



TODAY'S NEWS

Tuesday, 7th April 2026

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister McAllister](#) | [Minister Rae](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#) |
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The **[Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 1) reports that Labor backbenchers Michelle Ananda-Rajah and Mike Freeland have called for the Federal Government to overhaul the NDIS scheme, as it seeks to bring spending growth under 6 per cent in the upcoming May Federal Budget. Health Minister Mark Butler confirmed the Federal Government is considering major changes. *Also reported by: [The Australian](#), [Courier Mail](#)*
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 5) reports plans to mandate the publishing of specialist fee information to the Federal Government's Medical Costs Finder website may increase the cost of specialists, according to the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said in its submission to a Senate inquiry that the voluntary nature of the Medical Costs Finder scheme yielded weak results, with only 1-2 per cent of specialists signing up.
- The **[Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 1) reports that the NSW Government has launched a new immunisation program to provide free intranasal flu immunisations to children between the ages of 2 and 4.
- The **[Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 4) reports that 80,000 NSW residents left the emergency department without being attended to by a doctor between October and December last year, according to NSW Health data.

- The [Daily Telegraph](#) (page 9) reports that health professionals have warned of a particularly hard flu season as Australia heads into winter, with an unusually high number of “Super K” flu cases and a low number of vaccinations.
- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 12) reports that the Australian Injecting Illicit Drug Users League has alleged that social media platforms such as Meta and TikTok have removed health alert posts from Pill Testing Australia, CanTEST and KnowYourStuffNZ. *Also reported by: [Canberra Times](#)*

MINISTER BUTLER

NDIS providers and plans in budget's sights

The Australian, General News, 07/04/2026, Sarah Ison, Page 1

Labor is poised to drastically tighten how Australians are assessed for the \$50bn-a-year NDIS and crack down on its most costly sector the \$14bn disability accommodation system as it hands down a budget that industry leaders are calling “the last chance to get the future costs of the NDIS right”. [...] But despite a push from economists, Liberals and even members of the Labor Party like Michelle Ananda-Raja, government sources hosed down the possibility of the NDIS annual growth target being set any lower than the 5 per cent laid down by Health and NDIS Minister Mark Butler.

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

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Specialist flat fees 'may hurt the poor'

The Australian, General News, 07/04/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 5

The common practice among specialist doctors of charging richer patients more to subsidise those facing financial hardship is under threat if the government publishes a “standard fee” for their procedures, medical colleges are warning. [...] Only 88 doctors had voluntarily displayed their fees by the start of this year, up from six in 2022, according to federal Health Minister Mark Butler.

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NDIS needs bigger cost cuts or redesign to be sustained

The Australian, Editorials, 07/04/2026, Page 10

Victorian Labor senator Michelle Ananda Rajah, an experienced medical doctor and researcher, has belled the cat on an issue that politicians across all parties have sidestepped for too long. Health Minister and NDIS Minister Mark Butler's aim to slow the growth of the NDIS to 5.5 to 6 per cent a year was not nearly enough, she told Greg Brown.

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

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Labor MPs call for NDIS redesign

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 07/04/2026, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 1

Two Labor MPs who are doctors want their government to overhaul the National Disability Insurance Scheme, saying public support will crumble if the \$50 billion program isn't redesigned. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler is mulling major changes that will help Labor deliver savings as the government seeks to improve its bottom line in an uncertain economy.

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

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Target set on NDIS rosters

Courier Mail, General News, 07/04/2026, Joseph Olbrycht-Palmer, Page 11

Coalition frontbenchers have welcomed Labor's plan to rein in spending on the National Disability Insurance Scheme but warned rosters remain its biggest problem. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said

last week that government was eyeing ways to trim the scheme ahead of the Budget, declaring it "off track" and lacking "disciplined design features of a good social program".

