



TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 21st June 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sunday Herald Sun](#)** (page 12) reports an analysis of pricing data from online health directory Cleanbill indicates that despite the Federal Government investing two billion dollars a year into Medicare reforms to incentivise bulk billing, patients across Victoria continue to pay out-of-pocket doctor fees exceeding 50 dollars. Health Minister Mark Butler disputed the accuracy of the data, stating it does not present the full picture, and maintained that the implementation of these reforms means approximately 97 per cent of Australians now reside within a 20-minute drive of a registered Medicare bulk billing practice.
- **[The Sunday Age](#)** (page 1) reports an interim suppression order has been granted to an accused doctor fighting to keep his identity secret after allegedly filming females at a public pool, with critics highlighting a trend in Victorian courts to issue suppression orders, and calls for legislative reform to limit the scope of such orders.
- **[The Sunday Mail Brisbane](#)** (page 1) reports Queensland Health is reviewing its BreastScreen Queensland program materials after sending letters to more than 164,200 women in their 40s that urged them to reconsider mammograms by stating the evidence of benefit is less clear for their age group.
- **[The Sunday Territorian](#)** (page 12) reports resourcing shortages and extended wait times for routine morphology scans at the Royal Darwin Hospital have prompted concern from maternity

advocacy groups who hold the Federal Government accountable for the lack of additional infrastructure and staffing funding.

- **The Guardian** reports the AHPRA has adopted the IHRA's working definition of antisemitism as a reference tool to guide its regulatory work within the health system, though critics warn it could lead to vexatious complaints that silence health professionals.

MINISTER BUTLER

Patients still being billed

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 21/06/2026, Ashleigh Gleeson, Page 12

Patients are still being slugged more than \$50 in out-of-pocket doctor's fees across Victoria months after the start of the Federal Government's \$2bn a year reforms designed to incentivise bulk billing. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler slammed the Cleanbill data's accuracy, saying it didn't give the full picture.

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

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The NDIS has given Joe vital social skills. Funding cuts leave his mother fearing how he will 'do life'

MSN Australia, Other, 20/06/2026, Sarah Basford Canales

Joe Barham's favourite drink to make for customers is an iced chocolate. [...] Under a proposal by the federal government introduced last month, the NDIS minister, Mark Butler, would slash all social and community participation budgets by 50% for participants to save \$13.2bn from July to June 2030.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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MINISTER RAE

Radio National, Country Breakfast, 20/06/2026, David Cloughton

Report by ABC reporter Jasmine Hines. Baralaba woman Olive Eather has been living with dementia, but she and her family are struggling to access support in their rural location, and for them, staying there might not be possible due to limited beds. Kaele Stokes from Dementia Australia says delays in residential care are common, while Federal Aged Care Minister Sam Rae says the Federal Government is investing \$47b to deliver more beds and 20 new specialist dementia care units.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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DEPARTMENT

200 extra births but no extra RDH staff

Sunday Territorian, General News, 21/06/2026, Lottie Hood, Page 12

A maternity advocacy group said they have been left "deeply disappointed" and a contentious \$10m in funding is still nowhere to be seen as the NT government was grilled in Darwin this week. [...] Mr Paech asked if mothers are able to request a morphology scan -- something which should be offered to expectant mothers between 16 to 19 weeks according to the Australian Government's pregnancy timeline from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#).

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'I've bought health cover for 50 years, now I'm penalised for aging'

The Senior, Other, 20/06/2026, Desiree Savage

In all my time working for The Senior I have never seen so many Letters to the Editor on one particular topic as the proposed cuts to the Private Health Insurance rebate has. [...] Department of Health officials confirmed on June 3, that 3.1 million people would be affected if the proposal to downgrade the health insurance rebate for anyone over-65 gets the green light.

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Where do all the bad numbers come from?

