



TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 16th April 2026

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports that state governments have rejected the prospect of cuts to NDIS mental health plans and cost shifting.
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 5) reports that AMA president Danielle McMullen has warned Australia's healthcare system is "under strain" and urgent care clinics alone are not enough to solve its problems.
- **[The Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 3) reports that the Commonwealth Ombudsman has launched an investigation into the government's aged care Integrated Assessment Tool following complaints system is systematically under-assessing needs and putting lives at risk.
- **[The Daily Telegraph](#)** (page 5) reports that specially trained pharmacists in NSW will soon be able to prescribe the contraceptive pill, with the service to be free for the first 5,000 patients who use the scheme.
- **[The Adelaide Advertiser](#)** (page 3) reports that there are fears for patient safety as the Angaston District Hospital's emergency department is operating without on-site doctors three days a week.

'Let's get bang for NDIS buck'

The Australian, General News, 16/04/2026, Sarah Ison and Lachlan Leeming, Page 1

State governments have hit back at the prospect of cuts to mental health plans on the \$50bn-a-year NDIS, as one of the key figures responsible for getting psychosocial disability onto the scheme says a "reorientation" is urgently needed for the sake of participants and taxpayers expecting "bang for their buck". [...] It follows NDIS and Health Minister Mark Butler holding a closed-door meeting with providers and advocates this week, also attended by his assistant minister Jenny McAllister, and preparing the ground for "tough" decisions that would need to be made next month.

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

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NDIS return to basics a test for 'reformist' Treasurer

The Australian, Editorials, 16/04/2026, Page 10

Administrative tweaks won't save the scheme, only wholesale redesign If Jim Chalmers is serious about achieving his dream of becoming a reformist treasurer like his hero Paul Keating, he can ill-afford to sidestep the urgent task of reining in government spending. [...] His comments are all the more important following reports Health Minister Mark Butler is considering cutbacks to the scheme's \$6bn mental health spend as a means of constraining the number of people entering the program.

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

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'Breaking point': Sick kids charity reveals dire impact of fuel crisis in Australia

NEWS.com.au, Other, 15/04/2026, Alexandra Feiam

The boss of a charity that flies critically ill children across regional parts of the country to hospitals has revealed they are at "breaking point" amid the ongoing fuel crisis. [...] However, she is yet to hear anything from Health Minister Mark Butler about additional funding from the Albanese government.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Sky News Australia \(Online\)](#), [Perth Now \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

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PBS move spares cancer patients hip pocket pain

The SE Voice, Other, 15/04/2026

Decorated Mount Gambier Prison officer Allan Bridges has been spared a \$60,000 bill for life-saving medicines to combat his renal cancer. [...] There was renewed focus on Mr Bridges recently when he addressed a press conference in Adelaide alongside Federal Health Minister Mark Butler and his state counterpart Blair Boyer.

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Aged care operating under intense cost pressures: IHACPA report

The Weekly Source, Other, 15/04/2026, Caroline Egan

The independent aged care pricing authority has released its report on public consultations held last year. [...] IHACPA and Health Minister Mark Butler have both confirmed that the cost of care services does not factor in a margin.

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Fact check: Do aged care homes really have 24/7 RNs 99% of the time?

The Weekly Source, Other, 15/04/2026, Caroline Egan

Mark Butler, the Minister for Health, Disability and Ageing, made the claim last week on Adelaide radio. "Across every nursing home across Australia, there is a registered nurse on duty 24/7, 99% of the time," the Minister said in response to a listener question on staffing levels in aged care.

ABC News, Afternoon Briefing, 15/04/2026, Patricia Karvelas

Interview with Shadow Social Services and NDIS Minister Melissa McIntosh. McIntosh says immigration levels are placing pressure on hospitals, infrastructure, and services, citing a Western Sydney survey in which 80 per cent of respondents said immigration is too high. She also raises concerns about the NDIS, including uncertainty around possible means testing discussed by Health Minister Mark Butler and the Prime Minister, and claims the system is being affected by fraud, funding disputes, and legal costs.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

'Let's get bang for NDIS buck'

The Australian, General News, 16/04/2026, Sarah Ison and Lachlan Leeming, Page 1

State governments have hit back at the prospect of cuts to mental health plans on the \$50bn-a-year NDIS, as one of the key figures responsible for getting psychosocial disability onto the scheme says a "reorientation" is urgently needed for the sake of participants and taxpayers expecting "bang for their buck". [...] It follows NDIS and Health Minister Mark Butler holding a closed-door meeting with providers and advocates this week, also attended by his assistant minister Jenny McAllister, and preparing the ground for "tough" decisions that would need to be made next month.