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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It was a least a signal, possibly a statement of intent, and even a revelation

BioPharmaDispatch, Other, 07/04/2026

The afr Healthcare Summit 2026 canvassed the full breadth of Australia's healthcare challenges, ranging from disability, artificial intelligence, aged care, mental health, affordability and investment. Mark Butler chose to focus his keynote address exclusively on the PBS.

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Latest health and aged care news, plus consultations not to miss

Croakey, Other, 06/04/2026, Melissa Sweet

An urgent call for reform to the Support at Home aged care program, new data showing that deaths involving influenza remain unseasonably high, and an inquiry into the affordability of medical specialists are among topics covered this week. [...] Ministers and government Health Minister Mark Butler gave a speech on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) at the Australian Financial Review Health Summit, concluding that "the PBS is both a health program but it's also an economic stabiliser, helping Australians afford medicines, stay well and participate in work and all that life in this country has to offer".

[Read More](#)

Pauline Hanson demands big change to the NDIS after funding was used to pay for drugs, holidays and cars

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Nicholas Comino

Pressure is mounting on the Albanese government to overhaul the National Disability Insurance Scheme, as Senator Pauline Hanson pushes for the program to be means-tested. [...] Senator Pauline Hanson has pushed for the NDIS to be means tested Anthony Albanese (pictured) is considering NDIS savings in the upcoming federal budget Health Minister Mark Butler and NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister declined to comment when asked about means testing.

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Pauline Hanson backs means-testing for 'out of control' NDIS as Labor looks to tighten budget belt

Sky News Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Max Aldred

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has said the NDIS "will not last" without means-testing, as the government looks to rein in forecast blowout. [...] Both Health Minister Mark Butler and NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister refused to respond to questions from SkyNews.com.au on whether Labor would consider means-testing.

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Labor urged to root out rorts from NDIS, as providers warned of changes in May budget

Sky News Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Max Aldred

The Coalition has urged the Labor government to run a fine-toothed comb through the NDIS after providers were warned about potential changes in next month's budget. [...] Mark Butler recently told an Australian Financial Review Healthcare Summit he believed voters wanted Labor to rein in spending as a priority.

[Read More](#)

Sky News Live, The Kenny Report, 06/04/2026, Chris Kenny

Interview with Zoe McKenzie, Shadow Assistant Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. [...]

McKenzie says the NDIS faces major cost blowouts and misuse, with rising participation and concerns that it extends beyond its original disability focus, echoing warnings raised by Health Minister Mark Butler.

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Sky News Live, Newsday, 06/04/2026, Kieran Gilbert

Panel discussion with Jerome Laxale, Labor MP for Bennelong, and Tony Pasin, Shadow Minister for Scrutiny of Government Waste and Accountability. Laxale says the NDIS needs ongoing reform and points to Health Minister Mark Butler's experience as reassuring for managing the system. Pasin says NDIS spending grows out of control and warns public support could decline if concerns about excess and misuse continue.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

Pauline Hanson backs means-testing for 'out of control' NDIS as Labor looks to tighten budget belt

Sky News Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Max Aldred

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MINISTER RAE

Basic flaws hitting home

The Australian, Business News, 07/04/2026, Robert Gottliebsen, Page 20

For good reasons, about 100 federal politicians have received complaints about the workings of the home aged-care system. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae first entered the political arena in 2022 and assumed the ministerial role in 2025 after the passage of the disastrous act.

Also reported by: [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#)

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Cross-party MPs push urgent changes to Support at Home amid surge in complaints

Inside Ageing, Other, 06/04/2026, Amy Clarke

Federal politicians from across the political spectrum have intensified pressure on the government to urgently reform the Support at Home program, warning that rising costs and flawed assessments are leaving older Australians worse off. In a joint letter to Aged Care Minister Sam Rae, 21 senators from

the Coalition, Greens and crossbench outlined widespread constituent concerns and called for immediate changes to the system.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Push for health stars

MiNDFOOD (Australia), General News, 01/04/2026, Page 84

Australia and New Zealand Food Ministers are meeting to move forward with mandatory health star ratings on packaged foods. [...] "Putting health star ratings on all products will ensure all shoppers can quickly and easily compare the different options on supermarket shelves," says Rebecca White, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care at Food Standards Australia New Zealand.

