



TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 9th April 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](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports that a pay deal between the Victorian government and the Health Workers Union has yet to go to a formal vote, with the union now pushing to reject it due to increasing inflation and a more lucrative offer having been offered to the state's teachers.
- **[The Australian Financial Review](#)** (page 1) reports that jobs in disability and health-related services have increased more than 50 per cent over the past five years, an employment boost largely provided by the growth of NDIS-related industries.
- **[The Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 10) reports that an investigation into the Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) used to determine aged-care funding has found it to be "clinically insufficient" and in danger of under-assessing the needs of vulnerable seniors.
- **[The Herald Sun](#)** (page 3) reports that new Melbourne research suggests that an experimental synthetic peptide influenza treatment could offer protection against both severe flu and pneumonia.
- **[The Guardian](#)** (Online) reports that the Federal Government has established an NDIS Sustainability Taskforce to explore cost-cutting measures and control spending growth ahead of the May federal budget.

NDIS growth masks job market weakness

Australian Financial Review, General News, 09/04/2026, Lea Jurkovic, Page 1

Jobs in disability and health-related services have soared by more than 50 per cent over the past five years, driven in large part by the \$52 billion National Disability Insurance Scheme, underscoring the major role the care economy has played in...

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

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Alarm as childhood vaccination rates fall to five-year low

PerthNow Western Suburbs, General News, 09/04/2026, Clareese Packer and Blair Jackson, Page 16

Vaccination rates are continuing to fall among children at all key milestones, with the number of fully vaccinated 12-month-olds slipping by about 4 per cent from 2020 to 2025. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler is concerned rates among young children are continuing to decline, but said the trend is worldwide, pointing to online misinformation and the lingering effects of COVID.

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NDIS cuts backed in budget scramble

Weekly Times, General News, 08/04/2026, Page 6

Frontbenchers have welcomed Labor's plan to rein in spending on the National Disability Insurance Scheme but warned porters 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".

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

CSL responds to US tariff increase

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 08/04/2026, Page 1

CSL has released an ASX statement confirming that it does not expect to be affected by the trade tariffs of 100% to be imposed on pharmaceutical imports to the US, announced at the end of last week. [...] Meanwhile, Health Minister Mark Butler has reiterated that the PBS is not up for negotiation amid speculation the tariffs may increase pressure on the government to change the scheme.

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GLP-1s will come to the PBS: but not fast, and not for all ... yet

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, Other, 08/04/2026, Cate Swannell

In a speech to the AFR Healthcare Summit, Mark Butler signalled a 'slow and managed rollout' to manage equity concerns. Federal health minister Mark Butler has signalled he favours a cautious, but ultimately open pathway to subsidising the blockbuster GLP-1 obesity drugs on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

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NDIS provider registrations in spotlight as Labor eyes options to make budget savings

ABC Online, Other, 08/04/2026, Clare Armstrong, Samantha Dick and Lexie Jeuniewicz

Stricter registration rules would weed out low-quality NDIS providers and result in better services for Australians and budget savings, major operators say. [...] The federal government is currently developing a plan to reduce the scheme's growth rate to 5 or 6 per cent a year, with Health and NDIS Minister Mark Butler promising to bring the disability community "with us" on any changes.

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

[Read More](#)

Cuts to NDIS to be focus of Labor's quietly launched 'razor gang' ahead

of May budget

The Guardian, Other, 09/04/2026, Sarah Basford Canales and Tom McIlroy

Labor has quietly established a razor gang to drive budget savings in the national disability insurance scheme, as it works to further rein in costs ahead of next month's federal budget. [...] Led by the former Treasury official Anthea Long, the taskforce was not publicly announced but began work after the 30 January meeting between Anthony Albanese, state premiers and the health minister, Mark Butler.

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

[Read More](#)

Dr Nick Coatsworth rips into the NDIS and the huge problem many Aussies are too afraid to say out loud: 'Lost faith'

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 08/04/2026, Caitlin Powell

One of Australia's most trusted doctors has warned that people have lost faith in the National Disability Insurance Scheme, as its costs continue to balloon. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler told the Financial Review 's summit last week that some options to cut back on spending are being considered before the federal budget on May 12.

[Read More](#)

Health expert claims Aussies have “lost faith” in NDIS as costs rise

OverSixty, Other, 08/04/2026, Rizna Mutmainah

Senior health expert Dr Nick Coatsworth has warned Australians are losing confidence in the National Disability Insurance Scheme, as its costs continue to rise. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said options to curb spending are being considered ahead of the federal budget on May 12.

