Killer asthma approach

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/05/2026, Page 17

In almost every area of medicine, Australians are better off than they were 40 years ago, but not if they have asthma. Australia is still treating the disease the way it did in the 1980s and people are dying because of it, the George Institute for Global Health says.

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

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How Newcastle became a world leader

Newcastle Herald, General News, 01/05/2026, Dylan Nicholson, Page 8

Thirty years of world-leading research into stroke treatment is already changing lives in the Hunter. But the story of how it found its "perfect" home at the John Hunter Hospital has been as arduous as it has been successful.

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

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New stats to beat cancer

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 01/05/2026, Sarah Pye, Page 22

A group of common cholesterol-lowering medications may also reduce cancer risk in older adults. A Deakin University study has found a possible link between use of statins and reduced risk of

What can a coronary artery calcium scan tell you about your heart health?

The Australian, Other, 30/04/2026, Jason Kovacic

Cholesterol levels can reveal a lot about your heart health risk. While a certain amount of cholesterol is essential for the body to function, too much will lead to what is colloquially called "hardening of the arteries".

[Read More](#)

'I definitely have a guardian angel': how Andrew beat stage-four melanoma

Newcastle Herald, Other, 30/04/2026, Damon Cronshaw

When Andrew Ward's cancer returned, his life was hanging in the balance. [...] Australian Skin Cancer Foundation chief executive Jay Allen said Newcastle and the Hunter Region were "higher-risk areas for melanoma".

[Read More](#)

Calls for driver's licence change across Australia: 'Strong case for national adoption'

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 30/04/2026

The South Australian Premier has called on the rest of the country to change their driver's licences to include organ and tissue donation registration. South Australia is currently the only state or territory in the country that includes consent on its licences and "has the highest participation rate in the nation".

[Read More](#)

Asthma management stuck in the 1980s

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 30/04/2026

Australia's 2.8 million asthma sufferers are receiving outdated, fragmented care that is leading to outcomes that have stalled or worsened over the last decade, according to a landmark blueprint on the future of asthma care. A Bold Blueprint for Asthma Reform in Australia calls for urgent, system-wide reform of how asthma is diagnosed, managed and treated, and was authored by some of the country's leading respiratory experts, with input from a range of stakeholders, including the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Minister is deflecting from issue: union

Canberra Times, General News, 01/05/2026, Lanie Tindale, Page 8

A minister questioning police response to a Canberra Hospital staff siege is deflecting from issues in the mental health system, a police union says. Health and Mental Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith questioned whether police officers spent too long trying to negotiate with a knife-wielding emergency department patient last week.

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

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Fan support surges for country footy mental health round

Herald Sun, General News, 01/05/2026, David Johnston & Tallis Miles, Page 11

Footy fans have backed the push for a dedicated country footy mental health round amid overwhelming support for one at the elite level. An AFL Fans Association survey of almost 500 people, in the wake of

Carlton's Elijah Hollands suffering a mental health episode in a recent match, found 83 per cent of fans wanted an AFL mental health round created.

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

Stepping up to walk for mental health

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 01/05/2026, Dean Kerrison, Page 5

A Gold Coast charity is urging Australians to "step up" for mental health by taking 9000 steps a day in May. With the figure pointing to the nine lives lost daily to suicide nationwide, the inaugural LIVIN Better Challenge aims to turn alarming statistics into community action.

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Pushing for purpose

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 01/05/2026, Karli Farrell, Page 6

Exercise has many benefits, including reduced risk of heart disease, better weight management, reduced anxiety and depression, and increased life expectancy. Lifeline Loddon Mallee is taking this on board and adding other benefits to movement, with the Pushup Challenge in June raising awareness for suicide and funds for around-the-clock crisis support services, suicide prevention programs, and more community health initiatives.

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

One in three Australians fear using public bathrooms amid rising hygiene anxiety

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2026, Adrienne Tam

Brisbane mum Madelyn Jenkins has struggled to use public bathrooms after developing postpartum contamination OCD three years ago when her son, Leo Sala, was born. Postpartum contamination OCD is a perinatal anxiety disorder where intrusive fears about germs, illness, or toxins lead to excessive cleaning, washing, or avoidance behaviours to protect the baby.

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

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IMMUNISATION

Needle little help, here

Courier Mail, General News, 01/05/2026, Mikaela Mulveney, Page 5

Queenslanders trying to get vaccinated against the flu are being turned away by pharmacists due to a jab shortage sparked by Queensland Health's new distribution scheme. It's understood multiple locations across Brisbane have been out of flu jabs for more than a week, with logistical challenges also causing delivery delays in the Far North.