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Latest health and aged care news, plus consultations not to miss

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Channel 9, Nine News, 06/04/2026, Mark Burrows

The National Allergy Centre of Excellence's program ADAPT continues its work on allergy research and treatment as federal funding gets renewed beyond the end of the financial year. Assistant Health Minister Rebecca White says the government will provide an additional \$14.6m to support research, national anaphylaxis reporting, and patient support from July.

Also reported by: [Channel 9 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Perth\)](#).

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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DEPARTMENT

Specialist flat fees 'may hurt the poor'

The Australian, General News, 07/04/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 5

The common practice among specialist doctors of charging richer patients more to subsidise those facing financial hardship is under threat if the government publishes a "standard fee" for their procedures, medical colleges are warning. [...] Only 88 doctors had voluntarily displayed their fees by the start of this year, up from six in 2022, according to federal Health Minister Mark Butler.

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State grants available for Men's Sheds

Warrandyte Diary, General News, 01/04/2026, James Poyner, Page 7

What happens in Men's Sheds goes well beyond woodwork and a cuppa. Information on the Federal Government's Department of Health, Disability, and Ageing website states that Men's Sheds improve the general mental, physical, and social wellbeing of men in Australia by providing a safe space where they can make friends, be social, and participate in meaningful activities.

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

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Compliance remains strong as SIRS notifications rise

Hello Leaders Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Alex Jacobs

The first quarterly sector performance report for the 2023-24 financial year has been released by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. There's positive news right off the bat: there is a significant improvement in the number of fully compliant aged care providers.

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Fixing the system, not the doctor: South Australia's approach to workplace wellbeing

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 07/04/2026

A healthy, safe and engaged healthcare workforce is fundamental to a high performing and sustainable health system that delivers high quality patient care. [...] This program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Tax system looks after wealthy as others pay price

Australian Financial Review, General News, 07/04/2026, Mercedes Maguire, Page 1

The erosion of tax bases and ongoing budget deficits are expected to make it harder for governments to offer income tax relief without a fundamental overhaul.

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Dance classes providing connection, creativity and movement for older Australians

ABC Online, Other, 06/04/2026

Every Thursday morning in the main theatre of a north Queensland dance company, a community gathers. Under the guidance of dance teachers, women over the age of 55 come together to move and connect with one another.

[Read More](#)

The dementia challenge villages can't ignore

The Weekly Source, Other, 06/04/2026, Lauren Broomham

A retirement village in South Australia is trialling a new model that could reshape how the sector responds to rising dementia. Woodbridge Retirement Village has partnered with HammondCare to introduce an on-site dementia consultant, as part of an Australia-first initiative aimed at supporting residents to remain independent for longer.

[Read More](#)

2GB, Breakfast, 06/04/2026, James Willis

Interview with Dr Anne Ruston, Shadow Minister for Health and Aged Care, about concerns over aged care reforms. Ruston argues the system adds high costs, including high hourly rates for basic care, and burdens older Australians with complex rules and compliance that make services harder to access. She warns that the changes create confusion and may leave seniors choosing to go without essential care due to affordability and system complexity.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Chase AI for productivity lift

Australian Financial Review, General News, 07/04/2026, Ronald Mizen, Page 1

Westpac chief executive Anthony Miller says artificial intelligence could be the catalyst for a productivity boom, and the government should focus on the economic benefits, even amid growing public anxiety and distrust in the nascent technology.

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KKR taps UBS to review disability housing stake

The Australian, Business News, 07/04/2026, Page 14

Global private equity firm Kohlberg Kravis Roberts has hired investment bank UBS to weigh options for majority holding in disability housing business Synergis that could be worth up to \$1bn, sources say. The global buyout group, understood to have a majority interest in the fund, asked banks to pitch to explore options for its holding, which may lead to a sale.

