



TODAY'S NEWS

Saturday, 18th July 2026

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Weekend Australian](#)** (page 1) reports that Health Minister Mark Butler has refuted claims by One Nation leader Pauline Hanson that Muslim migrants are rorting the NDIS, calling it a "baseless smear" without evidence. *Also reported by:* [AFR Weekend](#), [The Guardian](#), [Canberra Times](#)
- **[The Weekend Australian](#)** (page 9) reports that Health Minister Mark Butler vowed to crack down on nicotine pouches, closing loopholes in the Special Access Scheme and Authorised Provider Scheme, and banning imports of the products which he said were "creating a new generation of nicotine dependency".
- **[The Saturday Age](#)** (page 1) reports that 150,000 Australians hospitalised annually due to medical device issues, raising concerns that the Therapeutic Goods Administration's limited scrutiny and monitoring of new devices is compromising patient safety.
- **[The West Australian](#)** (page 1) reports that taxi drivers have been caught exploiting the NDIS by sharing confidential client details, including access codes, on WhatsApp groups, allowing them to charge exorbitant rates for taxpayer-funded fares and potentially book phantom jobs.
- **[The Courier Mail](#)** (page 5) reports that a new Australian-led research program found that smaller doses of Covid-19 booster vaccines can provide long-lasting immunity, reducing costs and improving access.

- [ABC Online](#) (online) reports that NSW Health announced that an infant vaccination program for respiratory syncytial virus, introduced in 2024, has almost halved the number of hospitalisations linked to the virus, which is one of the leading causes of infant deaths nationwide.
- [The Weekend Australian](#) (page 6) reports that the Queensland Children's Hospital has issued a statement clearing child psychiatrist Jillian Spencer of any wrongdoing and acknowledging the "legitimate concerns" she raised with the hospital and state's policies regarding gender-affirming care for young people. *Also reported by:* [The Courier Mail](#)
- [The Weekend Australian](#) (page 9) reports that a leading food safety expert has said that a diarrhoea-causing parasite currently spreading through salad greens in the United States is unlikely to reach Australia, however the outbreak serves a reminder to wash fruit and vegetables and be mindful of the origins of imported produce.

MINISTER BUTLER

Islam 'based on terror': Hanson sparks concern inside One Nation

Weekend Australian, General News, 18/07/2026, Greg Brown, Page 1

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has declared a lot of Islam is "based on terrorism" in one of her biggest attacks yet on the religion, prompting Barnaby Joyce to disagree with his leader in an escalation of the chaos within the populist party. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said Senator Hanson's claim that Muslim migrants were rorting the NDIS was a "baseless smear".

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [7News.com.au \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#), [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#).

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Nicotine pouches create 'new generation of dependency': Butler

Weekend Australian, General News, 18/07/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 9

The Albanese government is cracking down on the sale of nicotine pouches as new data reveals more than 8 per cent of Australians aged 18-24 used them in 2025. Health Minister Mark Butler said he would close loopholes allowing access to unapproved pouches through the existing Special Access Scheme and Authorised Provider Scheme under the Therapeutic Goods Administration from next week, and it will no longer be possible to import them, even with a prescription.

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Hanson regrets end of White Australia policy

AFR Weekend, General News, 18/07/2026, Andrew Tillett, Page 5

Pauline Hanson praised her daughter as a future One Nation successor, referenced the White Australia policy and claimed Muslims were rorting the National Disability Insurance Scheme in a near hour-long podcast with UK far-right activist Tommy Robinson.

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

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Green in the Guild

The Saturday Paper, General News, 18/07/2026, Bianca Nogrady, Page 8

The peak body for pharmacy owners outspends the Minerals Council of Australia on political donations. [...] That agreement was signed exclusively by federal Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler and the Pharmacy Guild.

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

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Deal spares MS patients \$33k annually in medicine costs

Daily Liberal, General News, 18/07/2026, Robyn Wuth, Page 59

Thousands of Australians with multiple sclerosis have been spared paying \$33,000 a year for treatment after the federal government struck a deal to keep life-changing drugs on the Pharmaceutical Benefits

Scheme. Health Minister Mark Butler has confirmed drugs including Ocrevus (ocrelizumab) and Kesimpta (ofatumumab) will remain listed on the PBS while an urgent review of MS medicines is carried out, easing weeks of anxiety for patients, their families and clinicians.

Also reported by: [Western Advocate \(Bathurst\)](#), [Pharma In Focus \(Online\)](#), [The Medical Republic \(Online\)](#).

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A reality checkup for GPs

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Dr Max Mollenkopf, Page 18

Think your books will be full in a year? Think again. [...] It has been an absolute spending spree on Medicare-branded clinics under Mark Butler.

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MS drugs to remain on PBS

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 17/07/2026, Page 1

People with multiple sclerosis (MS) will be able to continue obtaining Ocrevus (ocrelizumab) and Kesimpta (ofatumumab) through the PBS, after a period of significant uncertainty around future access (PD 02 Jul). After meeting last week to discuss pricing, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) advised Health Minister Mark Butler of the clinical benefits of keeping the drugs on the PBS.

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Blame game erupts in Tasmania over aged care shortages

The Weekly Source, Other, 17/07/2026, Caroline Egan

Tasmania's Health Minister says the Federal Government's failure to build enough aged care beds is contributing to overcrowding at Launceston General Hospital (LGH). [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler was in Launceston earlier this month, and viewed the hospital himself.

[Read More](#)

Vaping rates among younger Australians plunge as smoking falls to historic low

ABC Online, Other, 17/07/2026, Ewa Staszewska

The allure of vapes and cigarettes appears to be wearing off, but for Australians who do use nicotine, average consumption may be on the rise. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the government is focused on protecting younger Australians and stopping the illicit tobacco trade.