[Read More](#)

Govt boosts aged care beds through MPS program

The Weekly Source, Other, 08/04/2026, Caroline Egan

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has provided an update on the Multi-Purpose Services Program (MPSP), revealing more beds and details on incoming 24/7 RN requirements. At a 30-minute webinar on 2 March 2026, Kate Atkins, Director, MPSP Section with the Department, revealed that Health Minister Mark Butler has determined that an additional 100 residential aged care places will be made available through the MPSP this financial year.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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

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New laws targeting scammers of NDIS participants

Freedom2Live, Other, 08/04/2026, Heidi Bain

Under the amendment banner of 'integrity and safeguarding', new NDIS laws that passed Parliament last week mean scammers can face jail time for knowingly deceiving and exploiting NDIS participants. Jenny McAllister, Minister for NDIS said, "If you are a fraudster or a shonk who thinks that the NDIS is a soft target then I urge you to reconsider, otherwise you might spend the next couple of years in a prison cell.

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The Guardian, Other, 09/04/2026, Sarah Basford Canales and Tom McIlroy

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

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MINISTER RAE

Medico peak body raises alarm over aged care assessment tool

Daily Telegraph, General News, 09/04/2026, Julie Cross, Page 10

A damning investigation into a controversial tool used to determine aged-care funding has found it to be "clinically insufficient" and in danger of under-assessing the needs of vulnerable seniors. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said only 0.5 per cent of the total number of people assessed since November 1 had asked for a review.

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

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

No relevant coverage

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

ADHD patient's three-month ordeal and the hidden cost of waiting for a doctor

Tasmanian Examiner, Other, 08/04/2026, Lauren Richardson

Erin hasn't had access to her medication for almost three months, and she said the "ripple effect" meant the delay affected her, her partner, her work, and her community. [...] Federal Assistant Health Minister Rebecca White said the government had strengthened Medicare with an \$8.5 billion investment nationally, near doubling the number of bulk billing practices in the state.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Metro homes may lose \$11m in quarterly funding shortfall

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 08/04/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

According to analysis by AN-ACC expert Dr Tanvi Dalal, the latest department care minutes data shows the daily supplement loss for metro homes that did not meet their requirements is around \$120,000 per day, on aggregate. Ahead of the Easter long weekend, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing released the care minutes performance data for the October to December 2025 quarter, finding nearly one in three homes nationally did not meet their care minute responsibilities.

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Hearing professionals to comply with the contract agreements

Freedom2Live, Other, 08/04/2026, Heidi Bain

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is informing hearing professionals who work under the Hearing Services Program to ensure they adhere to their contract conditions. Particular attention is given to hearing aids for clients with asymmetrical hearing loss.

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Cuts to NDIS to be focus of Labor's quietly launched 'razor gang' ahead of May budget

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

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DoHDA encouraged to pursue more 'coherent' cardiac imaging rules

The Medical Republic, Other, 08/04/2026, Holly Payne

Shall we give GPs education about when to claim an item? [...] It appears the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is looking at adjusting MPS items to fix unintended access barriers arising from broad application of the stress echo caveat, separation of metropolitan and rural/remote structures and rigid frequency restrictions.

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Liability gap looms in medical costs transparency bill

The Medical Republic, Other, 08/04/2026, Cate Swannell

Concerns are raised in a senate inquiry over errors and reputational harm should mistakes be published on the Medical Costs Finder website. [...] Transparency versus accountability Department of Health, Disability and Ageing officials confirmed the legislation did not expand data collection powers, but instead enabled the publication of existing datasets, including MBS billing data and insurer contributions.

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What are human assessors good for if an algorithm makes Support at Home decisions?

The Medical Republic, Other, 08/04/2026, Helen Tobler

The people are there to run the Integrated Assessment Tool algorithm, a Senate inquiry has heard. [...] That was independent Senator David Pocock's question to representatives of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing during last week's inquiry into the assessment tool.

[Read More](#)

Can Telstra Health's rebuild catch AI's take-off?

The Medical Republic, Other, 08/04/2026, Jeremy Knibbs

For anyone wondering what ever happened to Telstra Health, it's still there, and if it gets anywhere near

pulling off a very ambitious transformation, it's going to be dangerous. [...] Even better, the contract is effectively a monopoly after the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing made the unusual decision to kill off its only competitor a year ago.

