



TODAY'S NEWS

Tuesday, 21st July 2026

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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[Hobart Mercury \(page 4\)](#)** reports that Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has criticised tobacco companies after an investigation found some illegal devices pack the nicotine hit of more than 600 cigarettes, saying "They (youths) were told vapes were a safe alternative to smoking, but that was all a ruse from Big Tobacco."
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports that medical professionals are warning Tasmania will be sent "back into the dark ages" if Hobart Private ceases providing certain procedures after a potential takeover by a Catholic healthcare provider despite assurances from the State Health Minister there will be no service gap.
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports that Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has ruled out federal funding for a new hospital in Darwin, however he has announced a \$10 million grant to improve maternity services at Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH). *Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(page 5\)](#).*
- **[The Age \(page 4\)](#)** reports that new national guidelines will recommend that children be monitored for high blood pressure from the age of seven, after research found that an estimated 22,000 to 44,000 Australian children live with significant hypertension.
- **[The West Australian \(page 12\)](#)** reports that WA health authorities have issued a warning after the number of after the number of Mpox cases in 2 passed the 2025 total, with Director of the

Communicable Disease Control Directorate Paul Armstrong saying using condoms, early testing and vaccination remained the best ways to limit the spread of the disease.

- **The Daily Telegraph (page 8)** reports that the Therapeutic Goods Administration announced a crackdown on Australia's booming peptide black market, warning influencers and sellers pushing unapproved drugs that they will face "significant legal consequences". *Also reported by: **The Medical Republic***

MINISTER BUTLER

Butler's alarm at nicotine in vapes

Hobart Mercury, General News, 21/07/2026, Remy Varga, Page 4

Health Minister Mark Butler has admitted more work needs to be done on vaping after an investigation found some illegal devices pack the nicotine hit of more than 600 cigarettes. Independent testing commissioned by this masthead found vapes are full of addictive nicotine and chemicals that have an unknown health impact on the body.

Also reported by: Toowoomba Chronicle (Toowoomba), Daily Telegraph Australia (Online), Toowoomba Chronicle (Online), Gold Coast Bulletin (Online), Herald Sun (Online), The Mercury (Online), Northern Territory News (Online), Adelaide Now (Online), Townsville Bulletin (Online), Weekly Times Now (Online), The Courier Mail (Online), Geelong Advertiser (Online), Cairns Post (Online).

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Treatments remain accessible

Colac Herald, General News, 20/07/2026, Hannah Toohey, Page 2

Colac and district residents living with primary progressive multiple sclerosis say the Federal Government's decision to keep MS treatments on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme has come as a huge relief. Health and Aged Care Minister Mark Butler announced last week that Ocrevus and Kesimpta would remain available through the PBS.

Also reported by: Colac Herald (Online).

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Emma Bell takes bowel cancer fight to Canberra

Times Victor Harbor, General News, 21/07/2026, Dani Brown, Page 2

American River teacher and mother-of-two Emma Bell has taken her fight for better research and testing for bowel cancer in young Australians to Canberra. [...] "Then she put a question to the Health Minister in Question Time, and then she spoke in the Federation Chamber as well, and the response she got from the Health Minister was positive as well, which was good to hear."

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Crohn's patients missing out on life-changing IBD treatments

The Australian, Other, 20/07/2026, Penny Timms

Australia, where inflammatory bowel disease is prevalent, is locked out of some of the best treatment advances. For weeks Kelly Exner was convinced she was dying. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has now received crucial advice.

[Read More](#)

Revealed: The medicines denied to Australian patients

The Australian, Other, 20/07/2026, Natasha Robinson

Australia's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is currently facing its biggest challenge – and now a new report has revealed the medicines Australians are already missing out on. [...] Health minister Mark Butler has made clear in the wake of the reporting his deep concern at the nation's PBS challenges as well as the impact of global geopolitics, including Donald Trump's demands that US patients pay the same as the lowest price for medicines in overseas countries.

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The 18 important medicines that Australians are missing out on

The Age, Other, 20/07/2026, Natassia Chrysanthos

Just a quarter of new medicines launched globally in the last decade have been subsidised in Australia, putting life-changing treatments out-of-reach for patients, in a situation that pharmaceutical companies warn is becoming untenable. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler commissioned a Health Technology Assessment (HTA) review of these processes in 2022.

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Australia's daily smoking rate down

The Mandarin, Other, 20/07/2026, Melissa Coade

Last year marked the lowest on record for cigarette use in Australia, with data from 2025 showing national smoking rates reached an historic low of 5.8%. Tobacco remains the leading cause of premature death in Australia, but trends suggest things are changing for the better. [...] Commenting on the findings, Health Minister Mark Butler observed that Australia was becoming a healthier country, with 500,000 fewer daily smokers than three years ago.