[Read More](#)

Labor claims national smoking rate is declining despite higher nicotine use

Sky News Australia, Other, 17/07/2026, Zoe Phillips

Labor has claimed that the national smoking rate has decreased, even though overall nicotine consumption has increased. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler's office published a press release on Friday stating that fewer Australians are engaging in daily smoking, which is contributing to a "healthier Australia".

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NDIS to remove almost 145,000 people receiving autism support

CathNews, Other, 17/07/2026, Rebecca Comini

Almost 145,000 Australians receiving support for autism on the National Disability Insurance Scheme are expected to be removed by the end of the decade, internal estimates show. [...] The NDIS minister, Mark Butler, has repeatedly said the scheme is only intended for people with "significant and permanent disability".

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New PBS patient furore brewing

Health Minister Mark Butler has put out a fire with a decision to keep MS drugs on the PBS but there's already another patient furore brewing over access to a different life-changing treatment. The pressure on the Commonwealth to fund a broad listing for Keytruda is ratcheting up, with The Australian newspaper publishing an article as part of its 'Medicine Wars' series focusing on the lag in listing after a recommendation was made.

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Top redundancy pain points named

Pharma In Focus, Other, 17/07/2026

With jobs disappearing across Australian pharma, there's little surprise our top story this week was about the fallout for those who have lost their positions - and those who fear they're next. [...] It added to ongoing pressure on Health Minister Mark Butler to ensure the treatments remain on the PBS.

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Smoking hits record low

The Medical Republic, Other, 17/07/2026, Amanda Sheppeard

Daily smoking has fallen to a historic low in Australia, while vaping appears to have plateaued and new data highlights a growing shift towards illicit tobacco and emerging nicotine products. [...] Federal health minister Mark Butler said the results suggested the government's tightening of vaping laws was beginning to have an effect.

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ABC News, ABC News Hour, 17/07/2026, Melissa Mackay

Thousands of Australians who rely on medication to treat multiple sclerosis will continue to receive the drugs under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. A stoush between the drug manufacturers and the Federal Government had raised fears that patients would have to pay tens of thousands of dollars for them, but Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has now confirmed the medications will remain subsidised.

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ABC News, ABC News Day, 17/07/2026, Ros Childs

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has rebuked One Nation leader Pauline Hanson's accusation that Muslim migrants are among those taking advantage of the NDIS. Butler says he isn't sure where Hanson is getting her figures from, suggesting they may not exist.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 17/07/2026, James Glenday & Emma Reballato

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler, on latest figures showing that smoking rates have fallen to an historic low in Australia. Butler says they have known for a very long time that more than 90% of Australians who smoke want to quit, and the Federal Government has been boosting the support to help smokers quit the highly addictive substance. He says he is pleased by the report, but he also notes that the increase in illicit tobacco use has been a law and order challenge.

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

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Channel 10, 10 News, 17/07/2026, Hugh Riminton

The Federal Government is defending new health data which claims that smoking rates have fallen to an all-time low, despite a surge in the illicit tobacco trade and growing concerns over an increasingly popular nicotine product. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the availability of cheaper cigarettes provides a drag on the reasons why people might choose to quit smoking.

Also reported by: [Channel 10 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Perth\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Adelaide\)](#)

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Channel 9, Nine Afternoon News, 17/07/2026, Sophie Walsh

The latest survey from the Institute of Health and Welfare shows daily smoking rates are down to 5.6% in the last two years, and even though vaping rates are stable, illicit tobacco use has doubled. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the latest data confirmed that the public health campaign is still succeeding.

Also reported by: [Channel 9 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Adelaide\)](#).

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2GB, Breakfast, 17/07/2026, Ben Fordham

Fordham says the NDIS growth rate is expected to be reduced to just under 2%, and Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has admitted that the scheme is struggling and it's costing an extraordinary amount of money. He notes that the Federal and State Governments are now trying to get everyone onto the Thriving Kids program as an alternative, which will provide support to children under nine who are kicked off the NDIS.

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3AW, 15:00 News, 17/07/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says smoking remains Australia's biggest public health challenge, despite new figures showing daily smoking rates have fallen. Data from the Institute of Health and Welfare shows daily smoking has dropped to 5.6% of Australians, down from more than 8% three years earlier.

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ABC NewsRadio, Mornings, 17/07/2026, Caroline Winter

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has found 5.6% of people aged 14 and older smoked daily last year, down from 8.3% in 2022, but illicit tobacco use has more than doubled in the past three years, and more than half of those who purchase branded illicit tobacco have done so from a tobacconist. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler welcomes the drop in smoking rates, but says there is more work to be done to protect Australians from the harms of smoking and vaping.

Also reported by: [ABC Radio Canberra \(Canberra\)](#), [Radio National \(Canberra\)](#).

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ABC Radio Sydney, 19:00 News, 17/07/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has rebuked One Nation leader Pauline Hanson's accusation that Muslim migrants are among those taking advantage of the NDIS. Butler says he isn't sure where Hanson is getting her figures from, suggesting they may not exist.

Similar coverage reported by: [2SM \(Sydney\)](#), [2SM \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#), [ABC Radio Melbourne \(Melbourne\)](#), [Triple M Townsville \(Townsville\)](#), [Triple M Gold Coast \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Triple M Bendigo \(Bendigo\)](#), [Triple M Hobart \(Hobart\)](#), [Triple M Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [Triple J \(Sydney\)](#).

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ABC Radio Sydney, 10:00 News, 17/07/2026

Thousands of Australians who rely on medication to treat multiple sclerosis will continue to receive the drugs under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. A stoush between the drug manufacturers and the Federal Government had raised fears that patients would have to pay tens of thousands of dollars for them, but Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has now confirmed the medications will remain subsidised.

Also reported by: [FIVEAA \(Adelaide\)](#), [Triple J \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC Radio Darwin \(Darwin\)](#), [ABC Newcastle \(Newcastle\)](#), [ABC Radio Canberra \(Canberra\)](#), [ABC Radio Hobart \(Hobart\)](#), [ABC Radio Adelaide \(Adelaide\)](#), [ABC NewsRadio \(Sydney\)](#), [2MCE \(Orange\)](#).