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

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Seven Tasmania, Nightly News, 15/04/2026, Kim Millar

Tasmanians living with a disability are participating in a cooking and nutrition initiative run by the not-for-profit New Horizons, supported by a federal grant of more than \$1.2 million over two years to build skills for independent living. NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister said the program supports healthy living, wellbeing, and social connection while strengthening participants' independence.

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MINISTER RAE

Care tool in need of fix

Daily Telegraph, Edition Changes, 16/04/2026, Julie Cross, Page 3

The Commonwealth Ombudsman has launched an investigation into a controversial aged-care algorithm dubbed a potential "Robodebt 2.0" designed to calculate the level of funding provided to help older Australians remain safely in their homes. [...] In a letter to Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae, the politicians from the Liberal, National, One Nation and Greens parties, as well as independents implored the government to reverse its ban on humans being able to overrule the IAT's results.

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

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Ombudsman investigating IAT

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 15/04/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

The IAT has been the subject of much controversy in recent months, with Senators questioning the inability for human assessors to override its results in particular. [...] The IAT has been questioned

extensively by Senators, and in March an open letter addressed to the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae was signed by 21 federal politicians on behalf of their respective parties for the restoration of human oversight on needs assessments , among other things.

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Ombudsman investigating complaints about aged care tool – but not the tool itself

HelloCare, Other, 15/04/2026, Jakob Neeland

The federal ombudsman has begun investigating complaints about Australia's new aged care assessment system, but not the system itself, a distinction critics say borders on the absurd. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae has said the system improves efficiency and reduces wait times, while maintaining that human assessors remain central to the process.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

Ryde Medicare Mental Health Centre now open

Weekly Times, General News, 15/04/2026, Page 6

Residents now have access to free, walk-in mental health services with the opening of the new Medicare Mental Health Centre in Ryde last week. [...] The Centre was officially opened by Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Emma McBride, and Member for Bennelong, Jerome Laxale, last week.

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Free walk-in mental health clinic opens

Cairns Post, General News, 16/04/2026, Molly Frew, Page 8

Cairns Medicare Mental Health Centre has opened, offering free walk-in mental health support to residents. [...] The centre was officially opened on Wednesday by Leichhardt MP Matt Smith and Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride, who said the centres sought to remove barriers to accessing support and potentially reduce stress on emergency departments.

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Hub big boost for kids' mental health

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 16/04/2026, Natalie Croxon, Page 5

Free mental healthcare is available for the children of the Illawarra through a new service that brings together different supports under the one roof. [...] Ms Jackson and Emma McBride, the federal Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide and for Rural and Regional Health, said the Illawarra was chosen because it was a growing region.

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WIN Cairns, WIN News Far North Queensland, 15/04/2026, Steve Hart

The Cairns Medicare Mental Health Centre on Mulgrave Road opened today, bringing Queensland's total Medicare mental health centres to 15 as part of the Federal Labor Government's plan to establish a national network of 92 centres. Mental Health Assistant Minister Emma McBride highlights that services are walk-in, require no appointment or diagnosis, are free, and are backed by Medicare.

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4CA AM, Breakfast, 15/04/2026, Murray Jones

Interview with Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride. McBride points out that they are seeing a big increase in psychological distress in Australia. She adds that this

is one of the main reasons why they are introducing Medicare mental health centres, which aims to provide support to people in the community sooner when they need it.

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ABC Far North, Breakfast, 15/04/2026, Charlie McKillop

Interview with Assistant Federal Health Minister Emma McBride. McBride points out that she's opening the new Medicare Mental Health Centre at Leichhardt. She states that she has worked in regional hospitals for nearly 10 years, and what she has seen in people is that they are distressed and they end up in crisis simply because they couldn't get support sooner.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Kambu gets minister visit

Ipswich Tribune Today, General News, 16/04/2026, Page 8

Federal Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health Rebecca White has paid a visit to Kambu Health this week, engaging in worthwhile conversations with the board, health workers and local Elders. Joined by Blair MP Shayne Neumann, the pair inspected the newly upgraded Roderick Street clinic, which is now a fully bulk-billed GP practice, open to the whole community and seeing 55,000 patients in the last year.