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The Zap: latest health and aged care news, plus consultations not to miss

Croakey, Other, 20/07/2026, Melissa Sweet

Recommendations for preventing and ensuring better care for birth-related injuries, high-level concerns about the implementation of aged care reforms, and updated guidelines for reducing the risk of cognitive decline and dementia – these are among the topics covered this week. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said "these results show our world-leading vaping reforms are making a difference, but we know there is still more work to be done to protect Australians from the harms of smoking and vaping".

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Minister promises to chase down aged care SAH cold callers

Health Services Daily, Other, 20/07/2026

Mark Butler says he'd not been aware of the issue. Mark Butler says he'd not been aware of the issue.

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Nine in 10 Australians are now smoke-free, but the nicotine fight is far from over

PS News, Other, 20/07/2026, Naziya Alvi Rahman

More than nine in 10 Australians now live smoke-free, marking a dramatic turnaround from the start of the century when one in five adults smoked every day. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the decline in smoking and vaping among young people suggested recent national reforms were beginning to have an effect.

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

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Zoladex access 'at no cost' confirmed despite PBS removal

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 20/07/2026

Zoladex, a treatment for breast cancer and endometriosis, has been prescribed more than 90,000 times in 12 months. [...] There has been a significant increase in focus on the PBS in recent months, following the withdrawal of other medications from the flagship medicines scheme. Recently Federal Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler described the medications market as being 'in a state of enormous flux', citing the impact of policies such as the 'Most Favoured Nations' under President Donald Trump.

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Albanese snaps at Northern Territory reporters over funding 'delay' for vital, 'falling apart' hospital

Anthony Albanese has snapped at reporters after they questioned him over a "delay" in funding for a crucial Darwin hospital after the government committed just a third of the funds locals were requesting. Anthony Albanese has been grilled over a "delayed" hospital investment announcement in Darwin – as he was accused of short changing territorians. [...] He also told the forum receiving \$35 million seemed unlikely following negotiations with federal Health Minister Mark Butler.

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Royal Darwin Hospital to receive \$10 million maternity and neonatal upgrade

The Australia Today, Other, 20/07/2026, Amit Sarwal

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese Government has announced a \$10 million investment to upgrade maternity, birthing and neonatal intensive care facilities at Royal Darwin Hospital, aiming to improve care for Territory families and meet growing demand for public maternity services. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the upgrades would deliver practical improvements for women and newborns.

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JOY 94.9 FM, 09:00 News, 20/07/2026

Health Minister Mark Butler has vowed a vaping crackdown following independent tests commissioned by the Herald Sun. It comes as the tests revealed that some illegal devices packed the nicotine hit of more than 600 cigarettes and chemicals.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

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MINISTER RAE

Frontline providers sound alarm over aged care reforms

Starts at 60, Other, 20/07/2026, Scott Podmore

Just months after Australia's biggest overhaul of home aged care in years, concerns are mounting that the new Support at Home program may not be delivering on its promise to help older Australians remain independent for longer. [...] Starts at 60 contacted Aged Care Minister Sam Rae's office seeking comment on the concerns raised by providers and the Inspector-General, including whether the Government accepts the rollout has created significant challenges for some older Australians and whether further changes are being considered.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

Disability Support Guide

Disability Support Guide, Other, 20/07/2026

A new national report finds rising mental health awareness in Australia hasn't translated into better treatment, with 70% of people with mental health challenges reporting discrimination across workplaces, relationships, and health services. [...] Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride launched it at Parliament House.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Australian women nationwide gain support for menopause and perimenopause

Honi Soit, Other, 20/07/2026, Firdevs Sinik

From July onwards, women's health support will be provided nationwide through accessible clinics as part of the federal government's women's health package. [...] Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care and Assistant Minister for Women, Rebecca White, said the expansion addresses the enduring gap in women's healthcare.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Growing old in a second language, inside a system not built for them

Made in India Magazine, Other, 20/07/2026, Rakhi Malhotra

In a residential aged care home in Melbourne's outer south-east, an elderly woman pushes away a plate of roast meat and boiled vegetables. She spent six decades cooking dal and rolling roti by hand. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has committed to a fair, culturally safe single assessment framework at the front door of the system.

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Trachoma finally on the way out in Australia

Pearls and Irritations, Other, 20/07/2026, Jack Waterford

Fred Hollows' trachoma program exposed appalling Aboriginal health conditions and helped drive the growth of community-controlled health services. 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.

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TGA escalates war on unapproved peptides

The Medical Republic, Other, 20/07/2026, Amanda Sheppeard

The regulator has warned suppliers, influencers and consumers that enforcement against unapproved peptide products is ramping up as online promotion of the substances continues to surge. [...] Deputy secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and head of the TGA Professor Anthony Lawler said businesses should expect action if they continued operating outside Australia's therapeutic goods laws.