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

Australia's sheltered workshops

The Saturday Paper, General News, 18/07/2026, Elena Filipczyk, Page 3

Brooke Canham is no stranger to hard work. [...] The minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Jenny McAllister, was contacted for comment but did not respond before deadline.

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MINISTER RAE

Key funding question unanswered

Stawell Times News, General News, 17/07/2026, Henry Dalkin, Page 1

Grampians Community Health has publicly linked a reduction in its gardening services to Commonwealth funding changes, despite acknowledging it had previously been providing services beyond its funded hours. The organisation said its decision to reduce its gardening and home maintenance service for nominated Commonwealth Home Support Programme clients to two funded hours per year from August 1 had been "taken out of our hands", a claim subsequently amplified by Federal Member for Mallee Anne Webster, who called on Aged Care Minister Sam Rae to intervene and accused Labor of shifting funding away from trusted local providers.

Also reported by: [Colac Herald \(Colac\)](#), [Ararat Advocate \(Ararat\)](#).

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Govt makes next move on Support at Home funding

The Weekly Source, Other, 17/07/2026, Caroline Egan

The Federal Government has opened applications for the third round of Thin Market Grants, making \$311.4 million available to eligible Support at Home providers. Aged Care Minister Sam Rae announced the latest funding round, which is aimed at providers delivering services in thin markets, as well as those supporting older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other specialised cohorts.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

No relevant coverage

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

No relevant coverage

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

The man in the mask

The Saturday Paper, General News, 18/07/2026, Ged Kearney, Page 28

There are moments in our lives that seem incredibly ordinary at the time but can stay with us forever. [...] Special Envoy for Men's Health Dan Repacholi and I have launched the Healthy Men Community

DEPARTMENT

I've seen the gap, it changed my life forever

Canberra Times, General News, 18/07/2026, Jack Waterford, Page 34

In 1975, an Aboriginal friend in the federal Health Department, Gordon Briscoe, invited me to ask his department questions about the prevalence of trachoma in Aboriginal Australia, and what was being done about it. He suggested that I get some preliminary information from an ophthalmologist, Professor Fred Hollows, at the University of NSW.

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

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GCH to take over aged care services

Stawell Times News, General News, 17/07/2026, Page 8

Northern Grampians Shire Council has recommended Grampians Community Health (GCH) and East Wimmera Health Service take over the municipality's aged care services, following Council's decision to exit direct service delivery. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care will confirm the final providers, with Council to transition out of the service in January 2027.

Also reported by: [Colac Herald \(Colac\)](#)

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Backtrack on MBS billing rule

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Antony Scholefield & Rachel Carter , Page 2

Verbal consent for bulk-billing will still be allowed, at least until July 2027, after health officials responded to GPs' warnings of a looming paperwork nightmare. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has also suggested it will use the 12 months to explore options that involve less administrative burden.

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GPs lose adrenaline rights

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Carmel Sparke, Page 6

A longstanding exemption that allowed certain GPs to initiate PBS-funded adrenaline treatment has reportedly been scrapped. [...] It therefore seems that the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has concluded that the exemptions were not legally valid because, under the Act, the PBAC must formally approve all drugs prescribed by GPs under the PBS.

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'Examine doctor fatigue'

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Bella Rough, Page 8

Doctor fatigue and travel expectations must be examined in the wake of a registrar's death while commuting home at night, AMA Tasmania says. [...] A spokesperson for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said several staff procedures "provide advice and assistance for managing fatigue to ensure it does not contribute to health and safety risks for employees or in departmental workplaces".

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Opioid treatment to be withdrawn

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Jamie Thannoo, Page 11

Drug maker Indivior has caught doctors off guard by announcing its PBS-listed depot buprenorphine

injection will be withdrawn from Australia in December. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said it could not compel private companies to keep supplying medicines.

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Specialist shortfall looming

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Ciara Seccombe , Page 15

Australia will be short 6981 FTE specialists by 2033 yet simultaneously have an oversupply of 7867 FTE junior doctors, suggests modelling by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. If current trends continue, by 2048 the discrepancy will blow out to about 13,000 too few specialists - including GPs - but 11,000 too many junior doctors, according to the Whole of Medical Workforce Supply and Demand Compendium Report.

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Police, health authorities raid Warilla pharmacy in front of stunned shoppers

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 17/07/2026, Nadine Morton

Authorities are remaining tight-lipped on why police and officials raided a Warilla chemist this week. [...] The Mercury understands the warrant was issued by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, however a spokesperson declined to provide any information.

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NDIS to remove almost 145,000 people receiving autism support

CathNews, Other, 17/07/2026, Rebecca Comini

Almost 145,000 Australians receiving support for autism on the National Disability Insurance Scheme are expected to be removed by the end of the decade, internal estimates show. [...] The NDIS minister, Mark Butler, has repeatedly said the scheme is only intended for people with "significant and permanent disability".

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PD breaking news – New regulations to control access to nicotine pouches

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 17/07/2026

The Australian Government has today introduced new regulations restricting access to nicotine pouches. [...] Professor Anthony Lawler, deputy secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and head of the TGA, said "These changes respond to growing public health concern about nicotine pouches and their increasing availability in the Australian market.

[Read More](#)

PBS reprieve for MS blockbusters

The Medical Republic, Other, 17/07/2026, Amanda Sheppeard

The federal government has abandoned plans that threatened PBS access to Australia's two most widely used high-efficacy multiple sclerosis therapies – at least for now. [...] "This development recognises that the price cut stipulated by the Department of Health was entirely unfeasible," Dr Horridge said.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Dementia support funding boost

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 18/07/2026, Page 13

People living with dementia and their carers across the Loddon Mallee region will continue to benefit from a nature-based dementia support program following confirmation of further Australian

Government funding. The Australian Government has committed more than half a million dollars through the Aged Care Support Program to extend GreenConnect until 30 June 2027, providing certainty for participants and families as the original funding period approaches its conclusion.