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Haywire

Riverine Grazier, General News, 15/04/2026, Page 2

Women in the region can now access specialised endometriosis and pelvic pain care locally, with the new Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinic open and taking bookings at Nova Health in Wagga Wagga. [...] Assistant Minister for Women, Rebecca White said the clinic will help address longstanding gaps in access to specialised care for women, particularly in regional communities.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Endometriosis clinic improving health outcomes

Gippsland Times & Maffra Spectator, General News, 15/04/2026, Page 10

A new Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinic (EPPC) is now open in Gippsland. The clinic is a joint venture between Gippsland Primary Health Network (Gippsland PHN) and Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS). [...] The clinic is funded by the federal government's Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, and delivered by Latrobe Community Health Service.

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DoHDA will cooperate with ombudsman's IAT investigation

Health Services Daily, Other, 15/04/2026, Cate Swannell

Finally, the aged care integrated assessment tool will get the closest thing to an independent review as

the Commonwealth Ombudsman responds to complaints.

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Government and Spotify team up for anti-vaping push

Mediaweek, Other, 15/04/2026, Vihan Mathur

The Australian Government has partnered with Spotify to launch the next phase of its anti-vaping campaign, shifting from awareness to a community-led approach to help young Australians quit. [...] Creative Credits: Client: Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Also reported by: [AdNews \(Online\)](#), [Mi3 \(Online\)](#), [Mumbrella \(Online\)](#).

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Pfizer fights back over patient fury

Pharma In Focus, Other, 15/04/2026

Pfizer has responded to the backlash from breast cancer patients, confirming that price is a sticking point in securing a PBS listing for Tukysa but insisted that the battle for subsidy is not over. [...] In a statement provided to Pharma in Focus, Pfizer said it is "continuing to engage with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the PBAC to achieve reimbursed access to Tukysa (tucatinib) to provide Australians with another treatment option for metastatic (Stage IV) human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER-2) positive breast cancer.

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Seniors Australia report exposes a harsh reality

Redland Bayside News, Other, 15/04/2026

A new report from National Seniors Australia has shone a spotlight on the growing divide between older Australians living in the city and those in rural, regional and remote communities. [...] The research was commissioned by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, with a focus on better understanding the needs of older Australians in diverse and often underrepresented groups – including those living in rural and remote areas.

[Read More](#)

Pfizer, DoHDA talks stall as PBS listing times blow out to almost two years

The Medical Republic, Other, 15/04/2026, Helen Tobler

Patients are being "abandoned", patient advocates have said following news that pricing negotiations between Pfizer and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to list the cancer drug tucatinib on the PBS have ended without a resolution.

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Ombudsman investigates aged care Integrated Assessment Tool

The Weekly Source, Other, 15/04/2026, Caroline Egan

The Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) has faced mounting criticism since the new Aged Care Act came into effect on 1 November 2025. In the five months since, there have been 834 requests to review IAT decisions, compared with 170 across FY25, a nearly five-fold increase.

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Aged care an abject failure

Victor Harbor Times, Other, 15/04/2026

Five months since the Federal Government made changes to Australia's aged care system, the Independent Member for Mayo has told Parliament the "whole system is an abject failure". [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is boasting on its website it is improving the system 'to deliver the highest quality person-centred care for older people, where and when they need it.

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Loneliness bad for memory in elderly

Northern Territory News, General News, 16/04/2026, Page 12

Being lonely could be making older Australians' memory worse. However, loneliness does not accelerate mental decline over time, according to the international research published in Aging & Mental Health.

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Providers struggling with home care challenges

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 15/04/2026, Natasha Egan

Program complexity, higher workloads and profitability are among the key concerns emerging from a new survey of over 50 Support at Home providers. Inquiries are up, but the time needed for administration, onboarding and explaining the new program has increased by more, according to a survey of Support at Home providers.

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Understanding the aged care and NDIS interface

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 15/04/2026, David Pellow

The boundary between aged care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme has never been clean. Thousands of Australians sit at the intersection – NDIS participants approaching 65 who will eventually transition to aged care, younger people in residential aged care who are NDIS-eligible, and older Australians with disability who receive supports from both systems simultaneously.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Running on empty

Newcastle Herald, General News, 16/04/2026, Jessica Belzycki, Page 1

Hunter disability support workers are calling for increased travel funds as they struggle to do their job amid rising fuel costs. Australian Services Union (ASU) delegate and Raymond Terrace disability support worker Chantel Moffat said her work fuel costs had almost doubled since the US war with Iran.