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

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Coalition backs NDIS reforms

Herald Sun, General News, 07/04/2026, Joseph Olbrycht-Palmer, Page 15

Coalition frontbenchers welcomed Labor's plan to rein in spending on the National Disability Insurance Scheme but warned rorters remain its biggest problem. The Albanese government is reportedly set to trim the ballooning scheme as it scrambles to find savings to cushion economic shocks from the Iran conflict.

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Time for real action on NDIS spending

Courier Mail, Editorials, 07/04/2026, Page 20

In an increasingly rare example of bipartisanship, the Coalition has promised to get behind Labor's latest plans to rein in spending on the troubled National Disability Insurance Scheme. The government

has had the bloated Julia Gillard-era scheme in its sights for almost four years since former Health Minister Bill Shorten first announced that spending would be reined in and fraudsters targeted.

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By avoiding means testing, the government is giving handouts to the rich

The Conversation, Other, 07/04/2026, Robert Breunig

Australia is a global success story. [...] The NDIS was designed as a lifeline for those with severe disabilities. But the scheme's costs have blown out, partly because its uncapped model lacks the strict targeting traditionally seen in Australian social services.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Today, 06/04/2026, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

The NDIS is under intense fiscal scrutiny as the Federal Government seeks budget savings ahead of next month's deadline. Reports suggest providers are bracing for significant structural changes as policymakers attempt to offset the multi-billion dollar revenue loss caused by recent emergency cuts to the fuel excise.

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Sky News Live, The Bolt Report, 06/04/2026, Andrew Bolt

Interview with Bill Shorten, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canberra, about the NDIS scheme's sustainability. Shorten says rapid growth and unregistered providers drive problems and calls for stricter oversight to ensure funding reaches those in need. He also highlights cost shifting from other sectors and points to enforcement actions, while defending the NDIS as life-changing but in need of stronger controls.

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PRIMARY CARE

Ross Gittins spent 44 days in ICU and almost died.

Age, General News, 07/04/2026, Ross Gittins, Page 14

Don't worry, the doctors will make sure you don't die even if they have to half-kill you in the process. Sure, that's an exaggeration. Doctors don't set out to do you any harm, and they're not oblivious to the unwanted side effects of their ministrations.

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AMA labels drug law change 'dangerous, ideological'

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 07/04/2026, Hayden Johnson, Page 10

Changes to Queensland drug laws have been labelled as "dangerous" and driven by ideology over evidence by the state's peak medical body. [...] Australian Medical Association Queensland panned the Crisafulli government's proposal and said the current drug diversion framework was a cost-effective approach to drug use in the community.

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Real stories from the bush about the shocking care gap

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Brad Crouch

Alex Thomas has fire in her belly to improve health care access for rural and regional South Australians after the death of her father, Crystal Brook farmer Chris Thomas, 68. Mr Thomas died at home after returning from Adelaide, where he had been receiving care following two cardiac arrests, following the amputation of a leg.

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

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Referring to psychologists: why “fit” matters

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 07/04/2026

A psychologist colleague recently described a session with a new patient. When she asked why the person had been referred to her, the patient replied: "My GP said you were such a lovely person." I'm sure she is. But it raises a clinical question: is "lovely" really a sufficient basis for referral, given the range and complexity of presentations seen in general practice?

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\$9000 vs \$2300: Is it worth going overseas for dental treatment?

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 06/04/2026, Michael Gebicki

Katherine, a friend, went to the dentist a couple of weeks back. She had two dental implants, an extraction and a bone graft, several X-rays, a CT scan and had her teeth cleaned. She reported the side of her mouth was a bit numb for a couple of hours afterwards but had no pain.