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

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Free flu jabs available at WA's AFL games

West Australian, General News, 01/05/2026, Page 5

A free flu vaccination pop-up clinic will be available for footy fans at this weekend's AFL game at Optus Stadium as the Sate Government chases an increase in immunisations ahead of the winter hospital surge. St John WA will be administering the jabs across three AFL games in May, including for Eagles v Richmond on May 2, Fremantle v Hawks on May 7 and Eagles v GWS on May 17.

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

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

Queenslanders urged to get flu jab now as deadly Super-K strain

expected to surge

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2026, Jackie Sinnerton

A flu Armageddon is projected to hit this week as the 18th week of the year is traditionally when there is a mega explosion of cases. The Australian Respiratory Surveillance Report reveals that the 18th week — which in 2026 is from 27 April — has seen a ten-fold spike in reported flu cases over the past five years, from thousands to tens of thousands.

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

[Read More](#)

NT diphtheria outbreak worsens as cases of the potentially deadly disease more than double

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Olivana Lathouris & Tilda Colling

Cases of a potentially deadly strain of diphtheria have more than quadrupled in just over a month, as the Northern Territory's outbreak worsens. Diphtheria is a vaccine-preventable disease, and the strain of respiratory diphtheria can be deadly if left untreated.

[Read More](#)

Vaccine reminder as flu season approaches and measles risk rises

Shepparton News Online, Other, 30/04/2026

As winter approaches and World Immunisation Week ends, there is a push for members of the community to check their vaccination records for flu, measles and respiratory syncytial virus. According to the World Health Organization, immunisation has saved six lives every minute since 1974, with the measles vaccine accounting for approximately 60 per cent of the lives saved.

[Read More](#)

Large majority give health workers thumbs up for flu vax

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 30/04/2026

Trust in health professionals to give the flu vaccine is rising... so why are rates declining? A new survey asks Australians about their attitudes and barriers.

[Read More](#)

AMA urges Australians to 'Have the jab chat' with their doctor

Medical Forum, Other, 30/04/2026

The AMA has launched a national social media campaign encouraging Australians to speak with their GP about vaccination. The campaign was launched as part of World Immunisation Week from April 24-30 and amid declining immunisation rates.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 30/04/2026, Natalie Forrest

Footy fans at Optus Stadium can get free flu vaccinations as the WA government rolls out its winter immunisation push after a severe flu season last year. St John nurses will offer the jabs during three matches, with access available to anyone who brings a valid Medicare card, including updated vaccines for younger children.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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Lift force

The Australian, Wish, 01/05/2026, Christine Middap, Page 1

Enzo Porrello's eyes light up and he leans in, radiating enthusiasm as he describes the first time he saw labcreated heart tissue pumping away, as if powered by its own life force. [...] He heads up the stem-cell medicine theme and heart regeneration teams at Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) and he makes hearts beat faster just by describing the work under way in the laboratories embedded amongst the hum of The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

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Doctor on the front foot with technology

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 01/05/2026, Carla Hancock, Page 3

Matthew McLindon's daughter Genevieve was doing what most children do climbing trees - when she fell and suffered a concussion. After three days of normal concussion-type symptoms, she took a turn.

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

Region is sleep-deprived

Border Watch, General News, 01/05/2026, Page 60

Mount Gambier/Berrin has been named the seventh most sleep-deprived city in Australia, with new research pointing to long working hours and environmental pressures as key factors impacting residents' sleep. The study, conducted by home retailer Myer, analysed 50 of Australia's most populous cities using a "sleep stress index", which measures behavioural, societal and environmental pressures linked to poor sleep.

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Geelong clinical trial to test human poo for Long Covid treatment

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 30/04/2026, Zoe De Koning

The answer to long Covid symptoms might be found in something most people flush away without a second thought – human poo. While it may sound bizarre, Geelong researchers are set to undergo a government-funded clinical trial testing whether faecal microbiota transplant (FMT) could help restore microbial balance disrupted by Covid-19 infection.

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

[Read More](#)

Inflation soars but Aussie retirees are happier than ever: here's why

Canberra Times, Other, 30/04/2026, Desiree Savage

As inflation takes another jump and maintaining a current lifestyle is a worry for over-60s, the fear of running out of money in retirement is not as high, according to a new survey. [...] This is also in line with research from the (CHeBA) at the University of NSW suggesting getting social and connectivity also boosts longevity, brain health and increases quality of life.