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Family hopes epilepsy Senate inquiry will shine light on funding gaps

ABC Online, Other, 15/04/2026, Katrina Beavan

Every night when Kat Robinson puts her son Leo to bed, she is terrified he will have a seizure and never wake up. "That haunts my nightmares ... knowing that if I go to sleep, I'm not keeping eyes on Leo," Ms Robinson said.

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Ombudsman report into interaction between Queensland Health and boys with disabilities makes 13 recommendations

ABC Online, Other, 15/04/2026, Janelle Miles and Emma Pollard

Queensland Health staff missed multiple opportunities — across 15 years — to report child safety concerns about two brothers with disabilities found severely malnourished and locked in a room naked, an official probe has found. A 48-page report by the Queensland Ombudsman has been released on the interactions between health care workers and the siblings, known by the pseudonyms Kaleb and Jonathon, who were discovered living in squalor in May 2020.

[Read More](#)

Autism diagnoses are up, largely fuelled by the NDIS. What happens next isn't entirely clear

The Conversation, Other, 15/04/2026, Andrew Whitehouse

Research published earlier this year found the strongest evidence yet that the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has played a key role driving up autism diagnoses in Australia. The study found evidence the increase may be due to clinicians lowering the threshold for an autism diagnosis, rather than a "catch up" in the diagnosis of historically under-diagnosed groups.

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PRIMARY CARE

Urgent care clinics 'no fix' for health system under stress

The Australian, General News, 16/04/2026, Penny Timms and Thomas Henry, Page 5

The head of the Australian Medical Association has warned the nation's healthcare system is "under strain" and urgent care clinics alone are not enough to solve the woes of an overburdened system. Urgent care clinics have become a crucial pillar of the government's healthcare investment in recent years, designed to ease pressure on hospital emergency departments by diverting noncritical cases at times when most general practitioners are closed.

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

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NSW pharmacists set to prescribe contraceptive pill

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 16/04/2026, Kate Aubusson, Page 15

NSW pharmacists will be able to prescribe the contraceptive pill directly to women without a GP appointment. The reform, announced yesterday by the state government, will give women faster, more convenient access to contraception and take pressure off GPs.

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

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GPs bitter as chemists allowed to hand out the pill

Daily Telegraph, General News, 16/04/2026, Harrison Finlay and Danielle Gusmaroli, Page 5

Women in NSW will now find it easier to get the contraceptive pill, with the state government moving to allow pharmacists to be able to prescribe it over the counter, without a prescription from a GP. The move follows a trial in September 2023 in which trained pharmacists were able to give up to 12 months worth of the pill without needing a new prescription from a GP.

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'Not a luxury': Fury as Qantas dumps route

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 16/04/2026, Dylan Hogarth and Jacinta Round, Page 10

The decision by Qantas to scrap its services in the state's second largest city has been labelled alarming by medical professionals, who say the move will further isolate local residents from vital health services. On Tuesday, Qantas announced it would halt all flights between Adelaide and Mount Gambier next month as it grapples with the ongoing fuel crisis and declining demand for the service, making the route unviable.

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Drug prescription plan hits hurdles

Hobart Mercury, General News, 16/04/2026, Page 14

GPs and pharmacists being slow to adopt longer prescriptions is putting a handbrake on the potential savings for patients, research has suggested. The government launched 60-day prescriptions in September 2023 but a study focusing on blood pressure medication is showing uptake is well below projections.

Rezoning call to unlock health hub

Newcastle Herald, General News, 16/04/2026, Madeline Link, Page 2

A next-generation health precinct for the Hunter is a step closer to reality after Lake Macquarie councillors recommended rezoning land to unlock the project. Lake Macquarie Private Hospital at Gateshead is already approved for future upgrades and expansion, and the city's mayor Adam Shultz said developing the surrounding precinct could bring major benefits to the city.

