



TODAY'S NEWS

Sunday, 28th June 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (online) includes an op-ed by Federal Health Minister Mark Butler who says that modern medical breakthroughs act as both a health program and an economic stabiliser by improving patient outcomes and national productivity, though they significantly pressure government budgets. Minister Butler noted that the PBS must undergo reform to modernise health technology assessments and adapt to shifting global pricing dynamics so that innovative, personalised therapies remain affordable and sustainable for all Australians.
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports the TGA and the Federal Government's Chief Medical Officer have issued strict warnings against unregulated peptide use after independent laboratory testing has revealed that vials of the retatrutide purchased from an unregulated internet site contained nearly double the labelled concentration.
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports a study published in The Lancet tracking the Baggarook Yurrongi culturally-tailored midwifery program has found that continuity of specialised care for First Nations families significantly improves infant health outcomes, including reduced rates of pre-term births and low birth weight. Researchers called for expanded funding to implement this model of care across additional regional and metropolitan health services.
- **[The Sunday Mail Adelaide](#)** (page 3) reports an inspection by the South Australian Salaried Medical Officers Association into the Lyell McEwin Hospital emergency department revealed

that non-functioning duress alarm screens caused staff to unknowingly walk unsuspecting patients into active weapon confrontations.

- **ABC Online** reports the family of a man who died with advanced dementia is calling for legislative reform to allow individuals with the condition to access voluntary assisted dying through advanced care directives.

MINISTER BUTLER

Health Minister: Our PBS is a world-leading scheme but it can be better

The Australian, Other, 27/06/2026, Mark Butler

In Australia, access to high-quality, innovative and affordable medicines isn't just a nice-to-have, it's fundamental to who we are as a country.

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Lives on the line as medicines become a global bargaining chip

The Australian, Other, 27/06/2026, Natasha Robinson

Poised to the left of a giant portrait of Ronald Reagan in the Oval Office, Albert Bourla stood ready. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler is facing an incredibly complex task in attempting to forge a path of system reform, fiscal responsibility and patient access as Australia confronts the disrupted medicines market.

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Butler defends PBS ahead of high-stakes negotiations with the pharma sector

Health Industry Hub, Other, 27/06/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has mounted a defence of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) amid growing criticism that pricing...

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Everything is negotiable. Except trust

Health Services Daily, Other, 27/06/2026, Cate Swannell

At first blush this week's big news – the delay of the NDIS reform legislation and associated Senate inquiry – would seem to be nothing but good news for the disability community. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing table a roadmap accompanying the legislation that sets out the timeline and consultation requirements for all reforms included in the bill and the NDIS Reforms package announced in the 2026-27 Budget.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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MINISTER RAE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

ABC Radio Adelaide, 10:30 News (Weekend), 27/06/2026

More Australian women will be able to access menopause and perimenopause care from 1 July after the Federal Government decided to expand the services to all 33 of its endometriosis and pelvic pain clinics. Assistant Minister for Health and Women Rebecca White says the clinics will fill a critical gap in women's health care.

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

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

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DEPARTMENT

Two sides of the illicit tobacco industry

Sunday Examiner, General News, 28/06/2026, Owen Sinclair, Page 3

A source within the illicit tobacco trade says the prospect of raids by the Department of Health does not bother them, saying they are now "just routine". [...] Up to 80 per cent of total tobacco consumed in 2025 was illicit, national figures revealed, with the federal government excise on tobacco credited for creating fertile ground for a growing demand for black market products in Tasmania.

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Everything is negotiable. Except trust

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

PRIMARY CARE

Armed patient danger

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 28/06/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 3

Unsuspecting patients were led into a room where an armed patient was confronting security, a bombshell report into security concerns at Lyell McEwin Hospital claims. "Staff were taking patients through from the waiting room to 'See And Treat', only to open a door and walk into a situation where a duress call had been made and a Code Black response was happening, with the patient having weapons and SA Police involved," the report says.

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

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Willow Katarina Horne: 'Care management problems' at regional WA hospital in lead-up to baby girl's death

West Australian, Other, 27/06/2026, Charlton Hart

At just eight and a half months old Willow Katarina Horne was a beautiful, happy and deeply loved baby girl taken from her adoring mum and dad in the most cruel way. [...] Details of Willow's treatment have surfaced in a clinical incident investigation report which had been kept secret from Willow's parents.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Women are giving up on contraception but not because they want to get pregnant

Sun Herald, General News, 28/06/2026, Courtney Thompson, Page 20

About two-thirds of Australian women of child-bearing age use some form of contraception. A 2021 study and a 2020 report both found the oral contraceptive pill (a hormonal form of birth control) is most common, followed closely by condoms.

