



# TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 17th May 2026

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## MINISTER BUTLER

### Mercy pilots free of virus

Sunday Times, General News, 17/05/2026, Claire Sadler, Page 16

The pilots and crew that helped transfer to Australia the six passengers on a hantavirus-stricken cruise ship have left the country on the same plane, which had been disinfected before their departure. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler had said the crew wouldn't be required to isolate with the passengers if all tests were negative.

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### Keating once warned of a 'banana republic'. Chalmers is slowly taking us there

Canberra Times, Other, 16/05/2026, Michael Stutchbury

Forty years ago this week, ambitious 42-year-old Labor treasurer Paul Keating warned that Australia risked becoming a "banana republic". [...] Such a correction came three weeks before Chalmers' budget when Health Minister Mark Butler confessed that Labor's \$52 billion National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was "broken".

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## Innovative dementia program supports transition from hospital to aged care

Inside Ageing, Other, 16/05/2026, Amy Clarke

A national dementia support initiative helping older hospital patients transition into aged care is showing strong early results, with nearly 700 people successfully relocated and only a small proportion returning to hospital after placement breakdowns. [...] Mr Thorburn also welcomed Federal Aged Care and Disability Minister Mark Butler's April announcement expanding the program as part of a \$200 million dementia support package, which also included 20 additional Specialist Dementia Care Program units.

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## Public hospitals to face 'intensified pressure' as older Australians hit with major rebate cuts

Sky News Australia, Other, 16/05/2026, Max Aldred

Older Australians have been let down by cuts to private health insurance rebates, an ageing Australians advocate says, as she warned the changes could heap more pressure onto public hospitals. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler had announced the aged care changes ahead of Tuesday night's budget in a speech at the National Press Club.

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## Sky News Live, Weekend NewsDay, 16/05/2026, Julia Bradley

After a complex government mission, six passengers who were on board the hantavirus-stricken MV Hondius had spent their first night at the Centre for National Resilience in Perth. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says he is pleased that the passengers remain in good health.

[Play Now](#)

## ABC Coffs Coast, Australia Wide (Weekends), 16/05/2026, Alex Barwick

Report by ABC reporter Shannon Pearce. Kirsty Johnson, a South Australian mother of a boy with autism, has invited Federal Health Minister Mark Butler to spend a week in her home after the Federal Government announced sweeping changes to the NDIS, which will see 160,000 participants kicked off the scheme by the end of the decade, including some children with autism or mild developmental delay. Butler did not respond to Johnson's invitation to stay at her home, but she still wants her family's voice to be heard.

Also reported by: [ABC Kimberley \(Broome\)](#), [ABC Great Southern \(Albany\)](#).

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## 2GB, Weekends, 16/05/2026, Jason Morrison

Morrison says four Australians, one permanent resident, and a New Zealand national, who were stuck on board a cruise ship impacted by hantavirus, are currently at the Centre for National Resilience in Perth, where they will be quarantined for a few weeks. He notes that Federal Minister for Health Mark Butler maintained that the group had been tested, and they had no symptoms of hantavirus during the flight.

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## FIVEAA, 08:30 News (Weekend), 16/05/2026

Five Australians and a New Zealander have touched down in Perth to begin a three-week quarantine after a deadly hantavirus outbreak aboard a South Atlantic cruise ship. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the measures are necessary to ensure the zero risk of the virus spreading.

Similar coverage reported by: [ABC Radio Darwin \(Darwin\)](#), [ABC Radio Melbourne \(Melbourne\)](#), [ABC Radio Sydney \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC Radio Perth \(Perth\)](#).