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Doctors' orders: plea for longer GP visits

Western Advocate, General News, 16/04/2026, Duncan Murray, Page 7

Australia's healthcare system has been compared to a house with cracks in it by a peak representative body that says an ageing population is changing the role of general practitioners. The Australian Medical Association is calling for longer and better quality access to GPs, among a string of other reforms in a pre-budget submission launched yesterday.

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Doctors' orders: funding plea for longer GP visits

West Australian, Other, 15/04/2026, Duncan Murray

Australia's healthcare system has been compared to a house with cracks in it by a peak representative body that says an ageing population is changing the role of general practitioners. The Australian Medical Association is calling for longer and better quality access to GPs, among a string of other reforms in a pre-budget submission launched on Wednesday.

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NSW pharmacists can now prescribe contraceptive pill in major healthcare shake-up

NEWS.com.au, Other, 15/04/2026, Abisha Sapkota

One Aussie state is bringing in a major change making it easier for women to access contraceptives. Pharmacists in NSW will be able to prescribe the contraceptive pill directly to women aged 18 and over, removing the need for a GP appointment.

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

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More women set to skip the doctor to get the pill

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 15/04/2026

Doctor's appointments to get a prescription for the pill could soon be a thing of the past as pharmacists prepare to offer their services to millions of women. Up to 60 pharmacists will soon be eligible to start providing consultations with women over 18 who wish to access contraception in NSW, the state government announced on Wednesday.

Also reported by: [9News \(Online\)](#).

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How many nurses provide telehealth and virtual care? Australia doesn't know

Australian Doctor, Other, 15/04/2026

A leading nurse expert estimates that 30-40% of the nursing workforce is now providing some level of telehealth service. The number of doctors providing telehealth services has ballooned since the pandemic, but another transformation has also been quietly underway — the virtual care provided by nurses.

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Pharmacy prescribing doesn't 'quite fit' health system: AMA

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 15/04/2026, John Smith

Pharmacist prescribing is one of "many new doors opening that fragment out health system", Australian Medical Association (AMA) president, Dr Danielle McMullen warns.

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The downside of funding longer consultations

Medical Forum, Other, 15/04/2026

The RACGP and 20 peak patient bodies have called on the federal government to fund longer GP consultations in a bid to keep the cost of seeing a GP down for patients with chronic disease and complex health needs. But the proposal might not add up to all it is meant to, writes Midland GP Dr Nicholas Stanley-Cary.

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ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 15/04/2026, Yvonne Yong

NSW pharmacists will soon be able to prescribe the contraceptive pill without the need for a doctor's appointment. The state government says it's a move designed to make accessing the pill more convenient and potentially cheaper.

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ABC News, ABC Nightly News, 15/04/2026, Yvonne Yong

Experts are warning a Qantas decision to indefinitely axe a key regional flight route in South Australia could have adverse impacts on health care. The airline's blaming low demand and fuel costs for its decision to cancel flights to Mount Gambier, but locals have slammed the move as short-sighted.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 15/04/2026, Emma Reballato and James Glenday

Interview with Mt Gambier Mayor Lynette Martin OAM, about Qantas move to remove routes in Mt Gambier. Martin points out that doctors and medical practitioners in the area usually need to utilise flights as a mode of transportation into Mt Gambier, so Qantas not being part of the routes would be detrimental to Mt Gambier Hospital, which she can see why the AMA is worried about this matter.

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Channel 10, 10 News, 15/04/2026, Sandra Sully

The NSW Government has now allowed specially trained pharmacists to directly dispense the contraceptive pill from June 1st without a GP visit, supported by \$4.5 million funding. Dr Ramya Raman of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, raises concerns about patient safety and potential conflicts of interest when prescribing and dispensing occur in the same setting

Similar coverage reported by: [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [SBS \(Sydney\)](#).

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Channel 7, Seven News, 15/04/2026, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson

AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen is warning that without structural changes to healthcare and increased funding for GPs, including longer consultations and after-hours care, Medicare could be at risk. The federal government has acknowledged primary care pressures and invested \$1b in training new GPs, with an additional 100 training places announced, while doctors have proposed funding reforms such as a sugary drink tax to support Medicare and strengthen local GP services.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 15/04/2026, Thomas Oriti

Interview with Catherine Bronger, Senior Vice President of the Pharmacy Guild. Bronger says the NSW Government expansion of pharmacist prescribing powers will allow specially trained pharmacists to

initiate the oral contraceptive pill following extensive postgraduate training and structured clinical assessment. She explains that pharmacists will operate under the same clinical guidelines as doctors, use private consultation spaces, and refer higher-risk patients to GPs, with the reform aimed at improving patient access rather than replacing general practice care.