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

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Keki worked, paid rent all her life. A fire has left her without a home

Sunday Age, General News, 28/06/2026, Rachael Ward, Page 12

With her possessions destroyed by fire, living in community housing and no superannuation to fall back on, Keki, a former journalist and law student, never expected to find herself on the front line of the housing crisis at the age of 72. [...] About 17,000 women in insecure housing were assisted by specialist homelessness services last financial year-about 46 a day on average, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data shows.

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Social media companies face \$99m fines for failing to enforce under-16s ban

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 27/06/2026, Ellen Ransley

Social media companies will now face fines of \$99 million as part of beefed up powers for Australia's online safety tsar to better enforce the country's world-leading age ban. More than six months since the laws came into effect, following this masthead's Let Them Be Kids campaign, five million under-16

accounts have been removed across Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook, YouTube, X, Reddit, Twitch, Threads, and Kick.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#), [Sky News Australia \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Data base created to help in battle against MND

Sun Herald, General News, 28/06/2026, Emily Kaine, Page 8

When Keri Balding was told that her younger sister Jennifer had been diagnosed with sporadic motor neurone disease (MND) in May last year, she dropped everything, including her work, and raced back from Europe to Sydney to care for her. [...] According to MND Australia, the vast majority of motor neurone disease near 90 per cent is sporadic, meaning it develops without a family history of the condition.

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Family urges Voluntary Assisted Dying law reform to give dementia patients right to die

ABC Online, Other, 27/06/2026, Kaitlyn Sawrey

The final days of 77-year-old Rod Keys's life were not what he or his family wanted. [...] Like most of the 400,000 people living with dementia in Australia, Rod didn't meet the criteria for assisted dying.

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Patients who had 'no idea' of kidney disease link share experiences

West Australian, Other, 27/06/2026, David Hannant

Two people living in Australia with severe kidney diseases have admitted they had "no idea" about what else their conditions could lead to. [...] Research shared by the charity Hearts4Heart has revealed that about half a million Australians are affected by heart failure, about 67,000 new diagnoses each year.

Also reported by: [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Geelong mum Chrissie Davies 'dubious' of ADHD training plan for Victorian GPs as details revealed

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 27/06/2026, Zoe De Koning

Details of a training program that will grant Victorian GPs the power to diagnose and treat ADHD have been revealed, with practitioners expected to undergo two days of in-person training and two online modules. Expressions of interest are now open for general practitioners wishing to undertake training to become one of 150 in the state who can diagnose and treat ADHD in adults and children aged six years and over.

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

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Study results prove First Nations midwifery program leads to healthier babies

ABC Online, Other, 27/06/2026, Andi Yu

Midwifery care tailored to First Nations families produces better infant health outcomes, a Melbourne study has found. The study, published in medical journal The Lancet, tracked 669 Indigenous babies born in three Melbourne hospitals between 2017 and 2022 where their mothers received specialised care.

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'Sobering snapshot' reveals significant self-harm risk for First Nations teens

National Indigenous Times, Other, 27/06/2026, Jarred Cross

First Nations young people are more likely to indicate risk of suicide, with females significantly more likely to reach out for help, as more and more youth across the country contact mental health support. Concerning data comes via Kids Helpline's latest Impact Report.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Meet the next generation of women in medtech

The Australian, Other, 27/06/2026

Toorak College has become the first Australian school to offer a surgical robotics curriculum, giving Year 10 girls hands-on access to technology at the frontier of modern medicine. There's a moment, part-way through the IMRA MedTech Futures program, when a Year 10 student at Toorak College finds herself operating a surgical robot.

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Health Minister Blair Boyer denies 'secret plan' to permanently close Crystal Brook, Jamestown and Kapunda birthing units

Adelaide Now, Other, 27/06/2026, Brad Crouch

Health Minister Blair Boyer has ruled out a "secret plan" to close birthing services at Jamestown, Crystal Brook and Kapunda as births scheduled at those sites are diverted to others due to workforces shortages. Birthing services have stopped at Jamestown and Crystal Brook until at least July 31 while there is no date for a resumption of services in Kapunda, prompting the opposition health spokesman Jack Batty to note if it happened at a metropolitan hospital "there would be outrage."