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Tackling WA-specific aged care challenges

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 17/07/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Western Australia requires thousands of new beds to meet the growing demand for residential aged care, but sector investability remains a challenge for the state. Speaking to Australian Ageing Agenda, Amana Living chief executive officer Stephanie Buckland acknowledged this issue is not unique to WA, but noted the problems are more pronounced due to the cost of construction.

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Aged care reforms clash in practice, inspector-general says

The Mandarin, Other, 17/07/2026, Melissa Coade

The outgoing Aged Care Inspector-General has warned that Australia's approach to ageing is undermining the new legal framework created to support "the whole person". Natalie Siegel-Brown said attitudes towards ageing, both at the system and cultural level, were at odds with the human rights objectives of the Aged Care Act and were incapable of delivering a sustainable path forward.

[Read More](#)

Natalie Siegel-Brown puts housing in reform spotlight

The Weekly Source, Other, 17/07/2026, Lauren Broomham

The Retirement Living Council (RLC) says Natalie Siegel-Brown has reinforced the need to reform ageing long before Australians enter aged care. Responding to the Inspector-General of Aged Care's National Press Club address on Wednesday (15 July), the peak body said Australia cannot build its way out of an ageing population and instead needs to invest earlier in housing, independence and prevention.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Hanson's comments on White Australia policy condemned

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 18/07/2026, Matthew Knott, Page 3

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has accused Muslim Australians of rorting the NDIS and lamented the end of the White Australia policy in comments that drew condemnation from senior members of the Albanese government and community groups. [...] She then claimed that many Muslim migrants had migrated to Australia to access welfare payments and "rip off" the National Disability Insurance Scheme, while acknowledging other Australians were also rorting the system.

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

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Taxi drivers rort the NDIS

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 18/07/2026, Ben Harvey, Page 1

Dodgy cabbies are sharing details of disabled clients on WhatsApp to charge exorbitant rates for taxpayer-funded taxi fares. Message threads show that when drivers discover a customer is having the fare paid by the NDIS, they will flag the passenger to other crooked drivers.

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'Everyone deserves a chance'

Ballarat Courier, General News, 18/07/2026, Nick Powell, Page 1

More than 200 workers with a disability are behind everyday businesses across Ballarat, from

landscaping to laundry services, and the major brands lining supermarket shelves. They all have diverse abilities and reasons to work, but they are all proudly supported by local enterprise McCallum.

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Hanson hits out at vaccines, says Muslims are ripping off NDIS

Newcastle Herald, General News, 18/07/2026, Zac De Silva, Page 30

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has railed against Muslims, migrants and COVID-19 vaccines in a controversial podcast with a British far-right activist. In the nearly hour-long conversation with Tommy Robinson, published by the convicted criminal yesterday, Senator Hanson accused people from "Muslim areas" of ripping off the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

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PRIMARY CARE

Pharmacy Guild's glass jaw problem

Weekend Australian, Business News, 18/07/2026, Max Aitchison, Page 23

There have been more than a few proverbial molotov cocktails thrown this week in the turf war over prescribing powers between doctors and pharmacists. But it was the normally all-powerful Pharmacy Guild of Australia which took most of the battering and not for want of trying.

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

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How I ended up in a Medicare urgent care clinic and liked it

Sydney Morning Herald, Business News, 18/07/2026, Millie Muroi, Page 3

It wasn't the sharp twist of my ankle or the sudden tripping sensation that spooked me: those feelings I'm quite familiar with as someone with (what my physio has since told me is) a hypermobile ankle. It was the seconds after my ankle gave way time I usually spend snapping back and continuing on my run that told me I was in trouble.

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

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Why it's pharmacies over patients

Canberra Times, General News, 18/07/2026, Peter Breadon & Thomas Shortridge, Page 33

Your supermarket can discount bread. Your servo can discount petrol. But strict rules stop your pharmacy discounting most medicines. The government sets caps on how much Australians pay for a Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescription: \$25, or \$7.70 if you have a concession card.

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Where to get the help you need

Launceston Examiner, General News, 18/07/2026, Saree Salter, Page 1

While Launceston's public hospital is reaching crisis point, the government has launched a campaign to advise people about their treatment options this winter. [...] "This might involve community-based health services such as Medicare Urgent Care Clinics, GPs, pharmacies, virtual care, and mental health support services which can offer advice and treatment for non-emergency care needs," she said.

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RNs to write PBS scripts RNs to write PBS scripts: What you need to know

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Ciara Seccombe, Page 1

RNs working with doctors will be able to prescribe S4 and S8 drugs under the PBS after landmark legislation was passed by federal Parliament. The legislation ensures RN prescribers become a so-called 'PBS category', but it only applies to RNs with the equivalent of at least three years of full-time

post-registration clinical experience - 5000 hours in the past six years - who have undertaken additional training.

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GPs growing to like urgent care clinics, claims prominent GP

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Ciara Seccombe, Page 5

GP complaints about urgent care clinics have started fading, says GP Professor John Adie, who compares the shift to orthopaedic surgeons slowly accepting primary care fracture clinics. The Federal Government celebrated the launch of its 137th urgent care clinic (UCC) last month, meeting the target it set for itself during the 2025 election campaign.

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Govt axes medicines hotline

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Ciara Seccombe, Page 10

The Federal Government is closing its phone service for patients to ask questions about medicines and report adverse events, suggesting they see a GP or pharmacist instead. The Consumer Medicines Line, also called 1300 MEDICINE, receives 900 calls a month.

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\$600 to bulk-bill ADHD assessments

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Ciara Seccombe, Page 15

The NSW Government is offering select GP practices \$600 per patient if they bulk-bill initial consultations for ADHD diagnosis and at least one follow-up appointment. RACGP NSW&ACT chair Dr Rebekah Hoffman has welcomed the funding, announced in last month's state budget, saying it will cover the costs of assessment tools, administration and allied health support in some patient cases.

