



TODAY'S NEWS

Wednesday, 20th May 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Courier Mail \(page 15\)](#)** reports up to five Queenslanders have contracted diphtheria this year as Australia records its biggest outbreak in decades, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler expressing and confirming vaccination efforts had been ramped up in the Northern Territory.
- **[The Sydney Morning Herald \(page 11\)](#)** reports that the slashing of the Australia's Economic Accelerator (AEA) program in the federal budget risks endangering cutting edge products, including a pill designed to protect soldiers and cancer patients from radiation.
- **[The Courier Mail \(page 5\)](#)** reports that the imminent removal of endometriosis drug Zoladex from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will force sufferers to pay at least \$1200 per month.
- **[The Canberra Times \(page 1\)](#)** reports that dementia advocates are calling for increased funding under the National Dementia Action Plan as they say families are navigating systems without sufficient help.
- **[The Northern Territory News \(page 3\)](#)** reports that NT Health have expanded the risk area for Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE) to the entire Territory on the back of heavy rainfall, with two people dying from the rare mosquito-borne disease in Alice Springs.

- **ABC Online** reports that the Queensland State Government is set to expand its free nasal spray flu vaccine program, which made Flumist available for free for Queensland children between two and five as of March, to include children aged between six and 17 years of age.

MINISTER BUTLER

The \$2000 lecture from senior public servants

Australian Financial Review, General News, 20/05/2026, Mark Di Stefano, Page 33

The message to public servants out of last week's budget was supposed to be fiscal restraint. Interesting timing then for three of Canberra's most senior mandarins to peacock around a one-day talkfest...

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

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Outbreak worsens

Courier Mail, General News, 20/05/2026, Ellen Ransley, Page 15

Up to five Queenslanders have contracted diphtheria this year, as the country's worst-ever outbreak spreads across state lines. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said he was "very concerned" about "probably the biggest diphtheria outbreak we've seen, certainly in decades".

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

NDIS cuts to save \$36b

Pakenham Gazette, General News, 20/05/2026, Corey Everitt, Page 8

The latest Federal Budget reveals the government will save \$36 billion by making thousands of participants ineligible for the NDIS, in the largest overhaul in the history of the scheme. [...] And so we will put in place rules that make that much clearer," Health Minister Mark Butler said on Thursday.

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

'Monitoring it very closely': border changes flagged for Ebola

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 20/05/2026, Lucinda Garbutt-Young, Page 2

Travellers from West Africa could soon face additional screening for the deadly Ebola virus. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said border measures could be increased if the outbreak spreads.

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

Diphtheria outbreak spreads across three states and Top End

Central Western Daily, General News, 20/05/2026, Lloyd Jones, Page 7

One of Australia's worst diphtheria outbreaks has spread across three states amid fears the respiratory disease has claimed a life in an outback community. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler described it as the biggest diphtheria outbreak in Australia for decades.

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

Disease spread concern

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 20/05/2026, Alexandra Feiam, Page 3

Diphtheria has spread from the Northern Territory into Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia, in what has been described as the worst outbreak in years. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler told ABC Radio National that federal authorities were waiting for the Northern Territory government's investigation into the death to be completed but said "there's no question that this is serious".

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Refunds but no price caps for older Australians

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 20/05/2026, Page 3

Long-awaited home care price caps to stop older Australians being overcharged have been deferred

indefinitely, but other financial protections have been introduced in the meantime. [...] "We don't want to set in place a price cap that really leads to unintended consequences, particularly that sees prices go up," Health Minister Mark Butler told ABC radio yesterday.

Also reported by: [Country News \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Ageing Australia \(Online\)](#).

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

Biosimilars key to PBS savings

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 19/05/2026, Page 2

In the wake of last week's 2026-27 Federal Budget, the Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA) has welcomed the government announcement that it will begin consultation on options to ensure Australians have fast access to life-saving medicines. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said, "The generics and biosimilars sector is a critical ingredient to sustainability, quality and affordability, from a national perspective and for patients.

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

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Total disability spending to hit \$100b despite NDIS cuts

Australian Financial Review, Other, 19/05/2026, Michael Smith

The Albanese government will increase total spending on disability to \$98 billion this year despite efforts to slow the runaway growth of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, as payments to support pensions for people who cannot work and to carers...

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The Saturday Paper asks for your consent to use your personal data to:

The Saturday Paper, Other, 19/05/2026, Karen Barlow

Mark Butler is not denying that the fraud regularly cited as justification for a further overhaul of the National Disability Insurance Scheme represents only a small fraction of the proposed deep cuts.

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Australians with Down's syndrome among those to suffer most from proposed NDIS cuts government analysis says

The Guardian, Other, 20/05/2026, Sarah Basford Canales and Dan Jervis-Bardy

Australians with visual impairment, psychosocial disability and Down's syndrome the most, according to government analysis, with the government hoping to slash those budgets by 50% by the end of 2027. [...] The health minister, Mark Butler, last week introduced changes he said were critical to achieving the national cabinet's annual growth rate target of 5-6% in the coming years.

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Plan to reduce private health rebates for older Australians to have 'almost no impact' on hospital system, expert says

The Guardian, Other, 19/05/2026, Krishani Dhanji

A leading health economist says the removal of higher private health insurance rebates for those aged 65 and over will have "almost no impact" on the public health system, despite backlash from insurers and advocacy groups. [...] Sign up for the Breaking News Australia email The health minister, Mark Butler, had announced the move – alongside drastic changes to the national disability insurance scheme – at the National Press Club on 22 April.

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Northern Territory diphtheria outbreak spreads across borders to Queensland, South Australia

ABC Online, Other, 19/05/2026, Jason Walls

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has expressed serious concern as one of Australia's worst-ever diphtheria outbreaks spreads across the Northern Territory border into Queensland and South Australia. Australia's National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System reports a total of 133 notifications

of the disease in the NT since the current outbreak began, with another six in SA and up to five in Queensland.

Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [Medical Forum \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#).

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Ministers spruik Hunter healthcare boost

2HD, Other, 19/05/2026

The Federal Government announced a \$25.3 million commitment, to be spent over three years in the latest Budget to boost health care across regional NSW. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says they're hoping to change that.

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Australia considers tighter travel restrictions as Ebola outbreak escalates in Africa

7News.com.au, Other, 20/05/2026

Australia could soon tighten travel restrictions as fears grow over the escalating Ebola outbreak spreading through parts of Central Africa. [...] "They'll be revising or reviewing travel advice for Uganda," Health Minister Mark Butler said.