The New England Times, Other, 20/06/2026, RK Crosby

Every resource, infrastructure investment, policy and planning decision at all levels of government is based on numbers like population statistics. [...] This includes reports from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, in every state and territory and federal health department reports and assessments, independent academic research, and it warps public understanding, media coverage, and funding and policy decisions related to chronic illness for years.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Australians ditch failing aged care for luxury resort-style life in Asia

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 20/06/2026, Julie Cross & Remy Varga

Luxury resort-style aged care facilities offering private villas, around-the-clock personal nurses and restaurant quality meals are being built overseas for Australians, with inquiries soaring in the last few weeks. With horror stories about long waiting lists, high prices, staffing shortages and slop served in Australian aged care facilities, people have started looking for alternatives like South East Asia where self funded retirees can save tens of thousands of dollars a year.

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

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 20/06/2026, Fauziah Ibrahim & Lorna Dunkley

Interview with researcher and youth advocate Angelica Ojinnaka-Psillakis, on the report into the NDIS overhaul being delayed for the second time. Angelica Ojinnaka-Psillakis says she is calling it a saga because of the frustration felt by people with disabilities and their families. She also says there are negotiations between the Greens and the Labor Party, but the delay is tough for families, who feel that they have to justify the basic humanity of their loved ones.

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Channel 10, 10 News (Weekend), 20/06/2026, Ursula Heger

After backing down on several key elements of its tax package this week, the Federal Government may now compromise on its planned rollout of major NDIS savings. To win over the Greens, the Labor Party may end up delaying its NDIS reforms by at least a month and give in to the minor party's demand for a longer inquiry into the scheme.

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PRIMARY CARE

Wearing thin

Sunday Territorian, Editorials, 21/06/2026, Page 18

The most revealing moments in parliament are not answers politicians give, but questions they struggle to answer. On Monday, Health Minister Steve Edgington faced scrutiny during estimates over the state of maternity services in the Top End.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Winning ticket is owning a home

Sunday Age, Business News, 21/06/2026, Victoria Devine, Page 36

Something that never fails to get under my skin is when people try to pretend a situation is different from reality, and fail to disclose that they're benefiting in some way from this mass social gaslighting. [...] According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, roughly one third of Australians (31 per cent) currently rent their home.

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

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Toxicity fight must go on

Sunday Herald Sun, Editorials, 21/06/2026, Page 58

An estimated 200,000 Australian children aged between 10 and 17 use digital robots for companionship, research from the Office of the eSafety Commissioner indicates. It is an alarming statistic.

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An Australian first surgical procedure has allowed baby twins who were born deaf to hear their mother's voice for the first time together, and while the surgery and some early intervention therapy are funded by governments, there is still a gap of \$7000 per child in some states. The NSW Government revealed in Tuesday's state budget that it would contain more than \$20m over four years, which will largely cover the costs of implant activation and follow-up therapy.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Rehab drive aims to cut risk of repeat heart attacks

Sunday Age, General News, 21/06/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 13

Brendan Trew felt out of place when he walked into the cardiac rehabilitation gym at his local hospital. [...] But the study of 7100 Victorian patients across 13 public hospitals found that only one in five eligible patients accessed these programs.

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Finding hope

Sun Herald, Sunday Life, 21/06/2026, Elli Jacobs, Page 10

Every day, 19 women in Australia are diagnosed with a gynaecological cancer while six lose their lives. It's a statistic that Dr Andreas Obermair, one of Australia's leading gynaecological oncologists and the founder of Cherish Women's Cancer Foundation, returns to often and one he says can largely be traced back to a single, persistent problem: late detection.

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

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Breast cancer bungle

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 21/06/2026, Kylie Lang, Page 1

More than 164,000 women in their 40s have been sent letters urging them to reconsider getting a lifesaving mammogram in a spectacular BreastScreen Queensland bungle. [...] This is despite the incidence of cancer rising in women under 50 and an accompanying pamphlet stating that mammography "is the most effective screening test to detect breast cancer.

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

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Right call on breast cancer messaging

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 21/06/2026, Page 68

Almost 2900 Australian women aged 40-49 are believed to have been diagnosed with breast cancer last year. And while the chances of developing breast cancer increase after turning 50-- about 4200 Australians in that age bracket were diagnosed last year-- the incidence of breast cancer in women in their 40s has jumped by 4.3 per cent since 2000.