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The death of Baby R: Homebirth midwives vs doctors?

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Paul Smith, Page 40

Inquest findings were recently published into the death of a six-day-old baby. It was the result of an attempted homebirth, and in terms of what went wrong, little will surprise anyone who has read about these cases in Australia over the past 10 or even 20 years.

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Thousands of Canberrans caught up in GP clinic's cyber security breach

Canberra Times, Other, 17/07/2026, Lucy Arundell

Thousands of Canberrans have had their medical information exposed in major data breaches affecting three ACT general practitioners' clinics. North Canberra Family Practice in Belconnen, Wentworth Avenue Family Practice in Kingston and Ochre Medical Centre Tuggeranong have reported leaks of client data in two separate cyber security breaches.

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Hopes new ambulance station will cut response times among worst in state

The Border Mail, Other, 17/07/2026, Chelsea Wilson

A brand new ambulance station is hoped to help cut down response times that are among the worst in Victoria. Treasurer Jaclyn Symes had the first look at Beechworth's heritage-style, new ambulance station on Friday, July 17.

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Former diplomat says Telstra 'priority' service failures putting wife's life at risk

ABC Online, Other, 17/07/2026, Georgia Roberts

Telstra promised Alastair Gaisford that his wife's healthcare was a priority. But he says 15 landline outages, including some that could have prevented the ability to call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency, have convinced him otherwise.

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POPULATION HEALTH

One million cancer cases

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 18/07/2026, Page 8

Nearly one million Australians have been diagnosed with cancer in the last 10 years. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates 969,000 people alive at the end of 2025 had cancer.

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The power of one is growing

Herald Sun, General News, 18/07/2026, Angela Mollard, Page 23

Only children were once stereotyped as lonely and selfish, but as the birthrate plummets and parents opt for smaller families, experts say the stigma is rapidly evaporating. The number of single-child families in Australia has doubled in the past 40 years with one in three couple families now having just one child, according to the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#).

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

Smokers out of puff

Daily Telegraph, General News, 18/07/2026, Page 22

Smoking in Australia has fallen to a historic low. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data shows just 5.6 per cent of Australians 14+ smoked daily last year.

Also reported by: [Pharmacy Daily \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#).

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

Chiefs gasp for smoke tax cut

Hobart Mercury, General News, 18/07/2026, Bridget Clarke, Page 6

Daily smoking rates have hit record nationwide lows, but health bodies have warned against complacency as calls mount to reduce the tobacco excise. Released on Friday, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) National Drug Strategy Household Survey found daily tobacco smoking among people aged 14 and over dropped to 5.6 per cent in 2025, down from 8.3 per cent in 2022-23.

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

Criminals running the show

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 18/07/2026, Claire Sadler, Page 5

Almost all vape users in Australia rely on illegal products while illicit tobacco use has also doubled in just two years. The latest data come as overall smoking rates have fallen to historic lows, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's National Drug Strategy Household Survey.

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

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

Fewer daily smokers, but black market battle rages

Newcastle Herald, General News, 18/07/2026, Eleanor Wilson & Nick Wilson, Page 16

If you met an almost-50 year-old Terry Fulton in 2001, he'd tell you he didn't expect to live much longer. [...] The number of daily smokers has more than halved since 2001, according to data released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

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

The bloke who couldn't look away

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 18/07/2026, Stan Ghys, Page 31

I never expected to spend my weekends and evenings talking about homelessness to tens of thousands of strangers on trains, ferry wharfs, cafs and in parks. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported that more than 350 homeless people each day are turned away from homelessness services that are overwhelmed - 36 per cent are facing financial difficulties with the increased cost of living, 40 per cent are trying to escape domestic and family violence, 25 per cent are suffering from relationship breakdowns or inappropriate dwelling conditions and about 10 per cent are experiencing mental health, substance use or other health issues.

Also reported by: [Burnie Advocate \(Burnie\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Warrnambool\)](#).

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

Tobacco control is working

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 18/07/2026, Page 21

Smoking has fallen to a historic low with new Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data showing just 5.6 per cent of Australians 14+ were smoking daily last year. This is well ahead of Australia's target of 10 per cent or fewer adults smoking by 2025.

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

Would a return to 'graphic' anti-smoking ads turn West Aussies off cigarettes?

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 17/07/2026, Michael Philipps

As smoking rates show a significant decline across the nation, the head of the Perth-based Australian Council on Smoking and Health believes more can still be done to address the deadly habit. New data from the 2025 National Drug Strategy Household Survey shows that daily smoking among Australians aged 14 and over fell to 5.6 per cent in 2025 – down from 8.3 per cent in 2022–23 and 19.5 per cent in 2001 – while daily vaping stabilised after rising rapidly in recent years.

[Read More](#)

Natasha never expected to become addicted to prescribed opioids while battling endometriosis

ABC Online, Other, 17/07/2026, Coco Veldkamp

Natasha Trajkovski was 21 when she was first prescribed opioids. [...] According to the latest data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, in 2024 there were around 12.6 million Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme-subsidised opioid prescriptions dispensed to around 2.9 million patients in the country.

[Read More](#)

A friend, Facebook or ... Ukraine? No easy surrogacy options for Australian families desperate for children

The Guardian, Other, 18/07/2026, Tory Shepherd

Over eight years, Ethan and his wife went through nine rounds of IVF in Melbourne. They travelled to Spain for two more, without success.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 17/07/2026, Mark Burrows

A new survey from the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare found the number of daily smokers dropped from 8.3% to 5.6 in two years, while vaping rates stabilised at 3.6%, but illicit tobacco use has more than doubled, now up to 34%. The skyrocketing of illicit tobacco use has ignited a political debate over federal taxes that push tobacco prices up.