Also reported by: [Countryman \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

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'Deeply concerning': NT's diphtheria outbreak spreads to three more states

9News, Other, 19/05/2026

A resurgence of an almost-eradicated, highly contagious disease in the Northern Territory has now spread across three state borders, in what federal Health Minister Mark Butler has described as a "very concerning" development. The Northern Territory has recorded 133 cases of diphtheria to date, prompting a major push to increase

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Minister backs careful use of automated systems in NDIS

CathNews, Other, 19/05/2026

Health Minister Mark Butler has defended the increased use of automated decision-making in the National Disability Insurance Scheme, declaring that automation will play a growing role in administering social programs nationwide.

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NDIS reforms to give more power to minister, boost automated decision-making

Croakey, Other, 19/05/2026, Richard Pullin

An "extraordinarily short timeline", greater ministerial powers and the prospect of automated decision-making have added to fears among disability advocates over the scope and size of the Government's reform plans for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). [...] Health Minister Mark Butler introduced changes that, if passed by parliament, will tighten access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

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When fiscal rescue becomes a rights retreat

Eureka Street, Other, 19/05/2026, Tom Keating

On the day Mark Butler introduced the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill to parliament, the minister described the NDIS as 'a statement of our national values' and 'a source of national pride.' He is right.

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Minister takes on Hunter GPs in government push to increase bulk-billing

Newcastle Herald, Other, 19/05/2026, Matthew Kelly

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler makes no apologies for disrupting the Hunter's GP market as part of a push to drive up Medicare bulk-billing rates. The government will spend \$25.3 million over three years to establish six fully bulk-billing GP clinics across the Hunter and Central Coast, which have some of the lowest bulk-billing rates in the country.

Also reported by: [Gloucester Advocate \(Online\)](#).

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Australia's pandemic preparedness tested

Nursing Review, Other, 19/05/2026

When news broke of an outbreak of the deadly hantavirus on board a cruise ship, the world held its collective breath. [...] "They're going to be put into the strongest quarantine arrangements you'll find anywhere in the world," Health Minister Mark Butler said on Friday.

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Urgent care clinics, medicines and vaccines: the budget and health

Nursing Review, Other, 19/05/2026, Mia Jessurun and Peter Breadon

Health was at the heart of last year's budget. [...] Although there's less new reform, there is new spending on prevention, and big changes in Health Minister Mark Butler's other portfolios of disability and aged care, with big NDIS cuts and moves to expand and improve aged care.

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Should biosims be the default?

Pharma In Focus, Other, 19/05/2026

Sandoz has welcomed Federal Government moves to begin consultation on changing prescribing practices so that biosimilars would be the default medicines for new prescriptions. [...] "The generics and biosimilars sector is a critical ingredient to the sustainability, quality and affordability from a national perspective and for patients," Minister for Health, Disability, and Ageing, Mark Butler, said.

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'Doesn't return by chance': Australia's 'deeply concerning' diphtheria outbreak, explained

SBS, Other, 19/05/2026, Arielle Richards

The vaccine that prevents this "ancient" disease is freely available. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler told ABC Radio National on Tuesday he was "very concerned" about the outbreak and said it was Australia's worst in decades.

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Saving the NDIS or shrinking it? History has a warning for Mark Butler

The Mandarin, Other, 19/05/2026, Tom Keating

Reform that removes support before alternatives exist is not reform. It is the displacement of risk onto people with disability, families, and already-strained systems. On May 14, 2026, Health Minister Mark Butler introduced the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill to federal parliament.

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PBS 'cannot stand still' as US drives drug pricing reform

The Medical Republic, Other, 19/05/2026, Cate Swannell

Medicines Australia has warned that Australia can no longer behave like a "small aggressive price suppressor" in a globally interconnected medicines market, arguing that US pricing reforms are already changing pharmaceutical launch strategies and threatening patient access to new therapies. [...]

Federal health minister Mark Butler previously acknowledged concerns about the global implications of US pricing reform, warning in March that it could have a "chilling effect" on pharmaceutical companies' willingness to bring medicines to markets like Australia.

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\$25m bulk-billing clinic rollout begins in NSW

The Medical Republic, Other, 19/05/2026, Amanda Sheppeard

But the move has GP leaders questioning the impact on other businesses, and why community health can't have a share. [...] Assistant health minister Emma McBride said the clinics would complement other Medicare reforms already underway in the region.

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Government hits pause on Support at Home price caps

The Weekly Source, Other, 19/05/2026, Caroline Egan

With less than six weeks until rollout, the Government has deferred the introduction of Support at Home price caps amid concerns about inflation and provider "price gouging". [...] Minister for Health, Disability and Ageing Mark Butler said Government concern about global price volatility, due to the war in Iran, are a factor in the deferral decision.

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Ripped off older Aussies eligible for refunds as price caps on aged care home services delayed indefinitely

Yahoo! Finance Australia, Other, 19/05/2026, Nick Whigham

Older Australians who have been overcharged for home care services could see money returned to them under new changes in the aged care sector. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said the government had listened to older Australians and their families who called for stronger protections against "rogue" market prices.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Perth Now \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC News Afternoons, 19/05/2026, Ros Childs

Interview with COTA Australia Chief Executive Officer Patricia Sparrow. Childs says the Federal Government has delayed its plan to introduce price caps on home care services used by older Australians, and Health Minister Mark Butler maintained that the new implementation date has not yet been finalised. Sparrow states that it is more important that a series of stronger consumer protections is introduced so they can ensure there is affordability and strong price caps in the future.

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Channel 10, 10's Late News, 19/05/2026, Ursula Heger

The Northern Territory's diphtheria outbreak is now one of the worst in Australia's history, with 75 cases now confirmed in Western Australia. As the infection spreads in Queensland and South Australia, Federal Health Minister Mark Butler states that it is the biggest outbreak they have seen for decades.

Also reported by: [ABC \(Darwin\)](#), [ABC News \(Sydney\)](#).

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Channel 7, Seven News, 19/05/2026, Peter Mitchell

Tougher rules for in-home support providers are being introduced in a crackdown on price gouging in aged care. The Federal Government has delayed introducing price caps for in-home services for older Australians, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler saying that it is important they get the price caps right.

Similar coverage reported by: [Channel 7 \(Brisbane\)](#), [ABC News \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Adelaide\)](#).

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Channel 9, Today , 19/05/2026, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

Panel discussion with Health Minister Mark Butler and Independent MP Monique Ryan. Butler discusses the viral AI memes of PM Anthony Albanese, saying that their tax policies have two key principles, namely to earn their income from wages, working in a hospital or an aged care facility, or whether they earn their income from a trust or from an asset.