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Feds move to regulate automated decision-making

WEB IT News Australia, Other, 20/07/2026, Andrew Colley

The federal government will move to tighten regulation of automated decision making (ADM) as a result of a new set of safety priorities for adoption of AI in government and the community. [...] In April, the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman confirmed to several media outlets that it was

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Apartments boost housing supply

Shepparton News, General News, 21/07/2026, Ashley Darling, Page 3

A new development in Shepparton will provide housing for key workers in healthcare, education, aged care and other essential industries supporting the Goulburn Valley community. Goulburn Apartments at 101 Stewart St will feature 37 bedrooms across 28 apartments, and is being built by Shepparton-based company JMB Modular Buildings.

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I replied to a love scammer

Shepparton News, General News, 21/07/2026, Nathan Vincent, Page 12

What would you do if a stranger emailed you, not asking for money, but simply looking for friendship? Most people would probably delete it. But being me, I decided to reply.

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Older Sydney town: the suburbs where the over 65s outnumber those under 20

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 20/07/2026, Matt Wade

The share of Sydney suburbs where over-65s outnumber those aged under 20 has trebled during the past two decades as the city's population ages and the high cost of housing locks young families out of many neighbourhoods. The population of those aged over 65 outstripped those aged up to 19 in 54 Sydney neighbourhoods in 2024, new analysis of Bureau of Statistics population data shows.

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'We will all experience the system for older Australians': addressing the need for safe, effective and affordable aged care

The Guardian, Other, 20/07/2026

Experts at Flinders University are establishing world-class models of care for older Australians at a time when they are urgently needed Every day, more than 20,400 people are discharged from public hospitals in Australia; almost half of them are aged 65 and over. For many of these patients, this is an experience loaded with uncertainty and confusion: fragmentation across health and aged care systems is undermining care for older Australians, causing vulnerability, safety risks and undue financial stress.

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Australian dementia patient backs World Health Organization recommendations on how to halve cases

7News.com.au, Other, 21/07/2026, Jennifer Bechwati

The World Health Organization revealed almost 50 per cent of cases could be prevented with everyday lifestyle changes. Almost half a million Australians are living with dementia and the numbers keep rising.

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WHO says almost half of dementia cases 'preventable' with new health guidelines

7News.com.au, Other, 20/07/2026, Sarah Keszler

'These recommendations offer real-life actions that will reduce dementia risk.' New guidelines released by the world's leading health authority on reducing the risk of cognitive decline assert that almost half of

dementia cases are preventable.

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Inspector-General warns aged care reforms 'causing harm'

Aged Care Insite, Other, 20/07/2026, Stefanie Schultz

Natalie Siegel-Brown said the government is 'fighting the wrong battle' by focusing on demand rather than prevention. Aged Care Inspector-General Natalie Siegel-Brown has delivered a warning about the implementation of Australia's aged care reforms, arguing that long wait times, complexity and financial barriers are harming older Australians while driving up long-term costs.

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Eight projects advance under WA aged care loan scheme

Aged Care Insite, Other, 20/07/2026, Stefanie Schultz

The Cook government says demand for its aged care loan program highlights the need for more aged care capacity across the state. The West Australian government says its \$100 million Aged Care Low Interest Loan Scheme has attracted strong interest from aged care providers, with eight organisations successfully progressing to negotiations for projects designed to expand residential aged care capacity across the state.

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"Sorry, I can't give you any ice cream': Inside aged care's biggest HELF problem"

HelloCare, Other, 20/07/2026, Jakob Neeland

When a lifestyle team member in an Australian aged care facility resigned, the final straw was not the demanding shifts or heavy workloads. It was the daily task of refusing residents small pleasures such as a glass of wine, an ice cream or a newspaper.

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Two everyday factors now proven to cut dementia risk, WHO reveals

The Senior, Other, 20/07/2026, Carla Mascarenhas

Nearly half of all dementia cases are preventable, says the World Health Organisation (WHO), while wearing hearing aids and reducing exposure to pollution can help lower your risk. The WHO has just updated their dementia prevention guidelines with more guidance on lifestyle factors and treatment.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

ART reform a concern: lawyers

The Australian, General News, 21/07/2026, Noah Yim, Page 5

The nation's lawyers are rebelling against proposed efficiency reforms for the Administrative Review Tribunal and have raised the alarm with a growing pattern of Labor rushing law reform with limited transparency. Attorney-General Michelle Rowland is seeking to pass new rules to speed along matters before the ART, with the department citing a "substantial increase" in lodged matters, driven largely by an upsurge in migration and refugee claims.

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A mum's desperate battle for answers and the one organisation that changed everything

Northern Daily Leader, Other, 20/07/2026, Orlander Ruming

For three years Hayley Rees tried desperately to get help for her daughter Maisie. Ms Rees felt like she was on an emotional rollercoaster as she tried to navigate the long wait times to see a paediatrician and the specialist health services she knew her daughter needed.