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## MINISTER MCALLISTER

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## MINISTER RAE

### **\$3bn for aged care in budget**

Glasshouse Country & Maleny News, Other, 16/05/2026, Chelise Robinson

The Federal Government announced it will invest \$3 billion to deliver more beds, more packages and better care for older Australians in the 2026 Budget. [...] Minister for Aged Care and Seniors, Sam Rae, said when the Aged Care Act commenced, the Government promised it would "keep watching" how the reforms landed to make sure the system was strong and fair enough, to meet the moment.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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## SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

### **The talk of a male loneliness crisis needs to look beyond stereotypes**

Sun Herald, General News, 17/05/2026, Jacqueline Maley, Page 16

Comment nsw Liberal leader Kellie Sloane wants us to stop "bagging men" and calling them "toxic". Instead, she says, we should celebrate "healthy masculinity" and "champion top blokes". [...] As Dan Repacholi, the government's special envoy for men's health, tells me: "Where men struggle a bit different to women is we don't talk about it as well; we are not as open with having those conversations.

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## DEPARTMENT

### **Monash overhauling dementia strategy**

Star Weekly, Other, 16/05/2026

Monash University has opened a public consultation process for the first major update to Australia's national clinical guidelines for dementia in more than ten years. Commissioned by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing in May 2024, the draft update aims to modernise clinical decision-making by incorporating a decade of medical advancements and shifting care strategies.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### Options aplenty for first responders, gran's inquest told

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 17/05/2026, Miklos Bolza, Page 8

First responders facing a great-grandmother with a knife had options to manage the situation without police Taser her, an inquest has been told. [...] The three-day inquest examined systemic issues before the Taser incident with a focus on dementia care and training for aged care staff, police and ambulance officers.

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

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### Older patients seeing their usual GP linked to 21% risk reduction in being hospitalised: Aussie study

Australian Doctor, Other, 16/05/2026, Carmel Sparke

Older patients cared for by their usual GP are up to 21% less likely to be hospitalised or present to the ED than those seeing a new doctor, an Australian study on continuity of care has found. [...] The study looked at a cohort of 84,000 Australians over 65 who were living at home but had begun to access Home Care Packages.

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## DISABILITY AND CARERS

### Multicultural leaders decry 'shameful' Coalition immigration platform

Sun Herald, General News, 17/05/2026, Nick Newling, Page 2

The Coalition's plan to tie migration to housing completions and bar non-citizens from welfare programs is a "shameful" choice that makes immigrants feel less safe and damages social cohesion, multicultural leaders say. [...] He also stated a desire to "process and deport 70,000 overstayers", along with a policy of barring non-citizens from accessing 17 social welfare programs, including the Aged Pension, JobSeeker and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

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

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### Defence jobs boom while most of the APS faces squeeze

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 17/05/2026, Ray Athwal, Page 4

Defence and the tax office are the clear winners of the federal budget, while the majority of government agencies are forced to tighten their belts. [...] Frontline agencies Services Australia and the National Disability Insurance Agency had two of the largest reductions in staffing levels, dropping a combined 1344 positions.

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### Care crooks

Sunday Territorian, General News, 17/05/2026, Camden Smith, Page 1

A remote Northern Territory regional council has taken an unprecedented step in its battle to protect vulnerable citizens from "abuse" by unscrupulous National Disability Insurance Scheme providers. East Arnhem Regional Council recently moved to protect scores of NDIS participants from dodgy service providers, as Territory courts prepare to hear allegations of systemic fraud by NT providers.

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### NDIS changes necessary to secure scheme's future

The National Disability Insurance Scheme, or NDIS as it is known, was established in 2013 after a grassroots advocacy campaign that fought for a fairer system for disability support recognising that "Every Australian Counts". Since it started the NDIS has empowered Territorians living with disability to have choice and control.

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## Paying a price

Sunday Territorian, Editorials, 17/05/2026, Page 14

The NDIS was built on a simple idea: Every Australian counts. For many Territorians living with disability, it has done exactly what it was meant to do.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### Doing it for the kids

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 17/05/2026, Robyn Riley, Page 1

Murdoch Children's Research Institute will receive a \$5m grant from the federal government to set up a new research team dedicated to disease prevention and early intervention in child health.