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NBN Newcastle Hunter, NBN News, 19/05/2026, Natasha Beyersdorf

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler was at Charlestown this morning, spruiking the budget investment for six new bulk billing general practices in the Hunter and Central Coast. He says the Federal Government is looking to improve local access rates.

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ABC Gold Coast, Drive, 19/05/2026, Bern Young

Officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Border Force are with health experts today in response to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and one in Uganda, while the United States has banned non-citizens from Uganda, the DRC and South Sudan from entering in an attempt to stop any potential spread of the virus. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says Australian officials will discuss any procedures in Australia that need to change.

Also reported by: [ABC Radio Melbourne \(Melbourne\)](#), [ABC Radio Sydney \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#), [Triple J \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC Radio Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#).

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ABC Radio Darwin , 16:00 News, 19/05/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler is defending a decision to reduce private health insurance rebates for Australians in the budget. Currently, Australians over 65 get a larger rebate than younger people, but the Federal Government is planning to make the rebate the same, regardless of age.

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

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2CC, Canberra Live, 19/05/2026, Leon Delaney

Delaney is joined by Associated Press federal politics reporter Zac de Silva. De Silva says the Federal Government has been working on setting price caps on home care services used by older Australians, but costs have increased due to the Iranian war. He also adds that they have heard from Federal Health Minister Mark Butler that the caps would lead to higher prices if they are imposed now.

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ABC Alice Springs, Drive Show, 19/05/2026, Nat Tencic

Interview with Adelaide University School of Public Health Professor Adrian Esterman. Tencic says the NT is currently experiencing a diphtheria outbreak, prompting Federal Health Minister Mark Butler to urge Territorians to check their immunisation records. Esterman says vaccination rates have dropped slightly below 90% for the first time in decades, but he also notes that the issue is poor housing, and not vaccination hesitancy, because Aboriginal children are very well-covered for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis.

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ABC Newcastle, Drive, 19/05/2026, Jenny Marchant

Interview with Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Hunter Deputy Chair Dr Mollenkopf. Marchant says Federal Health Minister Mark Butler was in Newcastle this morning, where he spruiked the Federal Government's \$25m budget package to roll out six bulk billing GP clinics across the Hunter and Central Coast. Mollenkopf says they have a cultural reason as to why doctors in the Hunter should not bulk bill as much as in other places, such as Sydney, and it has really been a culture of delivering a level of care that the consumers in the region need.

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ABC Newcastle, Breakfast (Late), 19/05/2026, Paul Culliver

Interview with Health Minister Mark Butler about six new bulk billing clinics for Newcastle. Butler explains that \$25m has been spent to get six new bulk billing GP practices, and the reason for that is to intervene in the market effectively. He further explains that the big investments that they are making in bulk wheeling simply aren't enough to shift the dial in Newcastle.

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ABC Radio Adelaide, 13:00 News, 19/05/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the Federal Government is very concerned by a diphtheria outbreak in the Northern Territory and Western Australia. There have been more than 160 cases of the contagious infection across the country this year, with Australia recording its first death from the disease in nearly a decade.

Similar coverage reported by: [ABC Broken Hill \(Broken Hill\)](#), [ABC Radio Darwin \(Darwin\)](#), [MIX 104.9 \(Darwin\)](#), [Triple J \(Sydney\)](#).

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ABC Radio Brisbane, 17:00 News, 19/05/2026

The Federal Government has put an indefinite hold on plans to cap the prices older Australians pay for home care. No new start date has been locked in, but Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the sector's watchdog will get tougher powers down on price gouging while the details are fine-tuned.

Also reported by: [ABC Radio Melbourne \(Melbourne\)](#), [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#), [ABC Radio Sydney \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC Radio Canberra \(Canberra\)](#).

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ABC Radio Canberra, PM, 19/05/2026, Samantha Donovan

Report by Rachel Mealy. The Federal Government is delaying its plan to set price caps on Support at Home packages used by older Australians, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler stating that it is important they get the price caps right. Butler also says the Federal Government has expanded the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's powers to give consumers better protection against price gouging.

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ABC Radio Melbourne, Evenings, 19/05/2026, David Astle

Samantha Edmonds from the Older Persons Advocacy Network says many older Australians are struggling, and they are disappointed the Federal Government has delayed its price caps for in-home aged care services. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler notes the delay will allow more consultation.

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

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Radio National, Breakfast, 19/05/2026, Sally Sara

Interview with Minister for Health and Ageing, Disability, and the NDIS Mark Butler. Compere says the government has again delayed a key element of its aged care reform, as it looks at a price cap on services for in-home care, which won't start on 1 July and will be deferred indefinitely. Butler explains that they have put requirements for prices to be reasonable and they were worried about reports of price gouging in this sector, so they've been monitoring that over the relatively short period of time that the new legislation has been placed.

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MINISTER RAE

Refunds but no price caps for older Australians

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 20/05/2026, Page 3

Long-awaited home care price caps to stop older Australians being overcharged have been deferred indefinitely, but other financial protections have been introduced in the meantime. [...] "We don't want to set in place a price cap that really leads to unintended consequences, particularly that sees prices go up," Health Minister Mark Butler told ABC radio yesterday.

Also reported by: [Country News \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Newcastle\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Ageing Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Aged care watchdog to fight price gouging, but fee caps put on hold

Canberra Times, Other, 19/05/2026, Phoebe Loomes

Aged care providers have been put on notice for price gouging as the government increases powers of the industry watchdog to take action. [...] Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae said the government had "listened, and we're acting" to improve care for older people.

Also reported by: [Australian Ageing Agenda \(Online\)](#), [Ageing Australia \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [CathNews \(Online\)](#), [Catholic Health Australia \(Online\)](#), [OverSixty \(Online\)](#), [The Weekly Source \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Ripped off older Aussies eligible for refunds as price caps on aged care home services delayed indefinitely

Yahoo! Finance Australia, Other, 19/05/2026, Nick Whigham

Older Australians who have been overcharged for home care services could see money returned to them under new changes in the aged care sector. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said the government had listened to older Australians and their families who called for stronger protections against "rogue" market prices.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Perth Now \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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SBS, World News Australia, 19/05/2026, Janice Petersen

The Federal Government has indefinitely delayed the rollout of home care price caps for older Australians to avoid locking in current inflated prices. According to Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, Aged Care Minister Sam Rae has announced a range of protections against price gouging for recipients of aged care.