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Doc's spin on fighting illness

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 21/06/2026, Sue Bailey, Page 6

Retired public health scientist Dr Harley Stanton has a fitness regimen that many half his age would envy. [...] Dr Stanton, who worked for the World Health Organisation, is also taking part in a global research project that could help transform understanding of Parkinson's disease.

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

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Talking about number twos doesn't have to be taboo

Sunday Times, General News, 21/06/2026, Alexandra Feiam, Page 22

The low hum of a stomach churning and gurgling is usually a sign to pop off to the toilet. [...] New Kleenex and Bowel Cancer Australia data reveals 29 per cent of Australians are uncomfortable talking about going to the bathroom with others, and more than half (57 per cent) are too embarrassed to use the toilet at someone else's house.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#)

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'I thought it was an old person's disease': Lauren Gribble on her shock cancer diagnosis

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 20/06/2026, Nikita Mcguire

A fit and healthy woman who thought bowel cancer only affected older people has detailed her harrowing battle with the disease, after she was diagnosed at the age of 30. [...] Bowel cancer is the fourth most common type of newly diagnosed cancer and the second deadliest in Australia.

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

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Why Greg Inglis is tackling the mental health and suicide crisis

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 21/06/2026, Karlie Rutherford, Page 32

Greg Inglis might have etched his name in the NRL hall of fame but he believes his greatest legacy might be trying to solve our mental health crisis. Six years ago, after opening up about his mental health challenges including anxiety, depression and bipolar II disorder, Inglis founded the first accredited, Indigenous-owned mental health and education organisation the Goanna Academy.

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IMMUNISATION

It's time to think about immunisation

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 21/06/2026, David Goldsmith, Page 28

The introduction of an intranasal influenza vaccine for children is a "game-changer" in the ongoing fight against the potentially deadly disease. That's the verdict of Dr Nan Vasilunas, the Medical Unit Head of the Infectious Diseases Department at the Women's and Children's Hospital, who says the influenza nasal spray offers parents a welcome noneedle immunisation option for their children.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Early care to prevent crisis

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 21/06/2026, Page 6

Keeping Queenslanders out of overwhelmed public hospitals by investing in preventive medicine should be the state government's top budget priority, the state's peak medical body has warned. Australian Medical Association Queensland president Erica Gannon said prevention wasn't optional, and that it was the most costeffective, lifesaving investment the government could make.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Tassie blood in world trial

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 21/06/2026, Sue Bailey, Page 6

Blood samples from Tasmanians will be used in a major international study that could help in the treatment of people with Parkinson's disease. The Global Parkinson's Genetics Program (GP2) involves more than 250,000 volunteers around the world to further understand the genetics of Parkinson's disease.

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Accused doctor seeks suppression of identity

Sunday Age, General News, 21/06/2026, Erin Pearson, Page 1

A doctor accused of filming naked women and children in the change rooms of a public swimming pool is fighting to keep his name a secret. It's the latest attempt by an accused to suppress their identity on the grounds of psychological safety of a person.

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'It was worth it': junior doctor paid back \$165k in wages

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 21/06/2026, Lanie Tindale, Page 3

A doctor has been paid \$165,000 for unpaid and unrostered overtime accrued while working as a junior doctor in Canberra as part of a \$31 million settlement with Canberra Health Services and Calvary Health Care ACT. The "unprecedented and landmark" class action was settled in September 2024.

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

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A shot in the arm for NT medical careers

Sunday Territorian, General News, 21/06/2026, Page 4

Medical students and junior doctors flooded Royal Darwin Hospital this month to explore training

opportunities and get hands-on experience with lifesaving techniques. The NT Medical Career Expo 2026 hosted by Flinders University's NT Regional Training Hub attracted 27 organisations to take part on June 10 at the Top End hospital.