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POPULATION HEALTH

AI advice 'problematic'

Daily Telegraph, General News, 16/04/2026, Page 22

Half the answers to medical questions given by artificial intelligence are "somewhat" or "highly" problematic, scientists have suggested. Research published in the BMJ Open tested five leading generative AI chatbots and were given open and closed questions about cancer, vaccines, stem cells, nutrition and athletic performance.

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

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Ensuring laws do not go up in smoke

Hobart Mercury, General News, 16/04/2026, Helen Burnet, Page 21

Tasmania was once a national leader in tobacco control. Through tough regulation and strong public education, we saved lives and reduced harm.

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New survey reveals "national blind spot"

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 15/04/2026

Australians are suffering from a disconnect between their confidence in their ability to look after their health and the reality of rising chronic disease rates and a failure to adopt healthy habits, a large national survey has revealed. Now in its fifth edition, the Healthylife Living Healthy Report 2026, which was released yesterday, surveyed over 1,000 Australians with the aim of understanding people's perceived ability to look after their health and where these perceptions might not match reality.

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Free interactive online tool improves opioid safety

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 15/04/2026

A free interactive online tool can help people taking prescription opioids for non-cancer pain to better understand their risks, with requests for naloxone more than doubling, according to Monash University research. The Opioid Safety Toolkit - a collaboration between Monash University, the Burnet Institute, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, Painaustralia and consumers - helps users create a personalised safety plan, provides tailored information about their opioid risks and educates them on naloxone and how to access it.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 15/04/2026, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson

Charity Little Wings says rising fuel costs have increased expenses by up to 50 per cent in some regional areas and could force it to ground its fleet within weeks, with CEO Clare Pearson reporting weekly funding shortfalls and reduced ability to accept missions. Health Minister Ryan Park said the state government will work with providers to consider patient needs, and the organisation is seeking public donations as it continues to transport children from regional areas to critical healthcare services.

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Body clock fitness link

Courier Mail, General News, 16/04/2026, Page 17

Matching your exercise routine to your body clock could reduce risk of heart disease in people who are already vulnerable. Aligning exercise timing to a person's body clock chronotype being a "morning person" or "night person" was found to lower risk factors such as high blood pressure and unhealthy cholesterol more effectively than not doing so, according to new international research.

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

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AMA president says urgent care clinic mistook her patient's cancer symptoms for asthma

Australian Doctor, Other, 15/04/2026

Dr Danielle McMullen has shared the story of one of her patients whose increasing dyspnoea was dismissed by an urgent care clinic as asthma, but later diagnosed as cancer. The AMA president said her patient's experience illustrates the dangers of a healthcare system with increasing numbers of access points, but not enough GPs opening the doors.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

One year on, clinic praised for offering 'life-changing' treatment

Newcastle Herald, General News, 16/04/2026, Jessica Belzycki, Page 12

"Life-changing" is how some people describe the treatment for eating disorders received at the state's only public residential centre one year after its opening. Called Baiyangbaiyaang, the 12-bed Charlestown clinic has admitted and discharged 32 residents since it opened in April last year.

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New dads like me want to do fatherhood differently. Where's our support?

The Guardian, Other, 15/04/2026, Zac Seidler

The slow, weeks-long reckoning that followed my son's birth three months ago was something no book had prepared me for. What crept up on me was a dawning existential realisation, somewhere between one overnight feed and the next, that everything had quietly reorganised itself while I was too exhausted to notice.

[Read More](#)

2GB, Afternoons, 15/04/2026, Michael McLaren

Interview with child and adolescent psychologist Dr Michael Carr-Gregg. Carr-Gregg explains that the DSM-5 criteria help diagnose behavioural and mental health issues, like ADHD and oppositional defiance disorder, by looking at the patterns, frequency, intensity of symptoms, and how they affect children's daily lives. He also discusses behavioural issues in children in Sydney school programs.

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IMMUNISATION

Medico has a chilling winter warning

Ballarat Courier, General News, 16/04/2026, Michelle Smith, Page 5

A surge in early influenza infections has health experts concerned about a severe flu season that could claim hundreds of lives. There have already been close to 25,000 notified infections across Australia, almost 4500 in Victoria and more than 90 in the Ballarat LGA - but those numbers are just the tip of the iceberg as most flu cases go unreported.