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Govt boosts aged care beds through MPS program

The Weekly Source, Other, 08/04/2026, Caroline Egan

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Audiology Australia launches membership renewals with option to obtain HPI-I number

WEB Hearing Practitioner Australia, Other, 08/04/2026, Helen Carter

Audiology Australia (AudA) launched its membership renewal period on 1 April and is inviting members to renew their membership by 30 June 2026. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said, on its website, that Healthcare Identifiers were unique 16-digit numbers assigned to patients, healthcare providers, and healthcare provider organisations.

[Read More](#)

UOW healthcare traineeship program offers 45 spots

WEB Inside State Government, Other, 08/04/2026, Kelly Nealon

The University of Wollongong (UOW) has announced it is widening its aged care training opportunities for Bega Valley, Eurobodalla and Snowy Monaro widens to include disability and Indigenous healthcare. UOW and UOW College secured Australian Government funding through a Department of Health, Disability and Ageing initiative to deliver a regional healthcare traineeship pilot across south-eastern NSW.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Sydney, Nightlife, 08/04/2026, Philip Clark and Suzanne Hill

Interview with Professor Tony Lawler, head of the TGA. [...] So there are a number of things here. The tga regulates the advertising, manufacture, import, export and supply of therapeutic goods. And when we say therapeutic goods, that actually covers a really broad range of things, including sunscreen. Australia is a little unusual when compared to other countries that we regulate sunscreens as therapeutic goods. And there's a few reasons for that.

Continues on: [ABC Radio Sydney](#)

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Jobs up, jobs down: Drivers of changing demand

The Australian, General News, 09/04/2026, Bernard Salt, Page 21

Every three months for 40 years, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has published estimates of the number of workers employed in various occupations that comprise the Australian workforce. Worker numbers drive demand for shops, offices, warehouses, dwellings and, indirectly, public buildings and infrastructure (via taxation).

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

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Strong consumer protections are critically important

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 08/04/2026, Patricia Sparrow

Older people report that current measures are failing to solve the problems they face and these shortcomings must be addressed urgently, writes Patricia Sparrow. The release of COTA Australia's 2025 State of the Older Nation report delivered the kind of clarity that should make policymakers uncomfortable.

[Read More](#)

Colbeck: Home Care Package wait list “worse than in 2019”

The Weekly Source, Other, 08/04/2026, Ian Horswill

"The absolute tragedy and disgrace that we see today is that the numbers now are worse than they were in 2019," he said. There are currently more than 130,000 people on the national waiting list and another 100,000 people waiting to be assessed.

[Read More](#)

The payroll mistake costing aged care millions

The Weekly Source, Other, 08/04/2026, Caroline Egan

When Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) self-audited in 2023, they discovered underpayments to staff worth millions of dollars. The Not For Profit reported the non-compliance to the Fair Work Ombudsman within months.

[Read More](#)

Ruston raises concerns over aged care reforms

The Weekly Source, Other, 08/04/2026, Caroline Egan

The Shadow Minister for Aged Care has aired serious concerns about the Government's aged care reforms – legislation she previously supported – as pressure on the rollout builds. On 2GB radio on Monday, 6 April, Anne Ruston described a litany of problems with the aged care reforms as News Corp continued covering issues that The Weekly SOURCE has been reporting on for months.

[Read More](#)

Record flu season fuels fears of SuperK spread in aged care

The Weekly Source, Other, 08/04/2026, Caroline Egan

Dr Nicholas Woods, Chief Medical Officer at Bupa, one of Australia's largest residential aged care providers, says the Super K flu strain is driving unusually high flu activity. Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows flu deaths have been unseasonably high in recent months, well before the peak winter season.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

ABC News, News Breakfast, 08/04/2026, Catherine Murphy and James Glenday

With the Federal Budget only weeks away, the NDIS is under intense scrutiny. Over the past decade, the scheme's costs have escalated significantly, with an annual growth rate of approximately 10%. The government is now under pressure to implement reforms to rein in spending and ensure the scheme's long-term sustainability.