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4CA AM, Breakfast, 19/05/2026, Murray Jones

Interview with Aged Care Minister Sam Rae, about the issues surrounding the NDIS. Rae points out that they are undergoing reform of Australia's aged care system, as they need a system that will meet the needs of older Australians. He states that they have brought in place the new Aged Care Act and also brought into place the "Support at Home" system, which is the expanded version of their home care programme.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

\$25m bulk-billing clinic rollout begins in NSW

The Medical Republic, Other, 19/05/2026, Amanda Sheppard

But the move has GP leaders questioning the impact on other businesses, and why community health can't have a share. [...] Assistant health minister Emma McBride said the clinics would complement other Medicare reforms already underway in the region.

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ABC Western Queensland, Breakfast, 19/05/2026, Danny Kennedy

Interview with Federal Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health Emma McBride, about the first outback endometriosis and pelvic pain clinic at Blackall. McBride explains that when they came to power, they had a particular focus on the health and well-being of women and girls. She adds that they are also one of the first Federal Governments that has a majority of women members.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

ABC Radio Sydney, Mornings, 19/05/2026, Hamish Macdonald

Interview with Federal Assistant Minister for Women, Health, and Aged Care Rebecca White, about cardiovascular conditions that women suffer from. White recalls hearing stories that people might be presented with symptoms of a heart attack while in the emergency department, and it takes longer for them to be supported. She adds that cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of Australian women deaths.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

\$25m bulk-billing clinic rollout begins in NSW

The Medical Republic, Other, 19/05/2026, Amanda Sheppard

But the move has GP leaders questioning the impact on other businesses, and why community health can't have a share. [...] Assistant health minister Emma McBride said the clinics would complement other Medicare reforms already underway in the region.

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DEPARTMENT

The \$2000 lecture from senior public servants

Australian Financial Review, General News, 20/05/2026, Mark Di Stefano, Page 33

The message to public servants out of last week's budget was supposed to be fiscal restraint. Interesting timing then for three of Canberra's most senior mandarins to peacock around a one-day talkfest...

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

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Ageing Well Expo connecting our older residents with critical services

Murray Pioneer, General News, 20/05/2026, Page 28

A free community event brought together older residents, carers, service providers and other

Murraylands organisations for an afternoon focused on encouraging people to "stay active, stay informed, and age well". [...] Other speakers and stallholders included Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, Dementia Australia, Heart Foundation, Diabetes SA, Office for Ageing Well, Care Finder, Aged Rights Advocacy Service, and Services Australia.

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Price caps deferred, additional powers for regulator

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 19/05/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Capped pricing for Support at Home will no longer start in July 2026, but the quality and safety commission has new powers to order refunds for overcharged services. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the commission will also be specifically monitoring the prices for personal care as they transition into clinical care.

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Juniper opens 11 staff homes in remote Fitzroy Crossing

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 19/05/2026

Western Australian aged care provider Juniper has opened 11 new permanent staff homes in Fitzroy Crossing. [...] The staff accommodation was opened with a Welcome to Country, smoking ceremony and ribbon cutting event attended by government officials – including Department of Health, Disability and Ageing director for WA Rebecca McIlroy.

[Read More](#)

Troy Cassar-Daley backs winter vaccine campaign for mob

National Indigenous Times, Other, 19/05/2026, Joseph Guenzler

Gumbaynggirr and Bundjalung country music icon Troy Cassar-Daley is urging First Nations people to get vaccinated before winter, as flu, COVID-19 and RSV cases rise across Australia. The campaign, run by the Australian Government's Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, encourages First Nations Australians aged 50 and over to speak with their doctor or health worker about which winter vaccines are right for them.

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Urgent care clinics, medicines and vaccines: the budget and health

Nursing Review, Other, 19/05/2026, Mia Jessurun and Peter Breadon

Health was at the heart of last year's budget. [...] Although there's less new reform, there is new spending on prevention, and big changes in Health Minister Mark Butler's other portfolios of disability and aged care, with big NDIS cuts and moves to expand and improve aged care.

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Australians with Down's syndrome among those to suffer most from proposed NDIS cuts government analysis says

The Guardian, Other, 20/05/2026, Sarah Basford Canales and Dan Jarvis-Bardy

Australians with visual impairment, psychosocial disability and Down's syndrome the most, according to government analysis, with the government hoping to slash those budgets by 50% by the end of 2027. [...] The health minister, Mark Butler, last week introduced changes he said were critical to achieving the national cabinet's annual growth rate target of 5-6% in the coming years.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Why Labor's aged care fix fails vulnerable retirees

Sydney Morning Herald, Money, 20/05/2026, Rachel Lane, Page 26

In January last year, the government increased the market price cap on aged care beds from \$550,000

to \$750,000. It turned the aged care myth of "if I don't have any money, I won't get in" into a reality.

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

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Ripped off home-care recipients eligible for refunds

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 19/05/2026

The federal government is introducing new protections for elderly people in the home care packages program. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said the government had listened to older Australians and their families who called for stronger protections against "rogue" market prices.

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Aged care price caps: Why they're not here yet, and why they matter

HelloCare, Other, 19/05/2026, Jakob Neeland

Australia's aged care system has undergone its most significant overhaul in decades, but one of the reforms older Australians needed most has remained frustratingly out of reach. Mandatory price caps on in-home aged care services were promised from the outset of the Support at Home program, delayed once, and are now the subject of yet more consultation rather than firm action.

[Read More](#)

Three ways Support at Home providers are failing prudential management rules

The Weekly Source, Other, 19/05/2026, Caroline Egan

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) is undertaking a prudential review of Support at Home providers - and given the early-stage nature of the reforms, lapses are likely.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Statewide Mornings, 19/05/2026, Leon Compton

Interview with Chris Grice, CEO, National Seniors Australia, about private health insurance changes. Grice explains that before the reforms on private health were introduced, a third of their pensioners and part-pensioners were already concerned about the affordability of private health insurance.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

ABC News, Afternoon Briefing, 19/05/2026, Patricia Karvelas

Interview with Shadow Social Services Minister Melissa McIntosh. McIntosh says the NDIS has blown out under the current government, but she has been speaking to NDIS participants, particularly those with severe disabilities, and they are now seeing their plans cut already. She states that she will be on the Federal Minister's back to ensure that the Federal Government is doing the right thing for people who have disabilities.