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ABC Radio Brisbane, Breakfast, 06/04/2026, Joel Spreadborough

Interview with Dr Nick Yim, Qld President, Australian Medical Association. Compere mentions that new data shows that almost 350,000 Queenslanders are waiting for the initial consultation for their first meeting with a generalist, which is up by almost 12% on the same period as last year. Yim admits that the trend is quite worrying, as they are seeing these large numbers of patients in qld waiting for specialist outpatient appointments.

Also reported by: [ABC Radio Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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POPULATION HEALTH

Salty shock to health

Herald Sun, General News, 07/04/2026, Page 10

Popular foods like kimchi and kombucha touted for their gut benefits could pose hidden health risks and fuel heart disease, experts warn. Fermented kimchi is rich in probiotics but can also be high in salt, the British Heart Foundation upping the risk of heart attack or stroke by driving up blood pressure.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#).

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Life-saving approach

Northern Territory News, General News, 07/04/2026, Lottie Hood, Page 1

Tucked away in Darwin's Coconut Grove, just off Bagot Rd is a building which has seen a lot of life's big changes. [...] It does not help that the Territory also claims the lowest number of psychiatrists in the country, with only 11 psychiatrists per 100,000 people according to data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in 2024.

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Packet racket

Canberra Times, General News, 07/04/2026, Petlee Peter, Ray Athwal and Bageshri Savyasachi, Page 1

Under the noses of authorities, a sophisticated black market for illegal cigarettes is booming across the ACT, driven by a massive price gap and a lack of enforcement. While a legitimate packet of cigarettes at a licensed tobacconist can cost up to \$62, illegal alternatives are being sold across Canberra for as little as \$10.

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Former foster child warns system that saved him is now failing others as it hits breaking point

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Remy Varga

Jesse Bell-Myers says the foster care system saved his life. Born addicted to drugs, at the age of eight months old he was placed in foster care with the woman who would become his adoptive mother. [...] About 45,000 children are currently living in out of home care while there are 8000 foster carer households with a placement, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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

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Urgent warning as experts discover common infection that hits one in four women is being transmitted during sex

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Zoe Hardy

A common condition affecting up to one in four women should be reclassified as a sexually transmitted infection, experts say, after new evidence suggests sex plays a key role in driving it. Bacterial vaginosis – known as BV – occurs when there is an imbalance in the natural bacteria in the vagina.

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Controversial plans to launch 50,000 mirrors into space would disrupt sleep 'on a planetary scale', scientists warn

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 06/04/2026, Xantha Leatham

Plans to launch 50,000 mirrors into space to offer 'sunlight on demand' would disrupt sleep 'on a planetary scale', scientists have warned. California-based startup, Reflect Orbital, is poised to secure permission to launch a 60-foot (18.3-metre) prototype mirror into orbit to beam sunlight back to the Earth's surface.

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ABC Newcastle, 07:30 News, 06/04/2026

Health officials say regional anti-vaping initiatives are helping curb youth uptake following UNSW research linking e-cigarette use to lung and oral cancers. The North Coast Youth Anti-Vaping Task Force is promoting online advice and training to raise awareness about vaping risks.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Afternoons, 06/04/2026, Joel Rheinberger

Interview with nutritionist Dr Emma Beckett about the health effects of chocolate. Beckett explains that while studies link cocoa compounds to potential benefits like improved heart health, the evidence remains mixed, and most nutrients in chocolate also come from other foods. She adds that chocolate fits into a balanced diet, but overconsumption can lead to excess sugar, fat, and calories.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Fear key to sun safety

Herald Sun, General News, 07/04/2026, Page 7

Young people exposed to a fear-evoking sun protection campaign are now 10 per cent more likely to wear a widebrimmed hat, a study has found. The Cancer Institute 2023-24 campaign was designed to target young adults, who typically underestimate how often they are exposed to ultraviolet (UV) rays.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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The youngest VAD applicant was 18 and the oldest 104: Australia's voluntary euthanasia system in numbers