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Channel 9, A Current Affair, 08/04/2026, Allison Langdon

Jolly Duong, a young triathlete from NSW who was paralysed in a cycling accident in March 2024, is suing the NDIS because his home was deemed unsuitable for independent living and funding for a lift

was denied. Despite these obstacles, he continues to train for Paralympic sports, runs Second Chance Support Services, which helps people with disabilities participate in sports, and has started a fundraiser to make his home more accessible.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Drive, 08/04/2026, Shane McInnes

Interview with Dr Nick Coatsworth, Nine Network's medical expert and former Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Australia. Coatsworth discusses NDIS reform, pointing out how unregistered providers, weak enforcement, and insufficient regulation are diverting \$52b in funding. He also calls for stronger penalties and clearer guidelines to protect vulnerable Australians from a lack of transparency and complexity in entitlements and provider charges, which affects NDIS participants and aged care recipients.

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PRIMARY CARE

Warming kits to save babies' lives

West Australian, General News, 09/04/2026, Brooke Rolfe, Page 8

When Katie Wheatley found herself unexpectedly giving birth on the side of the road in November, there were unknowns and anxieties that even as a paramedic, she wasn't prepared for. Her contractions began at home in Chittering about 10.30pm and shortly afterwards she and her husband began the journey to hospital, preparing for what they expected would be a long labour similar to what she experienced with their now two-year-old, Abigail.

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Let nurse practitioners run urgent care clinics, says Australian College of Nursing

Australian Doctor, Other, 08/04/2026, Rachel Carter

Chief nursing officer Frances Rice says nurse practitioners are already doing the job in other settings. Nurse practitioners should be allowed to run Medicare urgent care clinics, with similar models showing it would be safe and effective in practice, says the Australian College of Nursing.

[Read More](#)

Patients want vending-machine medicine: Why I'm leaving private general practice for an urgent care clinic

Australian Doctor, Other, 08/04/2026, Rachel Glasson

When the Federal Government decided to plough \$1 billion into urgent care clinics, Dr Rachel Glasson was among those accusing the government of cannibalising the medical workforce and fracturing continuity of care. Now, the Sydney GP is leaving private general practice.

[Read More](#)

Nurse prescribing offers a roadmap for reform

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 08/04/2026, Phoebe Armstrong

New avenues for nurse prescribing have the potential to reshape frontline care. For pharmacists, it's a live example of how scope expansion translates into real impact.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Too costly to quit cigs

Herald Sun, General News, 09/04/2026, Page 14

Australia's approach to cutting out tobacco is failing those who need it most, with the cost now exceeding the cost of continuing to smoke for low-income people. New research published in Public Health Research and Practice warns Australia falls well behind WHO recommendations in providing free or affordable stop-smoking treatments, despite tobacco remaining the leading preventable cause of death.

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

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Butt it's just too expensive

West Australian, General News, 09/04/2026, Kirsty Lichtenstein, Page 8

Getting the help needed to give up cigarettes is more expensive than continuing to smoke, new WA-led research has revealed. According to the Public Health Research and Practice, Australia is falling short of World Health Organization standards in providing affordable treatments to help people stamp out nicotine addiction.

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

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'Warning flare' for high rates of Indigenous children in jail

Canberra Times, General News, 09/04/2026, Page 12

First Nations children are being locked up at alarming rates, as legal experts say Australians are being sold a "false choice" on community safety. [...] First Nations children are now 27 times more likely to be detained than their non-Indigenous counterparts, compared to 15 times as likely in 2020, according to data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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Inaction fuels ACT's illicit tobacco crisis

Canberra Times, Editorials, 09/04/2026, Page 20

It would be an understatement to describe as pathetic the ACT government's response to this newspaper's revelations that dozens of shops across the ACT are flogging illegally imported cigarettes to customers - many of whom are under the legal smoking age - with no fear of detection, let alone prosecution.

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The sweet and sour of rising rates of diabetes

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 09/04/2026, Dr Sarah Kleinman, Page 19

Sometimes it must seem like doctors are obsessed with sugar we test it all the time through finger pricks blood sugar level tests, blood tests and even urine tests But there is a good reason for this.

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How this Perth council plans to snuff out the tobacco wars on its doorstep

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 08/04/2026, Indigo Lemay-Conway

The City of Fremantle is using local laws to crack down on the scourge of illegal tobacco and vape sales at convenience stores that line the CBD. After multiple complaints from residents about the growing number of convenience stores selling illicit products popping up across town, a change in planning laws could see neighbours allowed to voice their concerns ahead of time.