Also reported by: [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#).

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### Sweet dreams

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 17/05/2026, Page 48

The Australian Medical Association was yet again pushing for tax on sugar-sweetened drinks in this year's budget, of 20c a can, citing health reasons. All very noble but here are two points: It would be yet another cash cow for the government in a cost-of-living crisis hurting low income earners more than high; and as someone who actively avoids sugar or caffeinated soft drinks, and aspartame, it is high impossible to find an alternative in many places, leaving just water.

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### Rural unrest over budget

Shepparton News Online, Other, 16/05/2026

The Federal Budget was billed as the most ambitious and important in decades, but rural Australians say critical gaps outside the cities did not get a look-in. [...] Permanent funding for 137 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics may not be the best investment for the 7.4 million Australians living outside the cities, rural health organisations warned.

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### Rural health concerns following budget

Sunraysia Daily, Other, 16/05/2026, Lochlainn Heley

Leaders in rural health have welcomed the Federal Budget's latest funding investments but say more is needed to remove barriers to access. The Federal Budget 2026-27 was announced on Tuesday night 12 May, spotlighting cost-of-living pressures as a priority issue in its distribution of funds.

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## POPULATION HEALTH

## Smoking's up, as is the rate of shops in flames

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/05/2026, David Penberthy, Page 80

Here's a question which on the face of it should have an obvious answer. [...] The AMA warned last year it feared more people were now lighting up as the market was flooded with illegal cigarettes as quarantine and customs failed to stem the inflow.

Also reported by: [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#).

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## Getting to guts of better health

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 17/05/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 22

Good guts are crucial to health and even mood and adjusting the vast community of tiny bugs living there could help with conditions such as arthritis. Professor Sam Forster of the Hudson Institute of Medical Research is growing tiny organisms in the laboratory with a long-term aim of tailored adjustments to the microbes in a person's gut to fight a range of diseases.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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## Health checks free if you're 3

Sunday Times, General News, 17/05/2026, Rhianna Mitchell, Page 13

All three-year-olds will be eligible for a free health and development check from November in a bid to improve early intervention. Child advocacy groups have welcomed the decision to reinstate the Medicare Healthy Kids Check, a subsidised GP assessment for three-year-olds, which was axed in 2015.

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## Helping mums boost baby's health

Sunday Times, General News, 17/05/2026, Angela Pownall, Page 23

Australia has failed to meet a target of 50 per cent of all babies being exclusively breastfed until they are six months old, prompting calls for action to lift breastfeeding rates. [...] Research has shown breastfeeding doesn't just produce milk but changes its composition over time to meet the child's nutritional, immunological and developmental needs, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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## SA retirees in 'danger zones' of vulnerability

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 17/05/2026, Brad Crouch & Updesh Tanwar, Page 16

Adelaide's southern coastal communities have emerged as areas with older workers most at risk of falling off a retirement cliff. [...] Data was drawn from sources including the Australian Taxation Office, Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to assess a ratio of impending retirees to their super funds and access to mental-health services.

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

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## CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

### My personal fight against our most common cancer

Sun Herald, General News, 17/05/2026, Wayne Swan, Page 27

Australia stands at a crossroads in the fight against prostate cancer. For too long, this disease the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia has been met with fragmented efforts, inconsistent awareness and, too often, silence.

## Finally, battle with trachoma won

Sunday Age, General News, 17/05/2026, Hugh Taylor, Page 27

Last Christmas Eve, I received the best present ever. It was news that Australia had submitted a dossier to the World Health Organisation seeking confirmation of the elimination of trachoma a bacterial eye infection that is the world's leading infectious cause of preventable blindness in Australia.

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## Tasmanian advocate Di Mason takes two-decade melanoma fight to TedX stage

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 16/05/2026, Bridget Clarke

Like many Tasmanians, Di Mason knows the heartache of losing someone to cancer. [...] Her two decades of advocacy has seen her assume roles with Cancer Council Tasmania, pharmaceutical companies, and as the Australian representative of the Global Melanoma Coalition.