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Urgent call for flu shots

Launceston Examiner, General News, 16/04/2026, Owen Sinclair, Page 1

Eight in 10 Tasmanians aged older than 75 are due or overdue for a COVID-19 booster vaccine, the state's health department has revealed. Ahead of winter, the community is being encouraged to capitalise on any vaccines available to them while also getting the flu jab.

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Needle-free flu vaccine rolled out for WA kids

Kalgoorlie Miner, General News, 16/04/2026, Troy De Ruyter, Page 2

A needle-free flu vaccine for children is being rolled out across WA, offering a simple nasal spray alternative to injections ahead of the winter season. The State Government has launched the WA-first program, making the intranasal vaccine known as FluMist free for children aged two to under 12.

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

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4 vaccine trends this influenza season

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 15/04/2026, Jorgia Burke

Flu season is underway and it's already taking a toll, with 112 influenza-related deaths recorded this year. There were 25,430 recorded cases of influenza in the first quarter of 2026 – following a whopping 25,430 cases in Q1 2025, and 1738 deaths caused by influenza.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Hobart, Afternoons, 15/04/2026, Joel Rheinberger

Interview with Dr Shannon Melody, Specialist Medical Advisor for the Tasmanian Department of Health. Melody says flu, RSV, and COVID-19 vaccinations are strongly advised ahead of winter to reduce serious illness, hospitalisation, and mortality. She explains that immunisation advice varies by age and risk group, with annual flu vaccines recommended for everyone six months and older, COVID-19 vaccines available every 12 months for adults, and targeted RSV and pregnancy-related vaccines.

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

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Price hikes for hospital

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 16/04/2026, Page 5

Gold hospital cover premiums have jumped by as much as 13 per cent on average since health insurance price hikes earlier this month. This is almost triple the government-approved average increase of 4.41 per cent, according to Canstar analysis.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Shift work disrupts liver function rhythm

Shift work and irregular eating patterns could affect liver function and disrupt its delicate circadian rhythm. The timing of food intake plays a critical role in maintaining the natural rhythm of the liver to secrete proteins, University of Queensland researchers have found.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Pre-sale guarantee to get apartments off the ground sooner

West Australian, General News, 16/04/2026, Rita Saffioti, Page 13

This week we announced a \$1.5 billion to expand our hospital system. Total funding in health and hospital infrastructure will be \$5.5b over the next four years a record investment.

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AMA warns health system cracks 'impossible to ignore'

Canberra Times, Other, 15/04/2026, Grace Crivellaro and Duncan Murray

There is no more efficiencies to gain in the Australian health system, a peak body warns, as burnt out health care workers battle ongoing hospital log jams. The Australian Medical Association is calling for longer and better quality access to GPs and more funding to address hospital overcrowding, as well as a string of other reforms in a pre-budget submission revealed on Wednesday.

[Read More](#)

Conservative commentator Megyn Kelly accuses Harry and Meghan of using children's hospital visit as a 'photo opportunity' - as a major blunder is revealed

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 15/04/2026, Karleigh Smith and Candace Sutton

Large crowds gathered at the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne for the first stop of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex 's four-day tour of Australia on Tuesday. They arrived just hours after stepping off a 15-hour business class flight from Los Angeles to Melbourne on a Qantas Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 15/04/2026, Sandra Sully

NSW Ambulance has launched an internal review after an 87-year-old woman from Mulgoa in Western Sydney died while waiting for emergency assistance. NSW Health Minister Ryan Park said he was very sorry for the family and would examine why NSW Ambulance had not provided information earlier.

Similar coverage reported by: [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#).

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Mornings, 15/04/2026, Rory McClaren

Interview with Associate Professor Peter Subramaniam, President of the Australian Medical Association in South Australia. Subramaniam says private hospital cybersecurity and data management processes are being handled appropriately and confirms there are no current patient safety concerns. He says private hospital emergency departments, including St Andrews, Ashford and Calvary Adelaide, remain important to system capacity with no reported surge in public hospital demand.