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'Warning flare' for high Indigenous kids' jail rates

West Australian, Other, 08/04/2026

First Nations children are being locked up at alarming rates, as legal experts say Australians are being sold a "false choice" on community safety. [...] First Nations children are now 27 times more likely to be

detained than their non-Indigenous counterparts, compared to 15 times as likely in 2020, according to data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

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'Overlooked' aspect of gender-based violence in focus

West Australian, Other, 08/04/2026

Women, children and young people who die by suicide after experiencing domestic and family violence are often overlooked as victims of gender-based violence. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found the suicide rate for Aboriginal women was 2.6 times higher than that of other women nationally in 2023.

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Alcohol messaging missing the mark for older Australians, study finds

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 08/04/2026

Australian researchers are calling for more tailored approaches to alcohol harm reduction after finding that current public health messaging doesn't resonate with older adults. The study involved interviews with 45 Australians aged 54–74 to explore which types of communication may better support reduced alcohol consumption.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 08/04/2026, Sandra Sully

Sam Brennan, a 21-year-old recovering addict, is raising awareness of the health risks of nitrous oxide canisters, which are increasingly sold in sweet flavours, bright packaging, and large tanks and may be contaminated with machine oil. He is running from Sydney to Canberra to demand legal reform and persuade the NSW Government to tighten consumer and therapeutic goods laws.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Mornings, 08/04/2026

Interview with Dr Nicole Lee, Adjunct Professor at the National Drug Research Institute. Lee notes that nitrous oxide canisters are rarely used, but misuse can cause short-term intoxication, accidents, and oxygen deprivation, posing a public health risk. She advises against banning the substance because it may increase black market activity and recommends education and harm reduction for youth misuse.

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Evenings, 08/04/2026, Spence Denny

Interview with Kelly Lambert, Professor and Disciplined Leader for Nutrition Science and Dietetics at the UOW. Lambert advises Australians who cannot lose weight to use weight loss drugs, which act on multiple organs and increase taste sensitivity, slow digestion, and improve health. She emphasises addressing obesity's root causes with a multidisciplinary team, noting side effects like gastrointestinal issues and micronutrient deficiencies, and promoting nutrient-dense, portion-controlled meals to maintain health and optimise weight management.

[Play Now](#)

FIVEAA, Afternoons, 08/04/2026, Stacy Lee

Interview with Ella Stratton, founder and director of the HAS Foundation. Stratton discusses the HAS Foundation's Mother's Day luncheon and how the organisation raises funds and awareness for paediatric palliative care at the Women's and Children's Hospital and supports families with memory-making and bereavement. She adds that SkyCity Adelaide supports all mothers, including bereaved mothers, promoting hope, well-being, and family time.

Interview continues on: [FIVEAA \(Adelaide\)](#).

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Deserts increase asthma risk in kids

Hobart Mercury, General News, 09/04/2026, Page 6

Location, gender and age play crucial roles in children's asthma cases, research has found. A Queensland University of Technology study analysing 20 years of hospital admissions for patients aged zero to 19 found hot desert and arid regions showed asthma risk up to nine times the state average, likely due to dry conditions and airborne dust.

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The sweet and sour of rising rates of diabetes

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 09/04/2026, Dr Sarah Kleinman, Page 19

Sometimes it must seem like doctors are obsessed with sugar we test it all the time through finger pricks blood sugar level tests, blood tests and even urine tests But there is a good reason for this.

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6PR, Afternoons, 08/04/2026, Christina Morrissey

Interview with Dr Linda Swan, CEO of Go Gentle Australia. Swan discusses the limited access to voluntary assisted dying in regional Western Australia due to an outdated Commonwealth law that prohibits the use of telehealth, forcing terminally ill patients to make multiple in-person trips despite long distances and limited practitioner availability. She also mentions reports of aged care providers restricting access and requiring patient relocation and the lack of prevalence data, noting that all jurisdictions have safeguards. She adds that Go Gentle Australia founding director Andrew Denton and Curtin MP Kate Chaney are lobbying for reforms that would allow telehealth while maintaining regulated eligibility for dying and suffering patients.

Interview continues on: [6PR \(Perth\)](#), [6PR \(Perth\)](#).

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Think you have ADHD? Look at the people around you

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 09/04/2026, Bianca Denny, Page 28

As a psychologist, I hear a lot about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Not only from patients, but increasingly from my female friends and acquaintances.