Also reported by: [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#), [Ballarat Courier \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Gambling among Australian construction workers well above national average, creating safety risks

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Melanie Vujkovic

Gambling on Australian construction sites has become "as common as a hard hat", with new research revealing the industry faces a crisis that threatens workers' finances as well as safety on the job. A study commissioned by Foundation House, a Sydney based not-for-profit rehabilitation centre serving the construction industry, found 89 per cent of workers had gambled in the past year, compared to 73 per cent of the national population.

[Read More](#)

This “hidden driver” may explain why glioblastoma keeps coming back

Prevention, Other, 30/04/2026, Christine Diane Almanzor

Brain cancer is the kind of headline that makes your stomach drop. Most people do not spend their days reading research papers, but when a study touches something as frightening as glioblastoma, it lands differently.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 30/04/2026, Melissa Downes and Joel Dry

Australia leads the world in food allergies, with one in ten children affected, and new research identifies potential risk factors from birth. A study led by Professor Vicki Clifton finds five placental genetic markers linked to maternal stress during pregnancy that correlate with children developing allergies by age seven, paving the way for an early screening test.

[Play Now](#)

4BC, Drive, 30/04/2026, Gary Hardgrave

Interview with Prof Alexandra McManus, Director of the Centre of Excellence Science Seafood & Health at Curtin University, about a study on seafood consumption. McManus explains that a major review of 281 high-quality studies shows eating seafood supports heart and brain health, including omega-3 benefits and other essential nutrients the body cannot produce.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

'Risky' co-sleeping likely caused death of three babies

West Australian, Other, 30/04/2026, Lloyd Jones

The deaths of three babies who slept alongside their parents and siblings in Indigenous communities could have been prevented by safer conditions, a coroner has found. [...] She also recommended NT Health and the Department of Children and Families consult with Aboriginal agencies to develop culturally sensitive educational materials about safer co-sleeping.

[Read More](#)

Six WA Police officers sanctioned over treatment of Aboriginal man who died in Kalgoorlie prison

ABC Online, Other, 30/04/2026, Cason Ho

Six police officers have been sanctioned in Western Australia over their treatment of a man in their custody who later died in prison, after the ABC revealed a constable laughed at news of his death. Linton Ryan died in his cell at a Kalgoorlie prison in April 2025. He was on remand, charged with aggravated assault occasioning bodily harm, after police allege he tried to strangle his partner.

[Read More](#)

AFL club North Melbourne partners with Deadly Choices

National Indigenous Times, Other, 30/04/2026, Jarred Cross

Sport and culture can serve as foundations for positive health outcomes and community connection, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service chief executive Michael Graham says, as AFL club North Melbourne officially partners with an important initiative. The Kangaroos have come together with Deadly Choices, an Aboriginal-led health initiative, who operate closely with VAHS in their work in Victoria.

[Read More](#)

From the Sapphires to leading the Aboriginal health movement: The wonderful legacy of nurse Naomi Mayers

Australian Doctor, Other, 30/04/2026, Jamie Thannoo

The nurse who helped found the first Aboriginal community-controlled health service has been remembered for her straight talking, her political advocacy and her time as one of The Sapphires. Dr Naomi Mayers (PhD) OAM, known as Aunty Nay, went on to help lead the Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) in Redfern, Sydney, for 46 years since its set up in 1971 — first as an administrator then as the CEO.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 30/04/2026, Yvonne Yong

WA police have sanctioned six officers over their treatment of a man in their custody who later died in prison after the ABC revealed how a constable ignored his threat of suicide. The Aboriginal Legal Service of WA says the punishment is too light.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

\$80m hospital buy-out bill

West Australian, General News, 01/05/2026, Jessica Page, Page 1

Taxpayers will fork out \$80 million to buy the Mt Lawley Hospital from St John of God, to add an extra 118 beds to the public system. In total, the cost to commission and start operations will add up to \$224.8m, which includes \$88m for new medical and ICT equipment and \$34m for staff onboarding and training.

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

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

Loophole pledge over ambo attack

Herald Sun, Edition Changes, 01/05/2026, Shannon Deery, Fergus Ellis & Regan Hodge, Page 4

Jacinta Allan has vowed to close a legal loophole that give perpetrators of violence against emergency workers a get out of jail card. It comes in the wake of an horrific attack on a paramedic who was stabbed in the neck and face while on a coffee break in Reservoir on Thursday.

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

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Hospital in the waiting room

Herald Sun, General News, 01/05/2026, Alex White, Page 6

The state government appears to have mothballed plans to build three hospitals it promised ahead of the 2018 election. Newly appointed Health Minister Harriet Shing was on Thursday quizzed about whether three hospitals announced as part of the government's 10-hospital plan would proceed.