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

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

More pay Medicare levy

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 28/06/2026, Page 11

The number of Australians paying the Medicare levy surcharge has risen sharply, new data shows. Analysis of Australian Taxation Office figures from Canstar.com.au show a 15 per cent increase in the 2023-24 year and a 74 per cent rise from 2021-22 to 2023-24.

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

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

ABC News, Weekend Breakfast, 27/06/2026, Fauziah Ibrahim & Johanna Nicholson

Interview with University of Tasmania bird flu expert Jane Younger, on the detection of H5N1 bird flu in WA. Younger says Australia was the only continent that's been free from the strain, until sub-Antarctic migratory birds carried the virus into the country, and she also notes that the strain killed tens of millions of seabirds and marine mammals, and decimated poultry industries. She says the virus can be

transmitted via close contact between animals, and even though the risk to humans is low, people are urged to report to authorities if they see sick or dead birds.

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

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Illegal peptides surge pushes needle, syringe programs to the brink

Sunday Age, General News, 28/06/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 3

A surge in illegal peptides is fuelling unprecedented demand for sterile injecting equipment, placing immense pressure on decades-old needle and syringe programs originally designed to combat the rise of HIV during the heroin epidemic. This new cohort of drug injectors now account for up to 40 per cent of clients at some services, sparking shortages of thinner-tipped needles used to inject peptides under the skin or into muscles.

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Police and border force seize over 365,000 illicit cigarettes in Tasmania

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 27/06/2026, Molly Appleton

More than 365,000 illegal cigarettes, 156kg of tobacco and 1,600 vaping devices have been seized as authorities vow to 'dismantle' the criminal networks driving the illicit trade. [...] Those agencies also included the Therapeutic Goods Administration and Department of Health Tasmania.

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

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Vial of unapproved peptide retatrutide had double the strength indicated on label

ABC Online, Other, 27/06/2026, Caitlyn Gribbin & Rachel Carbonell

Doctors have warned of an "enormous" risk of overdose after testing of a popular unapproved weight loss peptide revealed the product had double the strength of what was listed on its label. [...] Australia's Chief Medical Officer and the medicines regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, have warned Australians not to take unapproved peptides, saying they were often poorly labelled and presented a health risk.

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Scale of Geelong's illicit tobacco trade revealed in multi-agency crackdown

Geelong Advertiser, Other, 27/06/2026, Luke Griffiths

The results of a multi-agency task force targeting Geelong retail outlets suspected of selling illicit cigarettes and vapes have been revealed, with its haul highlighting the extent of the issue locally. [...] It is led by the Australian Border Force's National Disruption Group and includes members of Tobacco Licencing Victoria, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, Victoria Police, Sheriff's Office and WorkSafe.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

Drivers getting into the weeds

Daily Telegraph, General News, 27/06/2026, James O'Doherty, Page 3

A secret government study has found more than half of medical cannabis users are misusing their medication including by taking more than prescribed or using the drug recreationally. Explosive

research from Transport for NSW's Centre for Road Safety also found that 45 per cent of medical cannabis users got behind the wheel within six hours of using the drug.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Sunday Canberra Times \(Canberra\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#).

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Put stopper on dodgy alcohol

Sunday Herald Sun, Editorials, 28/06/2026, Page 58

The federal and state governments are at risk of turning a blind eye to another black market industry being targeted by criminals that threatens health and revenue. The Sunday Herald Sun today reveals the alcohol excise loopholes helping to drive a burgeoning bootleg industry that has already been linked to the explosive bar wars arsons.

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Drug usage is getting higher

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 28/06/2026, Page 11

Drug use around the world is rising, including a worrying increase of new potent and dangerous synthetic drugs. An estimated 331 million people used a drug in 2024, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime said in its 2026 World Drug Report 6.2 per cent of the global population aged 15-64, up from 5.2 per cent in 2014.

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

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2GB, Weekends, 27/06/2026, Jason Morrison

Interview with Shadow Minister for Roads Mark Coure, on the NSW Opposition demanding the NSW Government to abandon its three-strikes drug policy after the Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety revealed that 45% of surveyed users who'd been advised not to drive after using cannabis got behind the wheel within six hours. Coure notes that the figures are frightening, and every family is expecting that road safety comes first. He also says the NSW Government should release the Transport for NSW's secret report.

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