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

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Battle to save young lives

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 09/04/2026, Ann Wason Moore, Page 13

A leading eating disorder and mental health advocate is campaigning to overhaul a Queensland law that cuts parents out of their children's health care, saying changes could save lives. EndED founder and Queensland Australian of the Year 2026 nominee Mark Forbes is compiling documentation to present to the Queensland government for a review of the law around Gillick competence as it applies to mental health concerns.

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6PR, Drive, 08/04/2026, Jamie Burnett

Interview with psychiatrist Dr Tanveer Ahmed. Ahmed notes that smartphone use has the worst effects on teen mental health in English-speaking countries, but other regions may benefit. He stresses that

smartphones replace unstructured outdoor play and that quick, superficial social connections can exacerbate family and community vulnerabilities.

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IMMUNISATION

'Vaccine-fatigued' Aussies vulnerable to big flu season

West Australian, Other, 09/04/2026, Will Nicholas

Slumping vaccination rates have left Australia unprepared for another significant flu season that's being worsened by a new fast-spreading strain. Doctors issued the warning after 2025's record season, during which more than half a million Australians were infected and 1738 killed, outstripping COVID-19 deaths for the first time since the pandemic.

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

[Read More](#)

When is the best time to get your flu shot? Two infectious diseases experts explain

ABC Online, Other, 08/04/2026, Meru Sheel and Allen Cheng

We usually have to wait until winter approaches before we see an increase in cases of influenza, or the flu. But we have already seen a lot of flu this year, with 25,000 cases reported from January to March — and that's only a fraction of actual case numbers.

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'World-leading' expanded eligibility for infant RSV vaccinations

Medical Forum, Other, 08/04/2026

Western Australia's respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) immunisation program for infants has been expanded – meaning the state is once again leading the way on RSV. Increased eligibility for the state-funded program now allows all babies born between 1 October 2025 and 31 March 2026 to receive the infant immunisation, nirsevimab (also known as Beyfortus), at no cost ahead of winter – regardless of whether their mother received the RSV vaccine while pregnant.

[Read More](#)

Needle-free vaccines kick off

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 08/04/2026

Needle-free influenza vaccination for children is now available ahead of the coming flu season, with the nasal spray providing a simpler, less stressful experience for kids and parents alike. The FluMist nasal spray is available free of charge for children aged two to four years in NSW and South Australia, two to five years in Queensland, and two to 11 years in Western Australia.

[Read More](#)

Infectious disease experts explain the best time to get the flu vaccine

Sky News Australia, Other, 08/04/2026, Stamatina Notaras

Infectious disease experts say the best time to get your flu vaccine is two weeks before cases begin to rise - but when exactly does flu season start? Australians are being advised to get their flu vaccine around April or May, or two to four weeks before travelling overseas.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 08/04/2026, Catherine Murphy and James Glenday

Interview with Dr Aadhil Aziz, RACGP Victoria Deputy Chair, about the recently introduced nasal spray flu vaccine that is now available for children in Australia. Aziz points out that in some other states,

they've already started implementing the use of these types of vaccines, as well as in some other countries, like in Europe and the UK.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Breakfast, 08/04/2026, Tracey Strong

Victoria's Chief Health Officer, Dr Caroline McElnay, states that the Health Department is advocating for the Federal Government to expand access to the Meningococcal B vaccine. This follows calls from the RACGP to make the vaccine free in Victoria, citing a recent UK outbreak and the tragic death of a Victorian teenager last year.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

If your stomach feels more sensitive than usual, this could be the reason

SBS, Other, 09/04/2026, Zoe Brock

Social eating and exposure to sunlight might be linked to flare-ups of bowel symptoms. Flare-ups of bowel symptoms such as constipation and diarrhoea are more likely to occur during summer and autumn, a new scientific review has found.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Afternoons, 08/04/2026, Joel Rheinberger

Interview with Dr Nick Shackel, gastroenterologist and director of research at the Launceston General Hospital. Shackel discusses clinical trials as a way to give patients early access to treatments, citing a breast cancer trial that increased survival by more than 30 per cent. He also emphasises gut health, advising weight loss, reduced alcohol consumption, and a diet low in processed foods and red meat, with more white meat and vegetarian options.

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

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Leg amputee forced to wait two months for rehabilitation services in Tamworth

ABC Online, Other, 08/04/2026, Peter Sanders

After taking his first steps in about two months, Phillip Norris said receiving a prosthetic leg was one of the greatest feelings. "I stood up and went, 'This is just so good,'" he said.