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PRIMARY CARE

CareFlight course turns locals into lifesavers

Northern Territory News, General News, 20/05/2026, Page 10

The outcomes of serious health emergencies in remote communities often depend on what happens in the critical moments before professional care can arrive. During a recent aeromedical retrieval from a

remote Northern Territory community, CareFlight crews arrived to find a patient already receiving care from local responders.

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

Looking to a Looking brighter future

Ballarat Courier, General News, 20/05/2026, Nick Powell, Page 1

Christy Bell knows what agonising pain is like. Not only has she given birth, but she has fainted while undergoing an Intrauterine Device (IUD) insertion.

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

Clinic supports mums far away from home

Cairns Post, General News, 20/05/2026, Stella McKenna, Page 4

Far North women forced to travel away from their communities weeks before giving birth are being supported in Cairns through a new clinic designed to make the experience less isolating. The newly launched Sunbird Clinic at Cairns Hospital is providing care for up to 30 women each month travelling from Cape York and the Torres Strait to give birth in the city.

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

Urgent care clinic a critical need

Daily Liberal, General News, 20/05/2026, Ciara Bastow, Page 3

The Australian Dental Association NSW (ADA NSW) has backed calls for a Medicare-funded urgent care clinic in Dubbo. ADA NSW Board Member and Dubbo dentist, Dr Sophie Halpin, said communities across Western NSW are seeing growing demand for urgent healthcare services as patients delay treatment due to rising living costs and limited access to care.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Home design features for a longer, healthier life

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 20/05/2026, Robyn Willis, Page 12

The way we age and the quality of life we enjoy as the years tick by depends on a number of factors. While some may have won the genetic lottery for long life, lifestyle factors such as diet can play a key role in reducing the risk of certain cancers, as well as diseases like dementia and Parkinson's.

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

How to still be a superwoman

Daily Telegraph, General News, 20/05/2026, Danielle Gusmaroli, Page 19

A prominent GP has urged menopausal women to consider hormone replacement therapy to "get back to being superwomen", telling a medical conference the long-held belief it causes cancer is outdated and does not reflect modern treatments. Avalon doctor Ceri Cashell said the widely cited 2002 Women's Health Initiative (WHI) study, which linked some forms of hormone replacement therapy to an increased risk of breast cancer, overstated the dangers.

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

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

Pallas wants booze tax fix

Herald Sun, General News, 20/05/2026, Aris Schuler-Shah Alex White, Page 8

Former Victorian Treasurer Tim Pallas has joined industry calls for the Australian government to overhaul alcohol taxes to wipe out dodgy operators and stop the flooding of dangerous illicit alcohol. In a rare move, the retired state heavyweight has publicly called for action, following 30 hospitality venues

in Victoria being targeted in firebombing and drive-by shooting attacks, and forensic laboratory tests uncovering plastic contaminants and methanol in vodka sold on retail shelves.

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

Crackdown on bootleg threat

Herald Sun, Editorials, 20/05/2026, Page 24

The Allan government must move far more urgently and effectively to tackle the rising threat of bootleg alcohol in Victoria. The same mistakes that were made in the lacklustre effort against illicit tobacco simply can't be repeated.

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

One family's tragic battle

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 20/05/2026, Jacinta Round, Page 18

At 22, Charlotte Broome-Morton says watching a rare form of dementia slowly steal the mother she knows and loves has been like "losing someone while they're still there". [...] Data released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare last year revealed dementia as the leading cause of death of Australians.

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

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

Illicit ciggie sales on for young & old

West Australian, General News, 20/05/2026, Oliver Lane, Page 3

Almost four in five young people buying tobacco are choosing illicit products, with easy-to-access convenience stores or tobacconists a major source. Young people aged 18 to 24 were found to be relying on bricks-and-mortar locations to source illicit tobacco, a study by the Cancer Council has found.

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Bootleg booze a health hazard

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 20/05/2026, Page 6

Bootleg bottles of vodka containing more than 10 times the legal limit of methanol are being sold in bottle shops, as experts warn that lives are at risk from the black market. Lab tests of the illicit vodka uncovered plastic contaminants and methanol, with one in three bottle shops now estimated to be selling illegal booze.

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

Booze lose: Aussies risk health with illicit alcohol

West Australian, Other, 19/05/2026, William Ton and Melissa Meehan

Unsuspecting Australians could be drinking contaminated illicit alcohol stocked in regular bottle shops, leaving them at risk of serious health consequences. Almost one-in-three bottle shops visited in Victoria contained suspected illicit alcohol products, researchers from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW and National Drug Research Institute found.

[Read More](#)

People grappling with obesity are using super for weight loss surgery, but those looking overseas face risks

ABC Online, Other, 19/05/2026, Johnson Raela

At his heaviest, Fili Fili weighed about 300 kilograms. He still doesn't know exactly how heavy he was — 300 was just the number his doctor gave him after he maxed out the scales at the clinic in 2017.

[Read More](#)

Retailers warn cigarette tax is fuelling Melbourne tobacco warns as organised crime thrives

7News.com.au, Other, 19/05/2026, Aimee Edwards

Melbourne's escalating tobacco wars have sparked renewed calls to slash Australia's tobacco excise, with retailers arguing soaring cigarette prices are fuelling organised crime, violence, and a booming black market. The Australian Association of Convenience Stores is backing calls from the New South Wales Premier, Chris Minns, to reduce tobacco excise by 50 per cent, which would lower the price of a legal packet of cigarettes to about \$25, compared to roughly \$15 for illegal products sold on the black market.

Also reported by: [9News \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

'Disgraceful': Contaminated booze that killed Melbourne teens Bianca Jones and Holly Bowles found in Australian liquor stores

9News, Other, 19/05/2026

Contaminated alcohol is finding its way onto Australian liquor store shelves in alarming numbers, prompting a dire warning from the grieving father of a Melbourne teenager who was fatally poisoned in Laos.

[Read More](#)

Peptides a threat to health and sports integrity: SIA

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 19/05/2026

Concerns are being raised about the growing use of peptides, putting athletes at risk of lengthy bans. Sports Integrity Australia (SIA) is putting athletes, coaches and support personnel, including pharmacists, on notice that the use of peptides is banned under the World Anti-Doping Code.

[Read More](#)

Are there really 250 000 people vaping in Australia?

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 19/05/2026, Simon Chapman

The debate about electronic cigarettes has spawned a number of factoids: "facts" that become accepted as true because of their frequent repetition. [...] There are two main recent sources of data on e-cigarette use in Australia: the 2016 national data on e-cigarette use obtained by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) from its National Drug Strategy Household Survey, and the Australian Secondary School Smoking, Alcohol and Drug Use Survey conducted in 2014.