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

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Turning point for youth mental health

Sun Herald, General News, 17/05/2026, Rachel Rasker, Page 6

When Ley Laupama was a teenager, no one went to the school counsellor. "There was a lot of stigma against it." [...] A University of NSW study published in the Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry today using data from the HILDA survey the only nationally representative longitudinal survey in Australia found that while youth mental health has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, there are clear signs of recovery.

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### Lenses tackle depression

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 17/05/2026, Page 23

Contact lenses designed to treat depression are just as effective as drugs like Prozac, scientists claim. The lenses have been developed to deliver mild electrical signals to the brain via the retina, with the aim of stimulating brain regions associated with depression.

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

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### 'Zero help': our mental health care gap

Sunday Examiner, General News, 17/05/2026, Lauren Richardson, Page 1

Regional Tasmania's mental healthcare system isn't just lagging - it's broken. That's the experience of Kelsi Riley, who has bipolar disorder.

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### Tanya could barely get out of bed — until the diagnosis that changed everything

SBS, Other, 16/05/2026, Sandra Fulloon

Tanya is sitting in a small, well-lit room at a Melbourne women's health hospital, quietly colouring in a design. [...] Tanya is among the one in four women in Australia to battle severe mental health challenges, according to the 2025 Women's Mental Health Research Report.

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## PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

### **NT groups disagree over budget impact**

Sunday Territorian, General News, 17/05/2026, Fia Walsh, Page 10

The budget delivered by federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers in Canberra this week contained few surprises for the Northern Territory. [...] Mr McPhee said AMSANT particularly welcomed the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Schedule under the National Health Reform Agreement the first dedicated schedule for Aboriginal health within the national hospital funding agreement.

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

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### **Former CEO slams government after hospital misses out on funding again**

Warrnambool Standard, Other, 16/05/2026, Sophia Baker

A former hospital CEO says the state government is putting politics ahead of people's lives as an embattled emergency department has again missed out on funding. Western District Health Service's Hamilton Base Hospital did not receive funding in the 2026 state budget released on Tuesday, May 5, 2026, despite its more than three-decade wait for an upgrade to its ED, which has prompted former doctors patients MPs and the nurses' union to raise concerns about its condition.

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## CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Doctors drag chain on hand hygiene

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 16/05/2026, Cate Swannell

Poor hand hygiene compliance by doctors compared with nurses has been the "elephant in the room" for too long in the battle against hospital-acquired infections, according to a leading infection control expert. Dr John Ferguson, director of infection prevention and control at Hunter New England Health, was responding to research published today by the MJA reporting that medical staff consistently performed below the national threshold for hand hygiene compliance.

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## TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### Allowed to practise

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 16/05/2026, Greg Stolz, Page 21

The medical regulator has defended allowing former premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's surgeon partner Reza Adib to continue practising unrestricted despite him being hit with multiple rape charges. [...] Dr Adib's medical registration remains intact more than two weeks after he was charged, with the publicly-accessible Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency showing no conditions or restrictions have been imposed.

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

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### Migrant nurses training to fill skills gaps in rural SA health project

ABC Online, Other, 16/05/2026, Duncan Bailey

The rural town of Cleve in South Australia's Eyre Peninsula has received a healthcare boost with the addition of migrant trainee nurses from the Philippines. [...] All five were already working as registered nurses in the Philippines before coming to Australia, but because their nursing degrees were not recognised by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), they were unable to work in Australia.

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### Nurse reprimanded after faking grandfather's death to Qantas

The Australian, Other, 16/05/2026, Kate Stephenson

A nurse's desperate lie to Qantas about his grandfather cost him his hospital job and landed him before a professional tribunal. [...] The man told the tribunal he had completed further ethical training, pleaded guilty at an early opportunity and had fully co-operated with the ombudsman in his disciplinary proceedings, even self-reporting to AHPRA following the incident.