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Allan's hospital workers pay deal on shaky ground

Age, General News, 09/04/2026, Kieran Rooney and Daniella White, Page 1

On February 18, as Premier Jacinta Allan spruiked the opening of the new Footscray Hospital, it appeared her government's protracted battle with some of the state's lowest-paid hospital workers was finally over. That morning, the government confirmed it had offered the Health Workers Union a pay deal that the union's leadership was prepared to endorse, bringing to an end industrial action which was delaying surgeries across the state.

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Labour of love project

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 09/04/2026, Daneka Hill, Page 7

Dire predictions of a crippling midwife shortage in regional Queensland within six years has pushed the state government to create a new midwife "mentor" role, allowing hospitals to immediately boost their intake of graduate midwives. It's hoped the scheme will attract more young midwives to the regions, and retain senior staff on the cusp of retirement by offering them a role that doesn't involve 2am emergencies.

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

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Nursing union says Royal Darwin Hospital staff face violent threats, fear for safety

ABC Online, Other, 08/04/2026, Jane Bardon

The head of the NT health department has rejected calls for a security review at Royal Darwin Hospital's busy emergency department (ED) following allegations it is running dangerously over capacity and that staff working there receive "daily" threats of violence. Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) secretary Heidi Crisp said nurses in the department "feel unsafe every day".

[Read More](#)

Darwin midwife's \$1.1 million government contract under review

ABC Online, Other, 08/04/2026, Roxanne Fitzgerald

The Northern Territory government is reviewing a \$1.1 million contract it awarded to a midwife barred from working without supervision, as doctors continue to raise concerns. Claire Marks received the government funding last September to provide a private midwifery service, Midwives in Darwin, for a 12-month period.

[Read More](#)

Pharmacist prescribers deserve more: Barometer

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 08/04/2026

Close to three-quarters of pharmacists say they would back an hourly rate of \$70.80 for prescribers, UTS Pharmacy Barometer reveals. As pharmacists' scope of practice expands to include prescribing

for certain conditions, the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Pharmacy Barometer, finds significant support for increased rates of pay for those who undertake the required training.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Darwin , Morning Show, 08/04/2026, Lara Stimpson

Interview with Dr Peter Allely, President of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine. Allely notes that nine out of ten ED directors in Australia reported incidents within a week and that hospital-employed security staff trained in verbal de-escalation and physical intervention are needed. He also identifies systemic drivers, such as inadequate funding for mental health and drug and alcohol services, long patient wait times, and insufficient inpatient capacity.

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

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ABC Radio Darwin , Morning Show, 08/04/2026, Lara Stimpson

Stimpson reports on staff safety concerns in Northern Territory emergency departments, with NT WorkSafe confirming that it received a new safety complaint yesterday from the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and has launched an investigation. She says that NT WorkSafe advised workers to report incidents to their employers and escalate unresolved concerns to them directly, as well as contact the Federation and Northern Territory government to confirm previous inaction.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Trade terms tipped to slow PBS approvals

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 08/04/2026, Kate Cowling

The industry has responded to US President Trump's 100% tariff on pharmaceuticals and other trade policy threats, outlining the likely impacts – and exemptions. The US president's decision to slap a 100% tariff on pharmaceutical imports is expected to hurt newer, innovative medicines-makers, but is unlikely to majorly hurt our biggest pharma exporter.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

Red tape creates barriers for rural patients

Border Mail, General News, 09/04/2026, Stephanie Gardiner, Page 2

Rural Australians are delaying mental health care or going to emergency departments in crisis after changes to Medicare inadvertently created barriers to treatment. The changes, which came into effect last November, require patients to see a GP at least once a year to access mental health care via telehealth.

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Sydney healthcare workers push for refugee Medicare access amid growing health concerns

ABC Online, Other, 08/04/2026

A growing number of people seeking asylum in Australia are missing out on lifesaving preventative health care due to being ineligible for Medicare, a group of Sydney doctors and nurses say. Many refugees can access free health care while waiting for permanent residency — a process which can take years — but some are deemed ineligible due to the nature of their visa.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Landmark judgement

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 09/04/2026, Brodie Everist, Page 1

When Larissa Gawthrop left for hospital in November 2020, her husband recorded their departure on his phone, excited for the birth of their first child. They had packed their bags, and took their carefully written birth plan.