PRIMARY CARE

Former ambo boss dies after cancer battle

Herald Sun, General News, 21/07/2026, Shannon Deery, Page 9

Former Ambulance Victoria chief executive Tony Walker has died. Mr Walker served as chief executive of the organisation until his resignation in 2022 after being diagnosed with bowel cancer earlier that year.

Also reported by: [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

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PM delivers \$10m for NT maternity services

Northern Territory News, General News, 21/07/2026, Fia Walsh, Page 5

A group of local mothers has celebrated a "hard fought" \$10m boost to Darwin's maternity services, but says there is still a way to go to bring the Territory in line with the rest of the nation. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese visited Royal Darwin Hospital on Monday morning to announce the new funding to refurbish the existing birthing suites, maternity ward and newborn services.

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Threat of closure seems to have paid off

Border Mail, General News, 21/07/2026, Anthony Bunn, Page 7

A housing development, at the centre of a threat by a Henty physiotherapist to close up her allied health business, is now being recommended for approval by Greater Hume Shire councillors. Claire Lawson had publicly announced she would on July 10 shut her Old Servo rooms, which provide Pilates, speech pathology and hydrotherapy as well as physio, if her proposal to install three manufactured dwellings was not part of the agenda for the council's July 22 meeting.

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Crushing isolation of lacking transport

Burnie Advocate, General News, 21/07/2026, Freddie Moffat, Page 3

Without a car, bus, or a taxi, Kathryn and Michael Hargreaves cannot get to critical medical appointments, or get out to take a break. "My husband has less than five per cent of his heart left working, technically he is classed legally dead," Ms Hargreaves said.

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More organ donors sought

Kalgoorlie Miner, General News, 21/07/2026, Page 4

This time last year, Matthew Larman was watching life from the sidelines. The Brisbane teenager couldn't play rugby with his mates and had to be careful about social activities.

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Mater staff under attack

Newcastle Herald, General News, 21/07/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 1

Almost 400 cases of physical aggression occurred at the Calvary Mater hospital in five years, internal documents show. The data can be revealed as concerns rise about assaults on staff in public hospitals, amid increasing presentations at emergency departments for mental health troubles.

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The data they don't want you to know

Newcastle Herald, General News, 21/07/2026, Page 16

Government departments often proclaim they have nothing to hide. Unfortunately, they also spend an

extraordinary amount of time making sure the public cannot see information that might paint them in an unfavourable light.

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Improving ED patient flow

Shepparton News, General News, 21/07/2026, Jay Bryce, Page 15

GV Health's Emergency Department continues to experience high demand, but a range of new initiatives are helping improve patient flow and patient experience across the health service. Divisional operations director of access and investigative services Emma Bryden-Brown said the health service had continued building on improvements introduced over the past year.

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Anthony Albanese to commit \$10 million for Royal Darwin Hospital maternity upgrades

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 20/07/2026, Harry Brill

Darwin's woeful maternity services scene has made it all the way to the Prime Minister, who is expected to make a funding announcement on Monday morning. While his office is not confirming it Prime Minister Anthony Albanese is expected to announce an agreement has been reached to set aside \$10m to help fix Royal Darwin Hospital's Darwin's maternity woes.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#).

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Coroner finds home birth baby would have lived if she had been born at a hospital

The Courier Mail, Other, 20/07/2026

A baby delivered in an unsupervised birth at a South East Queensland home would have lived if she had been born at a hospital, a coroner has found, after tragic details of the birth were revealed. Coroner Stephanie Gallagher has ruled Baby M died in 2024 after choking to death on meconium as a result of a free birth at home.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

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Albanese dashes hopes for new NT hospital during \$10m maternity announcement

ABC Online, Other, 20/07/2026, Jack Hislop

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has dashed hopes of federal funding for a new hospital in Darwin, while announcing a \$10 million grant to improve maternity services at Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH). The Northern Territory's health department has been calling for a new hospital in Darwin since Cyclone Fina last November caused bricks to come loose and fall on a roof , leading to a partial ceiling collapse.

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Baby Thea Flaskett's death at Redcliffe Hospital caused by congenital heart defect, inquest finds

ABC Online, Other, 20/07/2026

The death of a baby girl at a south-east Queensland hospital was the result of her undiagnosed congenital heart defect, "not the standard of her post-delivery care", a coroner has ruled. Thea Flaskett died four hours after she was born via vacuum assisted delivery at Redcliffe Hospital in September 2023.

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Paramedics told to take complex cardiac patients to Launceston General Hospital instead of Mersey

ABC Online, Other, 20/07/2026, Ashleigh Barraclough

Paramedics have been told to transport complex cardiac patients in Tasmania's north-west to the Launceston General Hospital (LGH) rather than the local Mersey Community Hospital. Robbie Moore from the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU) said paramedics were notified by email of the new policy, which took effect on June 29.