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

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## Woman who had ovary removed files first court action against disgraced gynaecologist

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 16/05/2026, Henrietta Cook & Carla Jaeger

A woman who saw disgraced gynaecologist Simon Gordon for contraception and ended up having her ovary and fallopian tube removed has filed the first case in a tranche of expected legal action against the former doctor. [...] This masthead revealed in February that healthcare watchdog the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) launched an ongoing investigation into Gordon over allegations he performed unwarranted surgeries on women to treat endometriosis, including full hysterectomies.

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## AUSTRALIAN CDC

### Bad mozzies detected

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 17/05/2026, Page 9

Health authorities have detected the world's most invasive mosquito for the first time on the Australian mainland. Six Asian tiger mosquitoes, also known as "barbecue stoppers", were found near Bamaga in Far North Queensland.

Also reported by: [Sunday Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Sunday Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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### Diphtheria used to be a major cause of childhood deaths. Now it's back in Australia

ABC Online, Other, 16/05/2026, Audrey Courty

Australia has recorded its first reported death from diphtheria in almost a decade, after the Northern Territory declared an outbreak of the disease in March. [...] According to the Australian Centre for Disease Control (CDC), it is caused by the toxin-producing strains of the bacterium *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* or *Corynebacterium ulcerans*.

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### Australia on high alert as Asian tiger mosquitos are detected in Queensland for the first time in history

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 16/05/2026, Olivia Day

The discovery of six Asian tiger mosquitos on a farm in Queensland has marked the first time the invasive 'super pest' has been detected in Australia. The worrying discovery was made during routine monitoring near Bamaga in Far North Queensland and has sparked an urgent warning from health authorities.

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### Outbreak of disease in Northern Territory leads to first Australian diphtheria death in almost a decade

West Australian, Other, 16/05/2026, Freddy Pawle

An ongoing outbreak of a deadly disease has led to the death of an Australian for the first time since 2018. [...] It is the first time an Australian has died from diphtheria since 2018, which according to the Australian Centre for Disease Control was an unvaccinated adult who had contracted a respiratory strain.

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## Australia on alert as invasive super pest detected for first time: 'We've got an issue'

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 16/05/2026, Joe Attanasio

Australia's mainland has recorded its first detection of one of the world's most invasive insects — so aggressive it's earned the nickname "the barbecue stopper". Six Asian tiger mosquitoes were uncovered during routine monitoring near Bamaga in far north Queensland, prompting health authorities to launch spraying operations across the Cape York Peninsula.

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### Horror medical toll from black-market peptides

Sunday Age, General News, 17/05/2026, Melissa Cunningham & Henrietta Cook, Page 1

Victorians are landing in emergency departments after suffering severe side effects linked to illegal peptides, including vomiting, abdominal cramping, and chest pains that mirror heart attacks. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration said it was monitoring and taking action against the rise of unapproved, unevaluated peptide products driven by social media and online clinics.

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

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### Peptide pushing a dirty business

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 17/05/2026, Sarah Booth, Page 32

Tradies, social media influencers and cleaning companies are among the businesses and people allegedly linked to websites cashing in on the booming market for unregulated injectable peptides. [...] Medical Marketing Group Director Casey Jones, who specialises in TGA compliance, said the scale of the grey market was "hard to overstate" and the regulator needed to provide clearer, more accessible guidance on their advertising rules.

Also reported by: [Sunday Mail Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sunday Mail Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Sunday Tasmanian \(Hobart\)](#).

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### Are police drug tests too hard on medical cannabis users?

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 16/05/2026, Daneka Hill

People prescribed medical cannabis by their doctors are flooding the court system and being stripped of their driver's licences in droves, prompting some magistrates to question the current law. [...] According to Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) data, it's estimated about 785,000 patients were prescribed medicinal cannabis in 2025 - roughly one in 35 Australians.

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

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