[Read More](#)

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

On a cliff edge

Canberra Times, General News, 20/05/2026, Ray Athwal, Page 1

Dementia has become the leading cause of death in Australia, data shows. Diagnosis is a difficult time for sufferers and the disease is putting a strain on the health and aged care systems.

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The hidden battle after cancer: Expert leads push to treat survivor side effects

The Courier Mail, Other, 19/05/2026

In the battle against cancer, the challenges continue long after treatment. Professor Raymond Chan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at Flinders University understands this well – that's why he's dedicated his career and life into research in this area.

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

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 19/05/2026, Adam Steer

Interview with Crohn's and Colitis Australia Acting CEO Wayne Massuger, on World Inflammatory Bowel Disease Day. Massuger discusses the difference between Inflammatory Bowel Disease and Irritable Bowel Syndrome, stating that IBD is a chronic condition of the gut that causes injury to the bowel, and 180,000 Australians are living with it, while IBS is a more common condition that is often related to the type of food eaten. He also says landmarks across Darwin will be lit with purple lights to recognise and raise awareness about IBD.

[Play Now](#)

6PR, Afternoons, 19/05/2026, Tod Johnston

Interview with Crohn's and Colitis Australia Acting CEO Wayne Massuger. Massuger discusses the difference between Inflammatory Bowel Disease and Irritable Bowel Syndrome, stating that IBD is a chronic condition of the gut that causes injury to the bowel, while IBS is a more common condition that is often related to the type of food eaten. He notes that Inflammatory Bowel Disease is a condition often diagnosed between 15 and 35 years of age, and 180,000 Australians are currently living with it, but there is still no cure, and people are urged to have themselves checked or screened.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

How to spot 'AI psychosis' red flags and help someone experiencing chatbot delusions

ABC Online, Other, 19/05/2026, James Purtill

Prolonged periods of intensive chatbot use may be amplifying dangerous and harmful delusions for some users, in a phenomenon dubbed "AI psychosis". In a recent example, a 38-year-old Perth man shared chat logs with the ABC showing how a months-long period of chatbot use led to him believing he had created an uncontrollable sentient AI on a desktop PC, and that corporate secret agents would target his family.

[Read More](#)

Research in the news

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 19/05/2026

An Australian study of self-harm among adolescents and young adults published in The Lancet found the behaviour is strongly linked to depression and anxiety. About 8% of adolescents reported self-harm; however, in most cases the behaviour resolved spontaneously.

[Read More](#)

NSW police to avoid mental health incidents under UK model after spate of fatal shootings

The Guardian, Other, 19/05/2026, Jordyn Beazley

New South Wales police and the health department are expected to sign a new agreement on how to deal with mental health incidents, as the police union demands officers no longer be the "default response for every crisis". "There is an MoU that is very close to being signed," the police minister, Yasmin Catley, told police union members on Tuesday when discussing mental health call-outs.

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IMMUNISATION

Free flu jabs set to return at Ekka

Courier Mail, General News, 20/05/2026, Hayden Johnson and Rose Innes, Page 7

Flu vaccinations are set to return to the Ekka after they were controversially axed in the first year of the

Crisafulli government. Queensland Health did not have a vaccination tent at last year's Ekka due to a previously low turnout, it said.

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

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

Young 'superspreaders' targeted in bid to avoid repeat of deadly flu season

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 19/05/2026, Courtney Kruk

The state's nasal spray flu vaccination program will expand to target more young superspreaders in a bid to stave off another deadly flu season, as figures show Queenslanders remain hesitant to get vaccinated. Health Minister Tim Nicholls posed for cameras as he received his flu vaccination from a chemist on Brisbane's northside on Tuesday morning, before announcing that the state's needle-free nasal spray program, originally offered to children aged two to five, would be expanded to all people under 18.

[Read More](#)

Health Minister expands free flu nasal spray program for children

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 19/05/2026, Rose Innes and Elodie Jakes

Labor leader Steven Miles has accused the LNP government of expanding its flu vaccine program because thousands of doses are approaching expiration due to poor uptake. Health Minister Tim Nicholls has received his flu jab this morning where he also revealed nearly 20,000 children aged two to five had received the new flu nasal spray.

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

[Read More](#)

Vaccine fatigue threatens vulnerable Tasmanians after horror flu season, top doctor warns

The Mercury, Other, 19/05/2026, Alison Foletta

Tasmania's flu related deaths nearly doubled last year in a horror season prompting a plea from doctors for more people to get vaccinated after a worrying drop. After a "horror season" of flu that saw deaths rise and hospitals stretched, Tasmanians are being urged to get vaccinated, with health experts warning "vaccine fatigue" is leaving our most vulnerable exposed.

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

[Read More](#)

Eligibility expanded for Queensland's free nasal spray flu vaccine program

ABC Online, Other, 19/05/2026, Stephen Clarke

The Queensland government's free nasal spray flu vaccine program has been expanded to include children aged between six and 17 years of age. In March, FluMist was introduced for free for Queensland kids between the ages of two and five, with the vaccine available privately for others.

[Read More](#)

Queensland expands nasal flu vax access

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 19/05/2026

Needle-free influenza vaccinations can now be administered to children and teens up to 18 years under Queensland's free immunisation program.

[Read More](#)

More older people to access free RSV vaccines

Medical Forum, Other, 19/05/2026

More Western Australians are being provided access to free respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

immunisation. In February the state government announced those aged 65 and over in residential aged care could access the vaccine free and now more people from the age of 50 years are eligible.

[Read More](#)

Channel 7, Seven News, 19/05/2026, Max Futchter and Sharyn Ghidella

The Queensland Government's needle-free flu vaccine program has been expanded, with children aged six to 17 now able to get the jab without needing to roll up their sleeves. The free flu mist vaccine is available at GPs or local pharmacies.

Similar coverage reported by: [Channel 10 \(Brisbane\)](#).

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4BC, Afternoons, 19/05/2026, Carla Bignasca

Queensland's needle-free flu vaccine is now available for kids and teenagers aged six to 17. It is a shot in the arm for those who struggle with a needle vaccination.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Australia could lose anti-radiation pill

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 20/05/2026, Angus Dalton, Page 11

A world-first pill designed to protect soldiers, the public and cancer patients from radiation is just one of the innovations Australia could lose to other nations after the axing of a federal program which helped commercialise research. The government recouped \$800 million by cutting Australia's Economic Accelerator (AEA) program in the budget, and instead diverted funds to public science agencies including CSIRO and the National Measurement Institute.