Australian Doctor, Other, 06/04/2026, Carmel Sparke

Go Gentle Australia's latest report says some 14,700 terminally ill patients have died through VAD since 2019. The embrace of voluntary assisted dying as an option for terminally ill patients has been rapid. With the NT potentially about to adopt its own laws, voluntary assisted dying (VAD) could soon be legal in every state and territory in Australia.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 06/04/2026, Alicia Loxley and Tom Steinfort

Yarra Park fills with purple to honour the nearly 4000 Australians who die from pancreatic cancer each year and to highlight its low 14% survival rate and limited 2% share of cancer research funding. The event underscores pancreatic cancer as Australia's third deadliest cancer and the urgent need for increased research support.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

The right steps to take when someone you love confides that they're actually struggling

Age, General News, 07/04/2026, Shona Hendley, Page 14

"It's ok not to be OK" is a wellknown phrase in mental health campaigning. It's positive as it validates a normal part of human experience and encourages people to share their feelings. However, hearing someone you care about tell you they are, in fact, "not OK" can be difficult you don't want to say the wrong thing, or make the situation worse.

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System has failed us, alleges top end dad

Northern Territory News, General News, 07/04/2026, Zizi Averill, Page 4

A Leanyer father who lost the love of his life after she was stalked and killed by her former boss is prepared to sue the Northern Territory government for letting this violent man slip through the cracks. Darwin business owner and mother Sheena Fairfield was killed on November 10, 2022, after 59-year-old Joerg Kloepper stalked the 39-year-old and her daughter back to their family home and repeatedly stabbed her.

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From serving nation to serving a sentence

Daily Advertiser, General News, 07/04/2026, John Kidman, Page 2

Lifelong patterns of hardship, trauma and missed support have been identified as leading factors explaining why vulnerable war veterans can end up behind bars. The very people relied upon to protect Australia are being failed long after their service ends, according to complementary Flinders University studies.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Evenings, 06/04/2026, Greta Lee Jackson

Interview with Prof Lydia Woodyatt, Teaching Program Director in Psychology at Flinders University, about the rise of youth loneliness. Woodyatt says loneliness in young people stems not from lack of social contact but from deeper factors, as they remain surrounded by peers yet still feel disconnected. She explains mobile phones play a role, but broader societal shifts like reduced community interaction, busier households, and changing social environments also drive the trend.

Interview continues on: [ABC Radio Sydney \(Sydney\)](#).

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IMMUNISATION

Doctor's 'deadly' warning on flu

Daily Telegraph, Edition Changes, 07/04/2026, Tia Clarkson-Pascoe, Page 9

Doctors are pleading with Australians to get the flu jab ahead of an "extremely dangerous and potentially deadly" season. Medicos are on high alert, with vaccination rates continuing to fall and the new "Super K" flu strain causing an unusually high number of cases before winter has even begun.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#).

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What is Flumist, the new flu vaccine for kids that's sprayed in their noses?

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 07/04/2026

Many kids are scared of getting needles, and this can stop them getting vaccinations that protect that against the flu. Less than one in four Australian children were vaccinated against influenza in 2025. This winter, Australian families have another option. A nasal flu vaccine called FluMist will be available for the first time for children aged 2–17 years.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Canberra, Breakfast, 06/04/2026, Alice Matthews

Interview with Dr Rebekah Hoffman, Chair of the RAGCP NSW&ACT, about the rollout of a nasal spray flu vaccine and preparations for a severe influenza season. Hoffman says last year's high hospitalisation rates show the need for stronger vaccination efforts, especially for children who drive flu spread in schools and daycares. She explains the nasal spray offers a needle-free alternative that improves uptake, but cost and access still limit how widely families can use it.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Breakfast, 06/04/2026, Chris Taylor