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Nurses' union accuses Townsville hospital executive of failing patients and staff

Townsville Bulletin, Other, 20/06/2026, Daniel Shirkie

Premature patient discharges, unrepairable surgical beds, and a toxic executive culture that blames assaulted frontline workers for violence are severely crippling Townsville University Hospital (TUH), a damning new nurses' survey has revealed. The survey, conducted by the Nurses Professional Association of Australia (NPAA), exposes that the hospital operates on "Tier 3 status almost daily," burdened by constant ambulance ramping and a severe bed bottleneck.

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

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'One hand tied behind our back': doctor slams treatment of rural hospitals

Warrnambool Standard, Other, 20/06/2026, Sophia Baker

Doctors in the region are "working with one hand tied behind our back" to provide care, as the government's support for rural and regional hospitals has been criticised. [...] The government spokesperson said regional and rural health services faced unique workforce challenges, which it was addressing.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

'Fear replacing judgment': Top doctors warn on endometriosis care

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 20/06/2026, Robyn Riley

Women with endometriosis are suffering delayed diagnosis and access to pain management and even surgery because many doctors are "running scared" from treating patients with the debilitating gynaecological condition. [...] Dr Gordon is being investigated by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency over allegations he performed surgery on women to treat endometriosis, including removing their ovaries, despite no clinical evidence justifying these procedures.

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

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Fears doctors criticising Israel may be silenced as health watchdog adopts contested antisemitism definition

The Guardian, Other, 20/06/2026, Adeshola Ore

Australia's health watchdog has adopted a contested definition of antisemitism to guide its regulatory work. [...] In a joint statement with the federal government's special envoy to combat antisemitism, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) on Wednesday announced it had adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism for its "regulatory work."

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Alert over 'experimental' drug

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 21/06/2026, David Hannant, Page 22

Health bosses have issued a major warning after an "experimental" drug was linked to several cases of acute liver damage. [...] Victoria's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has now issued a warning, urging people to steer clear of the product after learning of liver damage cases linked to its use.

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

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Tobacco meets its match

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 21/06/2026, Andreas Nicola, Page 26

More than \$23m worth of illicit tobacco has been seized by authorities after a two-day multi-agency investigation targeting 16 locations across South East Queensland. [...] The joint operation, led by the ABF's National Disruption Group and Regional Investigations Queensland teams, used the legislative powers and capabilities of the ABF, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, Australian Taxation Office, Australian Federal Police, Queensland Police and Queensland Health.

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

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Warning issued over counterfeit weight-loss drugs labelled as retatrutide

ABC Online, Other, 20/06/2026, Andi Yu

Senior doctors at a Melbourne hospital are warning people not to take counterfeit weight-loss drugs labelled as "retatrutide" after seeing multiple cases of life-threatening illness. Among them is a woman who found herself in acute liver failure within a week of her second dose of the drug, who has ongoing health issues six months later. The injectable medication has not been approved by any worldwide drug regulator, including the US Food and Drug Administrator and the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

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Australia relaxes psychedelic therapy rules despite safety concerns from clinicians

7News.com.au, Other, 20/06/2026, Jennifer Bechwati

Australia's psychedelic therapy rules have been expanded with advocates hoping to improve access for patients with severe depression and PTSD. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration says the new guidance is now in place, but has not evaluated the drug's quality, efficacy or safety.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

Experts warn of new 'tobacco-style' turf war over toxic illegal alcohol

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 20/06/2026, Robert White

A dangerous new black market threatening to follow the same violent path as Australia's illicit tobacco wars is quietly infiltrating bottle shops, pubs and clubs across the country. Researchers from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) at UNSW and Curtin University's National Drug Research Institute say illegal alcohol is no longer confined to underground operations or dodgy backyard breweries.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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Opioid use down amid tighter scripts

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 20/06/2026, Kate Cowling

The combination of wastewater and PBS data paints a picture of how opioid use is changing, with environmental health scientists suggesting tighter script controls are likely helping Oxycodone and fentanyl use in Australia gradually declined between 2018 and 2022, with prescription controls, pandemic patterns and substitution thought to be responsible for falling numbers, published analysis

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