Similar coverage reported by: [Sky News Live \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Adelaide\)](#), [SBS \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Perth\)](#).

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ABC Radio Darwin , Breakfast, 17/07/2026, Jess Ong

Interview with Flinders University Professor Marita Hefler, on the latest data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's National Drug Strategy Household Survey, revealing that smoking rates have gone down to 5.6%. Hefler says they are definitely seeing a very strong downward trend in the number of people who are smoking. She notes that Australia's been doing a lot to reduce smoking for many years now, and she also states that cost is a contributor to the rise in illicit tobacco use.

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

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2GB, Afternoons, 17/07/2026, Michael McLaren

Interview with University of Sydney Faculty of Medicine and Health public health researcher Professor Becky Freeman, on the 2025 National Drug Household Survey, revealing that only 5.6% of Australians smoke daily. Freeman says it's not surprising that nicotine levels have gone up in wastewater. She also states that even though vaping and smoking rates have gone down, the amount of nicotine available in a vape now has skyrocketed.

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3AW, Drive, 17/07/2026, Heidi Murphy

Interview with ANU Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health Associate Professor Raglan Maddox, on the National Drug Strategy Household Survey's latest figures, revealing that smoking rates have decreased in the country. Maddox says the decrease in smoking rates reflects the decades of hard work and everyday Australians who are attempting to quit the habit. He also states that the illicit tobacco market is one of the current challenges, but states and territories are starting to catch up in terms of tobacco licencing.

Also reported by: [3AW \(Melbourne\)](#).

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Breakfast, 17/07/2026, Sonya Feldhoff & Jules Schiller

Interview with Public Health Association of Australia President Professor Caroline Miller, on the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare figures, showing that smoking rates are declining in Australia. Miller says daily smoking rates have come down to 5.6%, while vaping has stabilised at 3.6%, and it shows that the vaping reforms are working. She also says illicit tobacco is a serious problem, but South Australia and Queensland have done better in terms of cracking down on illicit tobacco than any other jurisdiction in Australia.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 17/07/2026, Kylie Baxter

Interview with Cancer Council Tasmania CEO Alison Lai, on the latest data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, showing that smoking rates have gone down to 5.6%. Lai says they are yet to learn the statistics for Tasmania later this year, but it is incredibly heartening to see the decrease in smoking rates at a national level. She also states that one in four Australians have indicated that they're using some form of nicotine products, such as non-therapeutic vapes.

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

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ABC Radio Perth, Breakfast , 17/07/2026, Mark Gibson

Interview with Public Health Association of Australia President Professor Caroline Miller, on the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare figures, showing that smoking rates are declining in Australia. Miller says daily smoking rates have come down to 5.6%, while vaping has stabilised at 3.6%, but they are very concerned that the exponential growth in vaping would turn into smoking. She also says there needs to be a national tobacco campaign to support Australians who want to quit smoking.

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

ABC Radio Sydney, Breakfast, 17/07/2026, Craig Reucassel

Interview with Public Health Association of Australia President Professor Caroline Miller, on the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare figures, showing that smoking rates are declining in Australia. Miller says daily smoking rates have come down to 5.6%, while daily use of e-cigarettes has stabilised at 3.6%, but they are very concerned that the exponential growth in vaping would turn into smoking. She also says smoking used to be the leading cause of death in Australia, but the nation is now world-leading in terms of stopping people from smoking.

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FIVEAA, Mornings, 17/07/2026, Matthew Pantelis

Interview with ANU Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health Associate Professor Raglan Maddox, on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's latest figures, revealing that smoking rates have decreased in the country. Maddox says the AIHW has revealed that smoking rates have gone down to 5.6%, and it shows that everyday Australians are kicking the habit. He also states that they have seen a decline among young Australians who are smoking e-cigarettes, and he adds that state and territory governments are raising the standard on tobacco licencing.

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Radio National, Breakfast, 17/07/2026, Sally Sara

Interview with Australian Council on Smoking and Health CEO Laura Hunter, on new data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, revealing that Australians are now smoking less, but the usage of nicotine products such as nicotine patches has increased. Hunter says smoking rates in Australia have gone down to 5.6%, and it's good news that young people are vaping less, but they are concerned that more Australians are using multiple forms of illicit nicotine products. She also says authorities need to crack down on the illicit tobacco market, establish hard-hitting education campaigns, and support Australians in quitting smoking.

Also reported by: [Radio National \(Canberra\)](#).

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

A gut instinct saved me from 16cm tumour

Courier Mail, General News, 18/07/2026, Travis Meyn, Page 19

Ally Frizelle thought she must have just put on a bit of weight. [...] "She explained that the ultrasound had found a 16cm tumour on one of my ovaries and, while more tests were needed, it had nasty characteristics which were consistent with cancer.

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

Diabetes stigma needs rethink

Hobart Mercury, General News, 18/07/2026, Aris Schuler-Shah, Page 5

Tasmanians are being urged to start a conversation this National Diabetes Week in a bid to break down stigmas surrounding the condition. For Ken Johnson, 77, a routine blood screening 20 years ago led to a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes, something he says gave him a new lease on life.

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

Hope for diabetic kids

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 18/07/2026, Claire Sadler, Page 20

A global drug trial combatting the effects of type 1 diabetes will be made available to WA children in an Australian first. The immunotherapy treatment is being trialled across the world but this is the first time it has been made available Down Under.

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

One in four with normal BMI 'obese'

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Antony Scholefield , Page 7

More than 26% of people with normal BMI meet proposed clinical obesity criteria based on fat mass and organ dysfunction, US research suggests. A 2025 Lancet Global Commission defined clinical obesity as excess adiposity, assessed via anthropometric measures rather than BMI alone, that affects everyday activities or contributes to organ dysfunction, such as microalbuminuria with reduced eGFR or steatotic liver disease with hepatic fibrosis.