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

The ED with no on-site doctors

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 16/04/2026, Elizabeth Henson and Brad Crouch, Page 3

A Barossa hospital's emergency department is operating without on-site doctors three days a week, with nurses told to call triple-0 after patients arrive, sparking fears "somebody is going to die". A source, who spoke to The Advertiser on the condition of anonymity, has detailed a series of alarming incidents at the Angaston District Hospital's accident and emergency department since it lost seven-day-a-week on-site doctor coverage.

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Hospital without doctors: How did it come to this?

Adelaide Advertiser, Editorials, 16/04/2026, Page 22

Imagine suffering a serious medical crisis and rushing to the nearest hospital, only to find its emergency department has no on-site doctors available. It is not that the doctors are busy with other patients there is not a single on-site doctors rostered on in the ED. This is not happening in some faraway country to people we don't know.

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Outback nurse Hamish Briggs captures life working in remote WA on social media

ABC Online, Other, 15/04/2026

Content creator Hamish Briggs has amassed more than 100,000 followers, sharing his journey working in Western Australia's far north as a nurse. His popularity comes amid chronic healthcare workforce shortages in WA's regions.

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Fuel crisis driving nurses to call in sick, as soaring costs outweigh travel allowance

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 15/04/2026, Robert Fedele

Rising fuel costs are forcing some nurses who use their own cars for travel on the job to call in sick, according to a district nurse, who says it has become a choice between staying home or working and being left out of pocket. In a typical week, Victorian district nurse Lachlan Timms covers around 140 kilometres on the road in his role providing in-home care, including chronic wound management, medication management, and diabetes education, to patients across the community.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Fresh charge for midwife accused of manslaughter

Newcastle Herald, General News, 16/04/2026, Anna Falkenmire, Page 9

Prosecutors have laid a fresh charge against a midwife accused of the manslaughter of a baby boy after a home birth in Newcastle. Oyebola Coxon, 36, has been on bail and faced Newcastle Local court in person yesterday.

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Warning over assisting patients to withdraw superannuation early

Medical Forum, Other, 15/04/2026

A Perth GP was found to have engaged in professional misconduct by assisting a patient to gain early access to their superannuation to pay for a cosmetic liposuction procedure. The case of GP Dr Bunty Chandra Prasad is one of a number which has prompted the Australian Tax Office (ATO) and AHPRA to remind practitioners that penalties can apply if they make false or misleading statements on medical reports.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Cannabis sales plunge in script crackdown

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 16/04/2026, Angus Thomson, Page 12

Medicinal cannabis sales have fallen sharply for the first time in a decade as regulators crack down on one-stop online clinics and GPs issuing dozens of scripts a day. [...] 'Australia's medicines watchdog, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), is considering major reforms to how it regulates the booming industry that has emerged since cannabis was legalised for medicinal use a decade ago.

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Brash medicinal cannabis system easily exploited

Sydney Morning Herald, Editorials, 16/04/2026, Page 20

The Sydney Morning Herald Australia's medicinal cannabis industry has grown too fast for the good of its own users. [...] Doctors need to obtain permission from the Therapeutic Goods Administration to prescribe medicinal cannabis.

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Gosford Hospital leading Australia with new lifesaving stroke prevention surgery from US

ABC Online, Other, 15/04/2026, Mary-Louise-Vince

A new surgical procedure to reduce a patient's risk of having a stroke has become available in

Australia, 10 years after it caught the attention of one of the nation's pioneering vascular surgeons. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) granted "special access" for the TCAR method to be performed in Australia, and it is still under review by the Stroke Foundation.

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Users left fearing death as fake Ozempic weight loss drugs flood UK black market

ABC Online, Other, 15/04/2026, Elias Clure

Aisleyne Horgan-Wallace lay on her bed, wincing in "excruciating" pain, worried she was about to die. "I was just in bed for like three to four days, like in and out of consciousness," she told the ABC.

[Read More](#)

Biocurious: Is a recovery in gestation at IVF play Memphasys?

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 15/04/2026, Tim Boreham

The developer of a sperm separation device for IVF purposes, Memphasys has disappointed investors for years. [...] Felix won European (CE Mark) clearance last December and in January the local Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) green-lighted the device.

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

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

Three strikes: another penalty for food safety

Border Mail, General News, 16/04/2026, Blair Thomson, Page 2

Harris Farm Markets has been hit with its third fine for food offences in the past year, with the popular business again found to have food that is unsuitable for sale. The business was issued a \$1980 fine in mid-February after the food safety issue was detected on January 22.

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