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Remorseful nurse fined \$10,000 after faking registration over 18 months

Australian Doctor, Other, 08/04/2026, Ciara Seccombe

A former nurse who forged two registration certificates so she could work at a medical centre while unregistered has been fined \$10,000. Janette Slater had allowed her registration to lapse in September 2022 despite receiving reminders from AHPRA to renew it.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Double defence against the flu

Herald Sun, General News, 09/04/2026, Sarah Booth, Page 3

An experimental influenza treatment could offer protection against both severe flu and pneumonia one of influenza's deadliest complications new Melbourne research suggests. The peptide's two-pronged defence is designed to both slow the infection at its source and fortify our lungs against the damage viruses like the flu can inflict on the vital organ.

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Outbreak of diphtheria

Northern Territory News, General News, 09/04/2026, Page 8

The diphtheria outbreak in the NT has worsened with another 10 cases since March linked to the recent outbreak, says NT Health. Three of these have been the more severe form of the infectious disease.

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

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NSW measles outbreak spreads to another major city, passengers on international flight warned to monitor for symptoms

9News, Other, 08/04/2026, Patrick Brischetto

The NSW measles outbreak has spread to another major city in the state, with a new case discovered in Newcastle. NSW Health confirmed a person had contracted the disease while travelling overseas in India, and are urging hundreds of passengers on an international flight from Singapore to monitor for symptoms of the highly infectious disease.

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ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 08/04/2026, Adam Steer

Since the outbreak began last year, NT Health has reported 40 skin-based diphtheria cases across all five regions to the Australian Centre for Disease Control. The outbreak persists in the Northern Territory, necessitating continued monitoring and response by NT Health.

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2CC, Breakfast, 08/04/2026, Stephen Cenatiempo

Compere mentions that the Canberra Liberals have jumped up and down and accused the government of admitting to a critical failure in infection control protocols, which confirmed that a measles case wasn't not isolated on arrival at Canberra Hospital.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Menopausal women with a low sex drive won't have cheaper access to drug

The Australian, Other, 08/04/2026, Magdalena Simonis

Australia's medicines subsidy gatekeeper has rejected cheaper access to a testosterone product for women. [...] What makes the PBAC ruling even more difficult to accept is that it appears to ignore that Australia's drug safety watchdog, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, registered the drug for use in 2020 based on extensive evidence that it is safe and efficacious with a low side-effect profile for its prescribed use in the treatment of distressing low libido in postmenopausal women.

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High-priced Medik8 sunscreens recalled in Australia over concerns SPF is lower than labelled

7News.com.au, Other, 08/04/2026, Demi Huang

Several high-priced sunscreens have been pulled from shelves in Australia over concerns they may not provide the level of protection advertised. Medik8's Physical Sunscreen SPF50+ 60mL, Professional 60mL and Try Me 15mL have been recalled by its owner, AC Newco Pty Ltd, according to a statement from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

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Renewed supplement probe after anaphylaxis reports

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 08/04/2026, Kate Cowling

The medicines watchdog is looking at whether a cold and flu supplement should keep its 'low-risk ingredient' designation after anaphylaxis reports in recent years. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is asking for opinions on the safety profile of a popular cold and flu herbal medicine sold in pharmacies, which has been linked to a spate

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Genetics may help explain why results from weight-loss jabs vary, say scientists

The Guardian, Other, 09/04/2026, Andrew Gregory

Scientists have discovered how genetics may help explain why weight-loss jabs work better for some people than others. Variations in two genes involved in gut hormone pathways, which regulate appetite and digestion, may help account for different weight-loss results or side-effects when taking glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP1) medicines.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Mandatory health star ratings a blow for olive industry

Shepparton News Online, Other, 08/04/2026, Laura Thomas

Health Star Rating information will soon be compulsory on all packaged food in Australia. In a move designed to increase implementation and boost consumer trust, the Federal Government has voted to make the system mandatory.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 08/04/2026, Lucy Breden

Interview with Associate Professor Julian Cox, food microbiologist at the UNSW and scientific director of the Food Safety Information Council. Cox discusses safe freezing, noting that while freezing can keep food for up to a year, bacteria such as Salmonella can survive the process. He emphasises best practices such as cooling food before freezing, using airtight packaging, avoiding repeated freeze-thaw cycles, and slowly thawing food in the fridge or on a microwave defrost cycle to ensure safety and quality.

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

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