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Ryan Bowman's grieving family wins fight for new patient safety protocol in South Australia

Adelaide Now, Other, 17/07/2026, Brad Crouch , Erin Jones & Karen Grace Prince

Worried families and carers will finally have a formal path to escalate concerns when they believe a patient's condition is deteriorating and is not being adequately addressed. It follows advocacy by the The Ryan Bowman Legacy of Care Foundation, established by Chris and Deb Brooks following the passing of their son Ryan in February 2025, with the aim of ensuring other families are spared preventable harm within the health system.

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

[Read More](#)

Woman bravely opens up about living with HPV virus: 'No treatment'

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 17/07/2026, Taylor Penny

A 31-year-old woman who tested positive to a strain of the human papillomavirus (HPV) not covered by the important vaccination she received as a teenager said there were no symptoms other than a cold and she wasn't very sexually active. Courtney Walshe, who lives in Melbourne's Diamond Creek, is bravely sharing how she was diagnosed with HPV during a routine pap smear five years ago.

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

[Read More](#)

Twelve days nursing my father in the 'dying room' taught me the value of planning for death

The Guardian, Other, 18/07/2026, Stephanie Wood

Dying is difficult, a nurse told me. It might have been even more appalling had Dad not been clear about his wishes.

[Read More](#)

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Flipping the script

Sydney Morning Herald, Good Weekend Magazine, 18/07/2026, Amy Fallon, Page 12

Tracy was at the front of a room inside London's majestic Royal Albert Hall, a stand-up star in the making. [...] But Jackson has registered the trademark for the term "Comedy-on-Prescription" in Australia, the UK and the US, and hopes that it will become available within the NHS under the wider umbrella of social prescription: the practice of connecting patients to non-clinical activities and community support to improve health and wellbeing.

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

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Movement is medicine for the mind

Exercise is often framed as something we do for physical health or appearance. But psychologically, its benefits may be even more powerful for the mind.

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

Territory prisoner spent 300+ days in Darwin Royal Hospital inpatient unit due to the chronic lack of forensic mental health facilities

Northern Territory News, Other, 17/07/2026, Zizi Averill

A prisoner spent more than 300 days in the Royal Darwin Hospital under constant guard in same ward as acutely vulnerable Territorians, the national torture watchdog has revealed. [...] The report found that a Territory man — known as 'Michael' — spent more than 300 days in the high-acuity mental health ward at the Royal Darwin Hospital due to the lack of forensic mental health facilities.

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IMMUNISATION

Covid vax in small doses

Courier Mail, General News, 18/07/2026, Page 5

Smaller doses of Covid-19 booster vaccines can provide long-lasting immunity, helping to reduce costs and improve access to vaccination, according to new research. An international research program led by Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) found fractional doses, where people receive half the standard vaccine amount given as boosters, produced strong immune responses that remained comparable to full-dose boosters.

Also reported by: [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [The West Australian \(Saturday edition\) \(Perth\)](#).

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New vax funded on NIP

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Bella Rough, Page 8

The Federal Government has funded a new pneumococcal vaccine on the National Immunisation Program for adults aged 65 or older and Indigenous adults aged 25 or older. The listing of MSD Australia's Capvaxie on 1 July also expands the definition of high-risk adults who are eligible for funded vaccines aged 18 or older by adding new categories, such as COPD, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, chronic liver disease and immunocompromising conditions.

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RSV vaccination rates halve NSW hospitalisations, as influenza peak looms

ABC Online, Other, 17/07/2026, Danuta Kozaki

New South Wales health authorities have hailed a vaccination program that has nearly halved hospitalisations for a potentially deadly respiratory virus among newborn babies a "fantastic" success ahead of the winter peak. A study published in the latest Medical Journal of Australia has shown the maternal and infant vaccination program for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in NSW has seen a major decline in notifications and hospitalisations for infants younger than six months old for one of the leading causes of infant deaths in Australia.

[Read More](#)

Channel 7, Seven News, 17/07/2026, Will Goodings

South Australia's flu numbers have weighed down, but health experts say it's too early to call it a victory. South Australians are now being urged to get a flu shot.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

WA research finds taking prebiotics during pregnancy could protect babies from food allergies

West Australian, Other, 17/07/2026, Claire Sadler

New WA research suggests a simple dietary change during pregnancy could help protect babies against food allergies caused by antibiotic use. The findings by The Kids Research Institute Australia, based at Perth Children's Hospital, found children born to mothers who received antibiotics during labour but did not take prebiotics were more than five times more likely to develop a food allergy.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Kimberley patients to access specialist vascular care closer to home in regional first

West Australian, Other, 17/07/2026, Phoebe Solon

Patients across the Kimberley are set to benefit from specialist vein and artery care closer to home, with consultant vascular surgeon Dr Olufemi Oshin launching the region's first dedicated visiting vascular service in Broome. [...] "When I came to Australia about 10 years ago, I saw a lot of the Aboriginal population and the health disparities and thought, 'Why is this happening?'"

[Read More](#)

Victoria establishes first Aboriginal-led human research ethics committee

National Indigenous Times, Other, 17/07/2026, Dechlan Brennan

Victoria's first Aboriginal-led human research ethics committee has officially begun operations, marking a significant step in strengthening cultural oversight of medical research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Delivered by the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and funded by the Victorian Government, the Aboriginal Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) will oversee medical research involving First Nations people to ensure projects are culturally safe, ethically conducted and deliver meaningful benefits for First Peoples.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

'I want other women to know what can happen'

Newcastle Herald, General News, 18/07/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 5

New Lambton's April Hagan lives with the scars of birth trauma. A decade ago, the birth of her son Leo in a public hospital caused her "lifelong injuries".

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

More professionals prescribed

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 18/07/2026, Lochlainn Heley, Page 5

Mildura has welcomed a new health partnership that promises to establish a fresh workforce of homegrown pharmacists. The partnership between the Mildura Base Public Hospital and the Alfred Care Group Pharmacy team, part of Bayside Health, will plan to provide the region with more clinical support and educational services.