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

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

High malnutrition rates found in remote hospital: Study

Nursing Review, Other, 19/05/2026, Stefanie Schultz

A decade-long study has revealed that malnutrition is widespread among adults admitted to a remote Central Australian hospital, with researchers warning the problem is far more common, and more complex, than many people realise. The study, led by Charles Darwin University (CDU), examined 980 adult patients and found that almost half were at risk of malnutrition, while nearly 60 per cent of those assessed were already malnourished.

[Read More](#)

Inside the Southern Cross University trial tackling climate PTSD with MDMA

The Courier Mail, Other, 19/05/2026

Researchers have secured \$3.8m to test groundbreaking MDMA therapy for climate trauma survivors, many of whom remain homeless after devastating floods. When catastrophic floods devastated Australia's NSW Northern Rivers region in 2022, followed by landslides, the physical damage was undeniable.

[Read More](#)

Swinburne researcher discovers broccoli extract could halt incurable neurological disorder

The Courier Mail, Other, 19/05/2026

Swinburne University researchers have discovered that sulforaphane from a green vegetable could treat a rare genetic disease that kills around age 50. Rare conditions can be daunting, terrifying and isolating.

[Read More](#)

Scientists use artificial intelligence to design viruses that hunt and kill superbugs

The Courier Mail, Other, 19/05/2026

Scientists have sequenced samples from one in five South Australian cystic fibrosis patients as antibiotic resistance reaches crisis levels worldwide. From the smallest organisms on Earth may come some of the biggest breakthroughs in science.

[Read More](#)

Australian sleep expert on the verge of first targeted drug to treat sleep apnoea

Northern Territory News, Other, 19/05/2026, NewsCorp Australia

A former elite cyclist and now an expert in human sleep and respiratory physiology research has been studies sleep disorders for years. Here's how they happen and therapies that can help cure them.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Call for Lockyer hospital

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 20/05/2026, Zachary Probert, Page 1

The Lockyer Valley mayor has backed calls from residents for a regional hospital, calling on the state government for support. Tanya Milligan said Lockyer Valley Regional Council had been in pursuit of a desperately needed regional hospital for more than a decade, ever since she became mayor.

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Silence is deafening

Warrnambool Standard, General News, 20/05/2026, Ben Silvester, Page 1

The Victorian government has refused to explain why Warrnambool's \$396.1 million hospital redevelopment has been delayed again, or whether it will meet the revised deadline. The 2026 state budget revealed the project timeline had been pushed back at least another three months to March 2028, but advisers within the lockup on budget day did not know the reason for the delay.

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'Pain is getting worse': Hospital expansion stalls leaving patients in limbo until 2032

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 19/05/2026, Elodie Jakes

The LNP has been slammed over the stalled construction of an expanded Redcliffe Hospital, with Labor accusing the government of keeping patients in limbo. Construction on a 200-bed expansion at

Redcliffe Hospital has stalled for more than a year, with Labor accusing the LNP government of leaving patients in limbo with the project now unlikely to finish until 2032.

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

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Queensland Health suspends nurse in ageism row

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 20/05/2026, Finn Rice Coleman, Page 9

Queensland Health has returned fire at a Hervey Bay nurse who claimed to be the victim of age discrimination. Hervey Bay Hospital mental health clinical nurse consultant Alice Huntly asked the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to urgently halt Queensland Health's "ongoing disciplinary processes" against her while her own claims of "unlawful discrimination in the work area" were assessed, a newly-published decision delivered April 24 has revealed.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#).

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Older pharmacists dropping rego

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 19/05/2026

Declining numbers of pharmacists aged 60 years and older are maintaining their registration, as profession's ranks continue to swell Registration data from the Pharmacy Board of Australia for the March 2026 quarter shows a record 42,941 pharmacists hold professional registration The figures released by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) on Monday (18 May 2026), revealed that the

[Read More](#)

Australian medical college leader suspended from position over alleged health and safety breach

The Guardian, Other, 19/05/2026, Donna Lu

The charities regulator has suspended the president-elect of one of Australia's oldest medical colleges for allegedly contravening a direction from the NSW work health and safety watchdog. The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) on Monday issued a notice suspending Dr Sharmila Chandran as a responsible person of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, which is a registered charity, until 20 September.

[Read More](#)

Minns government pledges to make major nursing recruitment drive

NEWS.com.au, Other, 20/05/2026, David Hannant

One state government has accelerated nurse recruitment beyond its current 900 new hires a year to improve the treatment of patients in public hospitals. Ballooning numbers of patients in need of urgent care has sparked a fresh pledge to put hundreds of more nurses on NSW public hospital wards.

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

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Endo drug to be axed

Courier Mail, General News, 20/05/2026, Page 5

Women suffering endometriosis may be forced to pay at least \$1200 for a sixmonth supply of a commonly used drug when it is removed from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Zoladex 3.6mg implants are about to be discontinued in Australia.

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

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Reform PBS or fall further behind, warns peak body

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 19/05/2026

Australians are increasingly being pushed to "the back of the global queue" for innovative medicines, and risk falling further behind without major reform of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), said a new report from Medicines Australia.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

Baffled by surcharge

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 20/05/2026, Page 3

Despite being a key part of Australia's tax and healthcare system, the Medicare Levy Surcharge remains poorly understood. The surcharge is an extra 1-1.5 per cent levy paid by high income earners who don't have private hospital cover.

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Dark chapter in state's history finally gets formal recognition

Launceston Examiner, General News, 20/05/2026, Matt Maloney, Page 7

The Tasmanian government and Parliament have delivered a historic, unreserved apology to the families of 177 people whose organs and tissue samples were systematically and unlawfully stolen during coronial autopsies over a 25-year period. Between 1966 and 1991, forensic and hospital pathologists employed by the Department of Health removed human remains without the knowledge or consent of the deceased's next of kin.

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Former Brisbane doctor hit with 148 charges over alleged sexual assault of 15 women between early 2000s, 2015

The Australian, Other, 19/05/2026, Andrew Hedgman

A Brisbane doctor has been hit with more than 100 sexual assault-related charges, allegedly committed against multiple women over more than a decade, following a historical police investigation. Detectives from Upper Mount Gravatt Criminal Investigation Branch allege the now-74-year-old Highgate Hill man sexually assaulted 15 women between the early 2000s and 2015 while working at a private health centre in Tarragindi.