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Doctors worry health system can't make up for loss of services if Hobart Private sells to Catholic-run Calvary

ABC Online, Other, 20/07/2026, Lucy MacDonald

A top surgeon has warned Tasmania will be sent "back into the dark ages" if Hobart Private stops offering certain procedures due to its potential takeover by a Catholic healthcare provider. But the health minister is adamant there will be no service gap, as her department tries to work out how it will ensure the services continue to be offered in the state.

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Why this GP is helping his practice nurse to become one of the first RN prescribers

Australian Doctor, Other, 20/07/2026, Ciara Seccombe

Practice nurse Benjamin Jol is to become one of the first RNs to start prescribing S4 medications with the support of his GP colleague. Currently, there are some 300 RNs going through the training, to be followed by clinical supervision, required to prescribe.

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Victorian Coalition makes election pledge to scrap payroll tax for GP practices

Australian Doctor, Other, 20/07/2026, Jamie Thannoo

Victorian Labor brought in an exemption for fully bulk-billed services but has not matched the Opposition on its promise. Payroll tax for GP practices in Victoria will be scrapped if the Coalition wins the state's upcoming election.

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Recommendations would 'force the local chemist to turn off the lights'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 20/07/2026, Megan Haggan

Suggestions that the location rules be scrapped should be rejected to protect the health of rural Australians, say pharmacists The Remote and Isolated Pharmacist Association Australia (RIPAA) has called on federal and state health policymakers to reject several of the recommendations made in the Grattan Institute's recent report on the pharmacy sector.

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Pharmacist prescribing 'not simply a matter of convenience'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 20/07/2026

NSW's successful scope of practice trials could pave the way for further expansion of pharmacists' roles within the healthcare system, a doctor-turned-politician believes Authorising "appropriately trained pharmacists" to prescribe under "strict medical protocols" is boosting access to healthcare, NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Dr Michael Holland says.

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Cops strip pharmacy shelves

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 20/07/2026, Megan Haggan

Police have swooped on a regional NSW pharmacy, seizing items from its storage area. According to the Illawarra Mercury, police executed a search warrant on a South Coast pharmacy on Wednesday, 16 July 2026. While customers were reportedly asked to leave the shop, it remained open and kept serving them.

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Not out of the wood yet, warns Novartis

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 20/07/2026

Novartis Australia has welcomed confirmation that its high-efficacy multiple sclerosis drug Kesimpta (ofatumumab) will remain on the PBS (PD 17 Jul). However, the company raised concerns over a PBAC-recommended rapid review of MS treatments, warning the process could ultimately limit patient access to treatment options.

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Guild launches Scope Hub

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 20/07/2026

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia has unveiled a new Implementation Hub to help community pharmacies expand their service offerings and respond to increasing patient demand with confidence. Developed in response to strong interest from pharmacy owners and teams nationwide, the Scope of Practice Implementation Hub is a one-stop-shop providing practical,.

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RACGP response to the Department of Finance consultation on verifiable credentials policy

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Other, 20/07/2026

The RACGP has provided feedback on the Australian Government's proposed Verifiable Credentials (VC) Policy, highlighting what's needed to ensure any future system works well for general practice.

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How drug companies are playing hardball with Australia's PBS

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 20/07/2026

Australia is coming under increasing pressure from international drug companies demanding higher prices for their drugs. In some cases, negotiations have broken down and companies have said they'll withdraw their drugs from the market.

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NBN Central Coast, NBN News, 20/07/2026, Natasha Beyersdorf

The new Medicare Mental Health Centre in Tuggerah has officially opened its doors. The centre will offer free walk-in mental health care and support for the local community seven days a week.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Why more young men are choosing to have vasectomies

The Australian, General News, 21/07/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 3

Men are taking control of their fertility earlier, with research revealing a 60 per cent increase in vasectomies across Australia in the past decade. The data shows almost 30,000 men aged 18-44 had a vasectomy in 2024, compared with 18,500 in 2016.

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Doctors push for blood pressure test for children

Age, General News, 21/07/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 4

Children should be monitored for high blood pressure from the age of seven, according to new national guidelines aimed at reducing organ damage, heart attacks and stroke later in life. While high blood pressure has previously been perceived as a disease that affects adults, research has found that an estimated 22,000 to 44,000 Australian children live with significant hypertension.

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

The popular medical device that left a trail of injured children

Age, General News, 21/07/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 8

We were in the trenches. My seven-month-old baby had croup and his little body rattled through the night as he barked like a seal.

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

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'Angry' minister vows to maintain the rage on dodgy retailers

Daily Telegraph, General News, 21/07/2026, Thomas Sargeant, Page 4

Illicit tobacco and vapes have proliferated so widely on our streets that the problem "has got away from legislators and authorities", the NSW Health Minister has admitted, as he issued a furious rebuke to retailers targeting children. Despite about 15 to 20 retailers being shut down weekly in NSW for selling illicit tobacco and nicotine products, it is still easy to find cheap, flavoured blackmarket cigarettes and vaping products being sold on Sydney's high streets, with Health Minister Ryan Park admitting "there's a lot of these premises opening up".