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Unpaid overtime payments roll out

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Heather Saxena, Page 6

More than a thousand doctors have received compensation - over \$150,000 in some cases - as part of a \$31 million unpaid overtime settlement. Current and former junior doctors have won or settled class actions in multiple states and territories for unpaid unrostered overtime since a landmark 2023 court victory in Victoria.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

'Like an extreme sport': doctor cleared in gender care fight

Weekend Australian, General News, 18/07/2026, Mackenzie Scott, Page 6

Child psychiatrist Jillian Spencer has compared medical whistleblowing to an extreme sport after being cleared of wrongdoing by Queensland's leading children's hospital four years after raising concerns about gender-affirming care. Dr Spencer was a senior specialist at the Queensland Children's Hospital prior to her suspension in 2023 for questioning the state's gender service policy.

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

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Child psych 'exonerated'

Courier Mail, General News, 18/07/2026, Des Houghton, Page 6

Psychiatrist Jillian Spencer, who exposed transgender activism at the Queensland Children's Hospital,

has been cleared of wrongdoing and paid a substantial settlement in a dramatic climb-down by Queensland Health. [...] Meanwhile, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency has stopped its investigation into Dr Spencer for sharing social media posts critical of transgender ideology.

Also reported by: [Weekend Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Weekend Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#).

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

Steroid psychosis

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Heather Saxena, Page 1

A GP who prescribed excessive steroid doses for COVID-19, including to a patient who was later hospitalised for steroid-induced psychosis, has been found guilty of professional misconduct. Dr My Le Trinh, who has claimed the case against her was a "witchhunt", was suspended under emergency powers in 2021 following a notification from the toxicology department at Westmead Hospital in Sydney, where one of her patients had been admitted.

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Nurse billed Medicare for spa clients

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Heather Saxena, Page 7

A nurse practitioner will repay Medicare \$500,000 after conducting unnecessary consultations with spa customers, who then received discounted spa services. The Professional Services Review (PSR) says the nurse billed Medicare for "pre-treatment consultations" offered to spa customers who presented their Medicare card, using items 82215 and 91180 each attracting a \$75.60 rebate as well as the now-defunct MBS item 82222.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Dead whale to be tested for bird flu

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 18/07/2026, Caitlin Fitzsimmons, Page 8

A newborn humpback whale that was stranded on a Sydney beach has died, and the carcass will be tested for H5N1 bird flu as a precaution. A member of the public reported the whale on Greenhills Beach in Cronulla about 6.30am yesterday by calling the Organisation for the Rescue and Research of Cetaceans in Australia (ORRCA) hotline.

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WA bird flu cases hit double digits with Seabird discovery

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 18/07/2026, Page 8

The number of confirmed bird flu cases in WA has hit 10, with another infected giant petrel found north of Perth. The discovery was made at Seabird, about 100km north of Perth.

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

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

Dead whale calf to be tested for bird flu

Newcastle Herald, General News, 18/07/2026, Aaron Bunch, Page 9

A baby humpback whale stranded on a beach has died, and authorities are testing the carcass for a deadly bird flu strain. [...] The risk to human health remains low.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Newcastle Herald \(Online\)](#).

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ABC, ABC News, 17/07/2026, Nakari Thorpe

The carcass of a humpback whale calf at Cronulla is being tested for H5N1 bird flu as part of standard

biosecurity procedures. The stranded four and a half metre male calf died shortly after rescue crews arrived at Greenhills Beach this morning.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 17/07/2026, Michael Thomson

Two new cases of the deadly H5 bird flu have been confirmed in WA, taking the total number of detections in Western Australia to 10.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Our weak laws on medical devices endanger patients

The Saturday Age, General News, 18/07/2026, Liam Mannix, Henrietta Cook, Clay Lucas & Amelia Ballinger, Page 1

Mother-of-three Vicki Kelly spent 17 months in hospital, paralysed from the waist down after a tiny, expensive pump, implanted to treat back pain, led to a blood clot that blocked a spinal cord artery. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration, Australia's medical devices watchdog, refuses to say how many reports it receives of injuries or deaths linked to devices each year.

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

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'It's the start of a revolution'

Australian Doctor, General News, 17/07/2026, Paul Smith , Page 12

The TGA recently approved teplizumab (Tziield) for use in Australia. It is being hailed as the first new therapy for type 1 diabetes since insulin was discovered by Banting and Best a hundred years ago.

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Monash, TGA ink quality meds MoU

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 17/07/2026

Monash University has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), bringing Monash into the TGA's Academic Outreach Program. The partnership aims to strengthen collaboration in pharmaceutical regulatory science, therapeutics development, research, education and knowledge exchange, with a key focus on improving medicine quality and safety,.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 17/07/2026, Michael Thomson

AstraZeneca will pull Zoladex, a life-saving breast cancer and endometriosis PBS drug, from Australian shelves from November due to commercial reasons. The Therapeutic Goods Administration says they cannot force a company to sell the product, while the Health Department is now working with companies to explore other options.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

No relevant coverage

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Salad warning after US illness outbreak

Weekend Australian, General News, 18/07/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 9

An outbreak of an explosive diarrhoea-causing parasite across the US has put the spotlight on lettuce and salad greens in fast-food outlets and supermarkets, with Australian experts saying it is important to keep a local eye on the source of fresh produce and to wash it thoroughly. The Cyclospora parasite has been reported in 30 US states this year, with thousands of cases.

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

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AICIS

Nutritionist slams Aussie regulator's proposal to allow higher trace amounts of isocycloseram on berries

NEWS.com.au, Other, 17/07/2026, Harrison Christian

A popular nutritionist is slamming an Aussie regulator's divisive proposal to allow up to 500 times more residue of isocycloseram on berries. The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has put forward the changes for the pesticide and says there is no consumer safety concern.

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

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