[Read More](#)

Inquest hears elderly man who died was given another person's prescription medication

ABC Online, Other, 19/05/2026, Isabella Carbone

An 82-year-old man died after he ingested incorrectly labelled prescription medication dispensed at a pharmacy in Adelaide's northern suburbs, a court has heard. A coronial inquest is investigating the circumstances that led to the death of Pelayo Del Carmen Cortes Godoy on May 21, 2020.

[Read More](#)

Conviction after 'demonstrated and ongoing pattern of fraudulent behaviour'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 19/05/2026, Megan Haggan

A woman has appeared before Penrith Local Court after she repeatedly made claims to be a psychologist, including providing a false certificate of registration.

[Read More](#)

Elderly man's fatal overdose after pharmacy error

West Australian, Other, 19/05/2026, Abe Maddison

An elderly vision-impaired man who was given medication from an incorrectly labelled pill organiser subsequently died from a drug overdose, an inquest has heard.

[Read More](#)

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Health alert after deaths

Northern Territory News, General News, 20/05/2026, Gary Shipway, Page 3

Two people have died from the rare mosquito-borne disease Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE) in Alice Springs, prompting warnings for Territorians and visitors to take protection. The deaths from the virus were in April and May this year and NT health said the risk area for MVE had been expanded to include all regions of the Territory on the back of this year's significant rainfall.

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Two people die from Murray Valley encephalitis in Alice Springs, sparking NT health alert

ABC Online, Other, 19/05/2026

Two people have died from Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE) in Alice Springs during the past two months, prompting a renewed health alert for the mosquito-borne disease across the Northern Territory. In the alert issued today, an NT Health Department spokesperson said the deaths from the rare but potentially fatal virus had occurred in April and May, though gave no further details.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC Late News , 19/05/2026

The Northern Territory's diphtheria outbreak is now one of the worst in the nation's history, with cases now confirmed in WA, Queensland and South Australia The race is on to get the message out across Central Australia and deliver enough vaccines.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 19/05/2026, Sandra Sully

The World Health Organization is rushing tonnes of desperately-needed supplies to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as its Ebola outbreak grows. Despite the death toll now over 100, experts have warned that the outbreak is almost certainly more deadly than is currently being reported, with hundreds of suspected infections emerging from some densely populated areas.

Also reported by: [Channel 10 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Perth\)](#).

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Channel 7, Seven News, 19/05/2026, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson

The Federal Government is considering tightening travel restrictions as the number of people diagnosed with the Ebola virus continues to grow in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. As medical supplies are being rushed into the area, the World Health Organization has declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Adelaide\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Sydney\)](#), [Seven Tasmania \(Hobart\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Seven Wagga Wagga \(Wagga Wagga\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Adelaide\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Perth\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Perth\)](#).

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Channel 9, Nine News Late, 19/05/2026, Natalia Cooper

About 79 diphtheria cases have been confirmed in WA's Kimberley region, six in South Australia, and up to five in Queensland. Vaccination efforts have also ramped up in the Northern Territory, where more than 130 cases are now confirmed, including one suspected death.

Similar coverage reported by: [Channel 10 \(Perth\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Perth\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#).

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SBS, World News Australia (Late), 19/05/2026, Liz Maddock

According to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the outbreak of Bundibugyo ebolavirus in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has claimed at least 130 lives, and more than 500 cases of the virus have been recorded. The World Health Organization has declared the outbreak a public health emergency of global concern, but says it does not meet the threshold of a pandemic declaration.

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

[Play Now](#)

Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 19/05/2026, Ashleigh Gillon

Interview with Sydney University Infectious Disease and Global Health Professor Meru Sheel, on the Ebola outbreak in Africa and the diphtheria outbreak in the Northern Territory. Sheel says an outbreak of the Bundibugyo ebolavirus strain has been reported in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but there is no vaccine for this particular strain, and she does not think the current Ebola virus vaccine will be effective against it. She also says it is unfortunate that they are seeing a large scale of diphtheria in the NT, but the disease can be prevented through vaccines, and they have to strengthen the public health response by increasing vaccination rates.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Darwin , Drive, 19/05/2026, Adam Steer

NT Health officials are warning residents to take precautions, such as using insect repellent and wearing long clothes, to protect themselves against Murray Valley encephalitis, a potentially fatal mosquito-borne disease. NT Health says it will also carry out mosquito control efforts across the territory.

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Mornings, 19/05/2026, Tom Elliott

Around 100 people have now been confirmed dead in the Democratic Republic of Congo from Ebola. The World Health Organization has declared it an international emergency, but there is still no approved drug or vaccine for the strain.

[Play Now](#)

6PR, Drive, 19/05/2026, Jamie Burnett

Public health experts are concerned about an outbreak of diphtheria, which has spread from the Northern Territory into WA, Queensland, and South Australia. It is a bacterial infection that can present as a sore throat, swollen glands or poorly healing skin infections.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Canberra, Mornings, 19/05/2026, Saskia Mabin

Australia's chief health officers have met to discuss how to mitigate the risk of the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. They say the risk to Australia is low, but they are considering if measures such as travel advice or border screening are necessary.

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

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FIVEAA, Mornings, 19/05/2026, Graeme Goodings

Interview with Adelaide University Professor of Epidemiology Adrian Esterman, on the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo that has now caused at least 100 deaths. Esterman says Ebola has several variants, but there are no vaccines available for the current strain in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He notes that Ebola is not as infectious as COVID, but it can be transmitted through bodily fluids, and there is no reason to worry about a pandemic.

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

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Free-for-all games enhance profits

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 20/05/2026, Tim Moss, Page 19

For boys like me in the 1970s, Evel Knievel was everywhere. On TVs and T-shirts, in toy shops, pinball parlours and school playgrounds. [...] In April, Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration deemed increasingly popular peptides a "safety risk", with no evaluation of quality or effectiveness, but increasing reports of adverse side effects.

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

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Australian firms losing AI race at home as giants look to Silicon Valley

NEWS.com.au, Other, 19/05/2026, Eilidh Sproul-Mellis

Australian insurance chatbots built in San Francisco. Locally-scanned mammograms sent to South Korea. This is the new reality for Aussie consumers, who are missing out on homegrown solutions to modern dilemmas because big business and governments aren't backing Australian-made AI.

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

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

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FOOD STANDARDS

'Romaine calm': WA housemates' jumpy discovery in sealed lettuce bag

NEWS.com.au, Other, 19/05/2026, Jordana Shell

What jumped out of the lettuce bag? No, it's not the start of a terrible joke, but it is the start of a crazy story told by some Aussie housemates.

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

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AICIS

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