Interview with Prof Catherine Bennett, Chair in Epidemiology at Deakin University, about the upcoming flu season and vaccination timing. Bennett says last year's severe and prolonged flu season, driven by a mutated Influenza A H3N2 strain, led to higher illness and deaths and even surpassed COVID-19 in impact later in the year. She explains the strain still circulates, warning of an earlier and potentially tough winter season.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Time to upgrade the tetanus shot to include pertussis control

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 07/04/2026

If you work in an emergency department, giving "tetanus shots" is routine. Dirty laceration, dog bite, gardening injury — we clean the wound, assess tetanus risk, check the record (or try to), and administer a booster when it is due. But during Australia's current pertussis (whooping cough) resurgence, many of us are still reaching for a tetanus booster that offers no protection against pertussis.

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Private health premiums are rising, but is the system working?

The New Daily, Other, 06/04/2026, Luke Slawomirski

Private health insurance premiums rose by 4.4 per cent on April 1 – faster than inflation, and at a time when many households are already under pressure. This increase directly mirrors the 4.4 per cent rise in the "medical hospital services" CPI-category reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Scientists identify 'neural fingerprint' of psychedelic drugs in the brain

The Guardian, Other, 07/04/2026, Ian Sample

Scientists have identified a hallmark signature produced by psychedelic drugs in the human brain when users experience their mind-altering effects. The "neural fingerprint" of the psychedelic trip was spotted among hundreds of brain scans of people on LSD, psilocybin, DMT, mescaline and ayahuasca, pointing to a shared impact on the brain's behaviour.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Cops assess review into use of force

Northern Territory News, General News, 07/04/2026, Gera Kazakov and Zizi Averill, Page 12

NT Police says it is currently assessing a independent use of force review into the death of a disabled man, who died in custody after allegedly being restrained inside Alice Springs Coles close to a year ago. On Thursday, a NT Police spokesman confirmed the independent use of force review had been completed and returned on Wednesday afternoon.

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New Defence plan aims to improve outcomes for First Nations people

National Indigenous Times, Other, 06/04/2026, Jackson Clark

The Australian Defence Force has released a new national plan aimed at improving outcomes for First Nations people, with a focus on jobs, support, cultural recognition and economic opportunity. Called the Defence First Nations Commitment, the plan sets out how Defence will support First Nations people to join the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Public Service, succeed while they are there, and continue to live fulfilling lives.

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Use of Force investigation handed down year after Alice Springs death in custody

SBS, Other, 06/04/2026

The investigation, completed by an interstate police force, examined the conduct of two Northern Territory officers who restrained and killed the 24-year-old boy inside the Alice Springs supermarket. **WARNING:** This article contains distressing content and the name of an Aboriginal person who has passed.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

'Another horror story' / of hospital ED wait times

Daily Telegraph, General News, 07/04/2026, Jackson Robb, Page 4

A record number of patients are leaving the state's emergency departments (ED) before receiving treatment, with visitors left waiting long hours into the night to receive care. Pictures obtained by The Daily Telegraph show a full house at Blacktown Hospital's ED at 10.30pm on a Sunday night.

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Bed blockers cause ramping problems at Cairns Hospital

Cairns Post, Other, 06/04/2026, Samuel Davis

Health Minister Tim Nicholls has conceded ramping numbers at Cairns Hospital are "still too high" with more than 100 bed blockers delaying patients from receiving further treatment within the emergency department. In January, 36.2 per cent of patients waited more than 30 minutes to be transferred off stretcher at the Far North hospital, according to data published on Queensland Health's website.

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

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Helping sick kids, a flight at a time

Canberra Times, General News, 07/04/2026, Farid Farid, Page 8

Attempting to break a Guinness world record, Australia's youngest female pilot has taken off for a worthy cause. Seventeen-year-old Rose Donald hopped aboard a Cessna 172 VHDWE from Essendon airport in Melbourne yesterday to raise funds for seriously ill children in the bush.