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Billions in illegal tobacco seized

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 21/07/2026, Eliza Barr and Josh Hanrahan, Page 6

Tonnes of illicit tobacco and millions of illegal vapes have been ripped out of the organised crime supply chain in Australia through seizures at the nation's borders and crackdowns on its streets. The Advertiser can reveal the Australian Border Force (ABF) has made record seizures in the past financial year including more than 2300 tonnes of illicit tobacco and 13.2 million vapes.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#). [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#). [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#). [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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\$210k to pay levy in demo blunder

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 21/07/2026, Darren Chaitman, Page 10

An Adelaide gym and its director have agreed to pay more than \$210,000 for "safety initiatives" after allegedly exposing people to airborne asbestos during demolition work. The director of 24 Power Fit Plympton Park, Chad Oldfield, told The Advertiser the payment would account for about two years of the gym's profit after he made an "unfortunate error" by not checking a wall for asbestos.

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Beating the loneliness epidemic with a smile and acts of kindness

Border Mail, General News, 21/07/2026, Hana Humboldt, Page 2

Dovida Home Care operations manager Andrea O'Neill has seen firsthand the impacts of loneliness on older residents of the Border region. [...] The latest 2024 data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found 16 per cent of Australians over 65 surveyed experienced loneliness.

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David always destined for a great life

Daily Advertiser, General News, 21/07/2026, Jac Marshall, Page 5

Few individuals embodied the true spirit of service like David Veness. His life was a masterclass in compassion, unwavering integrity, and an outstanding dedication to the Parkinson's community.

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Leading therapist claims a 'different level of fear' gags Australia's gender debate

The Australian, Other, 20/07/2026, Rachel Baxendale

As a gender-distressed child, psychotherapist Stella O'Malley says she would have 'swiped' puberty

blockers 'from your hand'. Now she's leading an international battle against medicalisation.

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Demand for sperm in Australia nearly doubles amid donor shortage

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 20/07/2026

New data has revealed that demand for sperm in Australia has nearly doubled in the last three years. Aussies wanting to start their parenthood journey are being met with hurdles that are growing increasingly difficult to clear.

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Young Australians urged to discuss organ donation

Canberra Times, Other, 20/07/2026, Katelyn Catanzariti

This time last year, Matthew Larman was watching life from the sidelines. The Brisbane teenager couldn't play rugby with his mates and had to be careful about social activities.

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Having a spouse with dementia increases your own risk of condition, study finds

ABC Online, Other, 21/07/2026, Paige Cockburn

Spouses of people with dementia have a higher risk of developing the condition, but the level of risk can vary depending on income and how many children the couple has, a new study has found. Research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) today studied almost 1 million people in Taiwan to examine dementia risk among married couples and what factors might alter that risk.

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Telehealth ban still standing between dying patients and their doctors

ABC Online, Other, 20/07/2026, Andrew Denton

It's a crisp and bright Canberra autumn day. I am sitting outside at the Queen's Terrace Cafe in Parliament House with local family, Jason and Anthea Smith, and their adult children, Georgia and Brae.

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Lesbian couples considered separate families in updated Queensland Health fertility clinic guidance

ABC Online, Other, 20/07/2026, Emma Johnson

Some lesbian couples in Queensland have been told they are no longer the same family in fertility clinic guidance from the state's health department. The Queensland Health advice, issued in February and given to fertility providers to help navigate the state's assisted reproductive technology (ART) legislation, has had a "devastating" impact on some same-sex couples trying to have more children, advocates say.

[Read More](#)

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria increasingly leaving children vulnerable to common infections, global study finds

The Guardian, Other, 21/07/2026, Melissa Davey

Harry Booth has had a rough run through Australia's coldest months. The 13-year-old has been in and out of hospital with a range of common chest and urinary tract infections that his doctors find challenging to treat.

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'No judgment' in push to treat hep C in Central Australia

Northern Territory News, General News, 21/07/2026, Page 11

A disease that once defined a health crisis can now be cleared in weeks with tablets, and a free Alice Springs event is helping Territorians take the first step toward a cure. To increase awareness, the Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council (NTAHC) is holding a free community event on Reg Harris Lane on World Hepatitis Day on Tuesday, July 28.

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Smoked screening

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 21/07/2026, taylor penny, Page 12

From thinly shaved ham to aged salami, deli meats can provide convenient protein. But additives vary wildly. Deli meats can be a convenient source of protein.

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'It's been torturous': hope emerges for a life-changing condition

Newcastle Herald, Other, 20/07/2026, Damon Cronshaw

Jonathan Siffleet was 20 metres in the air when his legs gave way. It was September 2022 and he was working to install a sign.

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'As a nutritionist, there's one complaint I hear from women in perimenopause more than any other. Here's what I tell them.'