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

Plan to tackle MRI wait times

Burnie Advocate, General News, 01/05/2026, Rodney Woods, Page 1

Medical professionals across the region are calling for additional and more powerful MRI machines to be available on the Coast. Patients needing advanced nerve and prostate imaging, as well as increased detail across all other scans, such as shoulders, spines, and knees, are having to travel to Launceston or Hobart for MRI services.

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Man arrested after on-duty paramedic stabbed in the neck in Melbourne

The Australian, Other, 30/04/2026, Samina Rakhshani

An on-duty paramedic has been stabbed in his face and neck while getting coffee, in an attack labelled "appalling and unacceptable". Paramedic Sam was stabbed twice in his face and neck an attack

outside a cafe in Melbourne's north on Thursday after being approached by his assailant.

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

[Read More](#)

Paramedics 'scared to go to work' after colleague attacked

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 30/04/2026, Alexander Darling

Victoria will make jail mandatory in all circumstances for people who assault emergency services workers, in response to an attack that left a paramedic in hospital with stab wounds to his face and neck. The assault in Reservoir on Thursday morning ended only after a good Samaritan stepped in.

[Read More](#)

Melbourne paramedic stabbed in neck in random, unprovoked attack in Reservoir

7News.com.au, Other, 30/04/2026, Demi Huang

An on-duty paramedic has been stabbed in the neck and slashed in the face in a shocking daylight attack in Melbourne's north. The Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance paramedic was assaulted outside a cafe on Broadway at Reservoir just after 11am on Thursday.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 30/04/2026, Jayde Cotic

The Allan Government faces criticism over delays and the apparent scrapping of three promised community hospitals originally announced nearly a decade ago. While Health Minister Harriet Shing confirms funding is on the way for Angliss Hospital, Werribee Mercy's emergency department, and Melton Hospital, Opposition figures accuse the government of recycling old commitments and failing to deliver new facilities.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 7, Seven News, 30/04/2026, Mike Amor and Karina Carvalho

An on-duty MICA paramedic in his 30s suffers stab wounds to the face and neck while getting coffee with colleagues outside a Reservoir café, prompting immediate first aid as he bleeds heavily. Ambulance Victoria CEO Jordan Emery condemns the attack and expresses shock, calling it a deeply disturbing incident for frontline health workers.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 30/04/2026, Brenton Ragless

SA pushes for nationwide organ donation reform after achieving the country's highest registration rate, helped by displaying donor status on driver's licences. Health Minister Blair Boyer urges other states to adopt the policy and plans to raise it at the National Health Ministers' meeting.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 30/04/2026, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

An experienced MICA paramedic suffers stabbing injuries to the face and neck in a violent attack outside a Reservoir cafe, prompting a bystander to step in and assist before police arrest the suspect. Ambulance Victoria calls for tougher penalties for assaults on emergency workers, urging stronger action from political leaders to protect frontline staff.

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Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 30/04/2026, Ashleigh Gillon

The Vic Government unveils new hospital funding ahead of Tuesday's budget while confirming three of 10 promised hospitals from 2018 will not proceed. Health Minister Harriet Shing says changing healthcare demand and how people access services have shifted priorities despite record investment in the system.

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3AW, Drive, 30/04/2026, Jacqui Felgate

Interview with Jordan Emery, CEO of Ambulance Victoria, about rising violence against paramedics following a stabbing attack in Melbourne's north. Emery says the injured paramedic is recovering in the hospital surrounded by colleagues, and describes the incident as devastating for staff who dedicate their lives to caring for others. He calls for stronger legal protections beyond clinical care settings, urging harsher penalties alongside a broader cultural shift to better protect first responders.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Unions push for four-day work week in radical workplace relations overhaul

The Australian, Other, 30/04/2026, Cameron Micallef

Unions are ramping up pressure on the government to instil a four-day work week that won't impact workers' pay. [...] The plan is backed by the retail workers – the SDA, the Australian Services Union, the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, the United Workers Union, the Victorian Trades Hall Council and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

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

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The RACP has lost its compass — members must take the wheel

Australian Doctor, Other, 30/04/2026

The fight over who will lead the Royal Australian College of Physicians (RACP) is testing the patience of members. They have been asked to vote in various expensive EGMs — to block the president-elect, to boot the current president from the board, on constitutional reforms that have failed.

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New code needs governance focus too: AdPha

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 30/04/2026, Megan Haggan

One group of pharmacists have submitted that the PSA's new draft code of conduct needs to be viewed from a wider lens Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has made a submission to the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's consultation draft of the Code of Ethics for Pharmacists (2026).