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

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Cardiologist's journey to become 'that guy'

Launceston Examiner, General News, 07/04/2026, Lauren Richardson, Page 5

Burnt out and lost, Dr Brian Herman moved to Tasmania almost by accident. It was 23 years ago. Dr Herman was a man adrift. He was "unhappy as hell", divorced, and so profoundly spent that he had walked away from medicine entirely.

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Sexual harassment in medicine: healing global medical cultures

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 07/04/2026

Over the last decade, I have worked with a team of editors and authors on an international book on sexual harassment in medicine, which has been published by Cambridge University Press. It has been a long, sometimes surprising and deeply disturbing analysis of a complex problem with world-wide ramifications.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

AusSuper slashes CSL stake in shake-up

Australian Financial Review, General News, 07/04/2026, Joshua Peach and Lucas Baird, Page 1

AustralianSuper has dumped an almost \$500 million stake in CSL as it repositions its portfolio, reducing bluechip Australian stocks such as Wesfarmers and Woolworths and piling into critical minerals companies.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Mum's \$1m Medicare rort to fund lavish lifestyle

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 07/04/2026, Lucy Rutherford, Page 10

A mother who defrauded Medicare of close to \$1m over four years has accepted her prison fate. Lauren Kate Tozer, 43, was "motivated by greed" when she committed the offending to fund her lavish lifestyle, including spending big on concerts and travel.

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

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Social media giants slammed for censoring party-drug alerts

Canberra Times, General News, 07/04/2026, Duncan Murray, Page 9

Warnings about potential harmful substances circulating as party drugs are being censored by social media giants Meta and TikTok, advocates say. Automated moderation by the companies is to blame for failing to differentiate public health posts from those promoting drug use, according to pill-testing groups.

Also reported by: [Daily Liberal \(Dubbo\)](#), [Daily Advertiser \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#).

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Meta hit over drug take-downs

Herald Sun, General News, 07/04/2026, Page 12

Auto-moderations from social media giants are blocking Australians from lifesaving information, with leading pill testing organisations urging the eSafety commissioner to intervene. The Australian Injecting Illicit Drug Users League claims organisations including Pill Testing Australia, CanTEST and Know YourStuffNZ have had posts removed, accounts and pages suspended and in some cases permanently deleted after auto-moderation systems flagged their health alerts as promoting drug use.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#).

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ABC Radio Canberra, AM, 06/04/2026, Isabella Higgins

Public health workers warn lives are at risk as social media platforms like Meta Platforms and TikTok remove harm-reduction posts about dangerous drug batches. Groups such as Pill Testing Australia say automated moderation flags posts mentioning drug names, blocking critical alerts that help prevent overdoses. Experts link the issue to algorithmic moderation and broader social media regulations, warning that it reflects a growing global trend.

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Jab-free flu vaccination takes out the fear factor

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 07/04/2026, Angus Thomson, Page 1

Thousands of children can now receive free flu vaccinations without a needle as NSW health authorities attempt to boost lagging immunisation rates following the state's worst influenza season on record. [...] It was first approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration in 2016 and it has been used widely in the northern hemisphere for two decades.

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Urgent recall for sunscreen over SPF rating concerns

The Courier Mail, Other, 06/04/2026, Georgia Palgan

Three sunscreens have been urgently recalled after concerns they may not provide their advertised SPF50+ protection, potentially increasing sunburn risk. [...] Medik8's Physical Sunscreen SPF50+ 60mL, 60mL Professional, & 15mL are all being recalled by owner AC Newco, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) said.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Climate-resistant, Indigenous plant could be salt-reducing superfood

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 07/04/2026

Food scientists at RMIT have studied native plant 'Old Man Saltbush' (*Atriplex nummularia*), traditionally consumed by Indigenous Australians, and found it to be incredibly nutrient-dense, and high in protein and fibre. [...] The researchers highlight that the value slightly exceeded the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) threshold for "low-sodium" classification (= 120 mg/100 g), which meant the product could not be labelled as such, despite not containing added salt.

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AICIS

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