Mamamia, Other, 20/07/2026, Amelia Phillips

In my almost three decades as a nutritionist and exercise scientist, there is one complaint I've heard from midlife women more than anything. And it's probably not what you think. Of course, there are the usual challenges of stubborn weight, crappy sleep and the 40-plus body's sudden determination to become a circle.

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The Sunshine Coast families in desperate need of help to battle cancer

Toowoomba Chronicle, Other, 20/07/2026, Jorina Maureschat and Kelsey Reid

Sunshine Coast families are turning to crowd-funding and donations for basic necessities when unexpected cancer diagnoses rob whole families of any means of income. See the list of families recently devastated by the deadly disease.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Sunshine Coast Daily \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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Channel 10, 10 News, 20/07/2026, Hugh Riminton

Dementia has no known cure, and the progressive illness is the leading cause of death in Australia, but the World Health Organization has released new guidelines that they claim will cut one's risk in half. The guidelines include regular physical activity, reducing alcohol consumption, stopping tobacco use and having a healthy diet.

Similar coverage reported by: [Channel 10 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Adelaide\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Melbourne\)](#), [Channel 7 \(Sydney\)](#).

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2CC, Canberra Live, 20/07/2026, Leon Delaney

New global dementia guidelines are being described as a vital step forward in tackling a looming cognitive crisis, with Australian researcher Kaarin Anstey saying the recommendations included social activity. The World Health Organisation says up to 45% of dementia risk could be mitigated by exercise, avoiding air pollution and adopting a healthier diet.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Evenings, 20/07/2026, Emma Crowe

Interview with UNSW Ageing Futures Institute Director Kaarin Anstey, on the World Health Organization's latest advice, noting that almost 50% of dementia cases can be prevented. Anstey says they cannot say whether taking menopausal hormone therapy reduces the risk of dementia, and the guidelines didn't make a recommendation about menopausal hormone therapy for women 65. She notes that it's unlikely that they would eliminate obesity, diabetes, hypertension, or smoking, but the potential to prevent dementia is enormous if the risk factors are reduced or mitigated as much as possible.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Centre fills gap

Ballarat Courier, General News, 21/07/2026, Michelle Smith, Page 1

A "missing element" of youth mental health treatment in Ballarat has been remedied with the opening of a new prevention and recovery care centre in Newington. The Grampians Health Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC) began operations on July 1, yet will already reach patient capacity this week.

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From a dark place, now Liam's giving back

Burnie Advocate, General News, 21/07/2026, Rodney Woods, Page 2

Having a supportive family is the "kick in the butt" Liam Rackley said he needed to reach out for help. The level two Tasmania Fire Service volunteer, who is a member of the Burnie brigade, said the fallout from a relationship breakdown led to him being diagnosed with depression and anxiety.

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IMMUNISATION

Spring and summer babies face jab 'protection gap'

The Australian, General News, 21/07/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 3

Australia's immunisation policy to protect babies against severe disease from the viral infection RSV may be leaving many parents with a false sense of security, with a new Australian research paper revealing potential gaps in protection for infants born in spring and summer. The Australian government has funded maternal vaccination during pregnancy to protect babies from RSV, with the shot that is funded under the National Immunisation Program for pregnant women usually given between 28 and 36 weeks of gestation.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Cultural links on the cards

Northern Territory News, General News, 21/07/2026, Lottie Hood, Page 4

A Territory psychologist has launched a "game changing" tool for non-Indigenous health professionals to better help and connect with First Nations clients and the system is attracting nationwide attention.

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

Telehealth a game changer: closing the gap in remote Aboriginal communities

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 20/07/2026

Face-to-face consultation via video conferencing and direct supervision and observation of patient examinations are delivering improved health care in the Laynhapuy Homelands, East Arnhem Land. Uptake of telehealth in the Northern Territory has been limited, for a variety of reasons including inadequate access to broadband internet.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Sky News Live, Afternoon Agenda, 20/07/2026, Tom Connell

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese visited Royal Darwin Hospital today, where he announced a \$10m commitment for maternity services. He pushed back against claims the NT'S health system has been underfunded.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Surgeon had 'disinterest' after making major error

Border Mail, General News, 21/07/2026, Page 1

A Border surgeon who made a "catastrophic error" during an operation on a patient who later died has been banned from practising for six months. The Health Care Complaints Commission sought a ban for Dr Liu-Ming Schmidt over her treatment of 13 patients.

Also reported by: [The Border Mail \(Online\)](#), [Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser \(Online\)](#).

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ACT paramedics get high-tech training room to combat on-the-job-violence

Canberra Times, Other, 20/07/2026, Bageshri Savyasachi

The ACT Ambulance Service has launched a cutting-edge immersive simulation environment to better prepare its paramedics for The new facility, known as the Blended Learning Interactive Simulation Suite (BLISS), turns a traditional classroom into a 270-degree interactive training space using advanced projection technology.