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RACGP WA makes pitch for more after-hours help

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 30/04/2026, Jolyon Attwooll

Improving access to after-hours general practices is one policy at the heart of a recent RACGP WA submission ahead of the state's May budget. RACGP Vice President and WA Chair Dr Ramya Raman noted politicians carrying out 'a lot of work' related to urgent care and pharmacy scope of practice, saying that after-hours care should be a core part of GP work.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Tribunal dismisses sexual assault charge

Canberra Times, General News, 01/05/2026, Hannah Neale, Page 4

Two tribunal members are at odds about whether a former doctor raped and indecently assaulted a nurse. The Medical Board of Australia took Imran Kader, aged in his early 40s, to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal alleging he raped a woman in 2019, and committed perjury and attempted to pervert the course of justice on two occasions in 2022.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Cops flag mould at several stations

Courier Mail, General News, 01/05/2026, Thomas Chamberlin & Rose Innes, Page 6

Officers at multiple police stations across Queensland have now complained of mould issues in their buildings, with the state's police union pushing for an audit of buildings. The union said it believed spores had been found in ground floor areas on Wednesday, and warned that if tests found they were dangerous the Logan Central Station would need to close.

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

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Silica dust risk for workers

Hobart Mercury, General News, 01/05/2026, Page 17

Tunnel construction workers across Australia say they face significant exposure to silica dust at work, which can cause silicosis and lung cancer. Despite widespread recognition of the dangers, 14.2 per cent of workers who participated in the University of Sydney-led survey reported having a silica-related disease or condition, most commonly chronic bronchitis, silicosis or rheumatoid arthritis.

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

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Deadly police station

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 01/05/2026, Tia Clarkson-Pascoe, Page 15

One of Queensland's busiest police stations could be closed after black mould was reported in the building. Logan Central Police Station, the head office of the Logan district, is being tested for black mould.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#).

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Toxic black mould fears put Queensland's Logan Police Station at risk of shutdown, with officers relocated amid health concerns

7News.com.au, Other, 30/04/2026, Katharina Loesche & Liam Bland

A major police station has been partially shut down amid a toxic mould scare, as concerns grow over long-term health impacts on officers. Officers were forced to work from other stations on Thursday as sections of the Logan District Headquarters in south-east Queensland have been closed off following an urgent health alert, with fears black mould is spreading throughout the building.

[Read More](#)

4BC, Drive, 30/04/2026, Gary Hardgrave

Interview with Shane Prior, General President of the Queensland Police Union, about black mould fears at Logan Police Station. Prior reports that samples collected from multiple areas of the station undergo testing while visible mould appears in parts of the building, and dehumidifiers run to reduce moisture levels. He warns that confirmed toxic mould would trigger urgent escalation and full remediation to protect QPS staff from serious health risks.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Seized vapes give law enforcement agencies multimillion-dollar disposal bills

Age, General News, 01/05/2026, Chris Vedelago, Page 8

Australian law enforcement agencies are facing a massive cost blowout and potentially serious public safety issues dealing with the storage and disposal of illicit vapes containing toxic chemicals and unstable lithium batteries. More than 19 million vapes have been seized by the Australian Border Force and Therapeutic Goods Administration since they were banned more than two years ago.

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

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FIVEAA, Afternoons, 30/04/2026, Stacey Lee

Panel discussion with Lauren Whiting, Founder and CEO of Lift Cancer Services, and Natasha Tunney, Oncology Nurse at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, about medically prescribed exercise in cancer care. Whiting explains exercise medicine as an individually dosed treatment, tailored like a prescription to diagnosis, treatment stage, medical history and physical function, supported by clinical evidence and supervised care.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

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FOOD STANDARDS

Why you should always check for a single clue on your feta cheese packet to prove it's 'authentic'

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 30/04/2026, Cindy Tran

Shoppers are 'mind blown' after discovering a single letter makes a huge difference between cheese

labelled 'feta' and 'fetta'. [...] Go to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) and download the food additives list.

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AICIS

Concerns allayed after fears algae could contaminate town's drinking water

Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser, Other, 30/04/2026

Fears that a toxic blue-green algae bloom is flowing unchecked into the region's drinking water and world-famous trout fishery have been firmly dismissed by authorities, with Snowy Hydro assuring the community the water is safe. Over the past week, urgent alarms were raised by local residents and visiting anglers who observed what appeared to be polluted water entering the delicate Eucumbene River system via the Providence Portal tunnel from Tantangara Dam.

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