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Fake scripts appear on patient's My Health Record

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 20/07/2026, Megan Haggan

A pharmacist's registration has been suspended after she self-dispensed medicines including diazepam, codeine, tramadol and zolpidem. The pharmacist, who was practising in a suburban Perth pharmacy, appeared before Western Australia's State Administrative Tribunal, with the Pharmacy Board alleging she was guilty of professional misconduct.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

State Mpox cases pass 2025 levels

West Australian, General News, 21/07/2026, Page 12

WA health authorities have issued an Mpox warning after the number of cases passed the 2025 total. The viral infection spreads through close physical contact with an infected person, including skin-to-skin contact, intimate or sexual contact, contact with contaminated materials such as bedding or towels, and prolonged face-to-face contact.

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

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Cold, hard truths

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 21/07/2026, Page 29

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states, categorically, that temperatures under 18C in a house, pose serious health risks to the inhabitant(s). High blood pressure, respiratory diseases, heart problems and black mould, among other things, are a likely outcome.

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6PR, Drive, 20/07/2026, Jamie Burnett

WA Health has issued its second MPOX warning in the space of a couple of months. The number of notified cases this year has grown to 36, compared with 28 for the whole of last year.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Sharp truth in blitz on peptides

Daily Telegraph, General News, 21/07/2026, Sarah Booth, Page 8

Australia's booming peptide black market has been put on "notice", as authorities warn influencers and sellers pushing unapproved drugs that they will face "significant legal consequences". The Therapeutic Goods Administration announced a crackdown on the industry on Monday, amid growing concern about the number of Australians injecting themselves with unapproved performance and imageenhancing drugs purchased online.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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Peptide crackdown

Herald Sun, Editorials, 21/07/2026, Page 18

There is so much rubbish on the net and social media - and plenty of it is pushed by 'influencers' who earn money through sometimes dangerous promotions. [...] As detailed in today's Herald Sun, the Therapeutic Goods Administration has launched a crackdown on online peptide sales amid growing concern about the number of Australians injecting themselves with unapproved performance and imageenhancing drugs, for anything from weight loss to muscle growth and skin tone.

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Health Check: Medical pot providers need better regulation, says medical pot provider

Adelaide Now, Other, 20/07/2026, Tim Boreham

Ecs Botanics is enjoying a profitability purple patch, but endorses moves to tighten regulation of the local medical cannabis sector. ECS Botanics backs reforms to enhance the "long-term credibility and sustainability" of the local medical cannabis sector LTR Pharma firms another US deal [...] Concerned about lax prescribing practices under the Authorised Prescriber scheme for non-approved cannabis therapies, last year the Therapeutic Goods Administration launched an industry consultation process.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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Influencers, suppliers warned as TGA cracks down on black-market peptides

Sky News Australia, Other, 20/07/2026, Bianca Mulheron

Australians who are promoting or profiting from the booming black-market peptide trade have been put on notice, with the Therapeutic Goods Administration warning offenders they could face prosecution. Australians who are promoting or profiting from the booming black-market peptide trade have been put on notice, with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) warning offenders they could face prosecution.

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At-home STI test pulled from Australian shelves after failing to detect

infections

The Guardian, Other, 21/07/2026, Achol Arok

Australia's only approved home test for chlamydia and gonorrhoea has been pulled from shelves after it failed to detect infections for an unspecified number of patients. Touch Biotechnology has been handed a six-month suspension by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) after a review of the company's self-testing kit found "the device is not reliable ... and poses a high risk for false negative results for users".

[Read More](#)

ABC, Four Corners, 20/07/2026, Dr Norman Swan

Report by Dr Norman Swan. The commercial longevity industry has emerged rapidly in Australia, with nearly 100 biological age testing clinics, IV drip bars and recovery studios now operating, while experimental treatments, such as NAD+ infusion, are being sold directly to consumers, but evidence shows that the treatment used to slow ageing is slim. Professor Robyn Langam from the Therapeutic Goods Administration says the TGA is working hard to disrupt illegal advertising, illegal importation and supply of unapproved peptides and other products, while in a statement, AHPRA said that it's concerned that some practitioners may be seeking to exploit the latest health trends by putting profits ahead of patients.

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

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 20/07/2026, James Glenday and Catherine Murphy

Australia's Health Practitioner Regulator, AHPRA, says some providers might be exploiting anti-ageing health trends by putting profits ahead of patients. The Therapeutic Goods Administration says it's worried people are also buying unapproved black market products.

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

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Drive, 20/07/2026, Nikolai Beilharz

Beilharz is joined by Four Corners reporter Dr Norman Swan. Swan says there are concerns that more Australians are using unregulated peptides due to the ongoing anti-ageing health trends online. He also states that there's a gap between what the Therapeutic Goods Administration does and the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency, which regulates the behaviour of doctors, nurses and pharmacists.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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