



TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 13th August 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **ABC Online** reports that Eli Lilly pharmaceuticals CEO David Ricks says he still wants to reach an agreement with the Australian government and bring diabetes and weight loss drug Mounjaro into the Australian PBS. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said in April that price negotiations to get the drug on the PBS were the issue.
- The **Sydney Morning Herald** (online) reports that defibrillators that unexpectedly shut down and rebooted without warning were behind the medical watchdog's move to suspend the sale of the troubled devices that are used in NSW ambulances.
- The **Herald Sun** (page 20) reports that data reveals that the average wait time for an aged care placement has risen to an astonishing 356 days, and the Federal Government is accused of blocking a Bill to fix a flawed AI algorithm in the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's Integrated Assessment Tool.
- The **Australian Financial Review** (page 3) reports that Australia's poisons hotline received more calls related to unapproved peptides in the first six months of this year than in the two previous years combined, new data shows.
- **ABC Online** reports that Federal assistant minister for mental health and suicide prevention Emma McBride said options were being explored for nationally consistent miscarriage data

collection. A federally funded perinatal mental health centre is also planned for Bunbury, as part of a national network.

- The **Australian Financial Review** (page 30) reports that applying means testing to the NDIS has been proposed as a way to reduce the scheme's cost, but research indicates the move would deliver only a modest saving. The e61 research finds means testing could eliminate government contributions for 40 per cent of NDIS participants, yet reduce total scheme spending by only 12 per cent. *Also reported by: Hobart Mercury*
- **The Mandarin** (online) reports that Dr Martin Lavery, who helped design and implement the NDIS, wants to see the scheme restored to its original intent. A key measure to get there, he says, is the creation of a new statutory-appointed NDIS inspectorate to oversee barriers to accessing services, participant interactions with the NDIA, and the performance of state and territory governments as they return to direct service delivery.
- **The Age** (page 1) reports that the crumbling state of Victoria's mental health system has been exposed by workers who say they are being subjected to violence weekly and the sector is more broken than it was before the royal commission.

MINISTER BUTLER

The battle to face the world with dignity

Canberra Times, General News, 13/08/2026, Megan Doherty, Page 6

The cost of facial prosthetics is high, and no support exists, yet lobbying is under way to secure \$25m in funding. [...] "[Health] Minister [Mark] Butler and his staff are listening to you," Senator O'Neill said.

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

Means testing the NDIS is overrated, and two numbers show why

Australian Financial Review, Other, 12/08/2026, Luke Kinsella

The National Disability Insurance Scheme has gone from nothing to the third-most expensive government program, behind only federal payments to the states – to pay for hospitals and schools – and the age pension.

[Read More](#)

Eli Lilly CEO still wants deal to bring Mounjaro to Australia under PBS

ABC Online, Other, 12/08/2026

Eli Lilly pharmaceuticals CEO David Ricks says he still wants to reach an agreement with the Australian government and bring diabetes and weight loss drug Mounjaro into the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said in April that price negotiations to get the drug on the PBS were the issue.

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Albanese government remains near historic polling low as MPs embrace taxpayer-funded influencer strategy

News24 Australia, Other, 12/08/2026, Oscar Godsell

Labor has remained stuck at near-historic polling lows as federal MPs continue their transformation into social media influencers with salaries of more than \$120 per hour. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler channelled his inner Hollywood, pretending to act with Leonardo DiCaprio while spruiking Urgent Care Clinics as "open seven days a week bro".

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Nothing to see here: Dept submission on Support at Home

The Weekly Source, Other, 12/08/2026, Caroline Egan

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's submission to the Senate Inquiry into Support at Home is troubling. [...] A month later, the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae announced the

Government will consult with the sector on a new escalation pathway for aged care assessment outcomes.

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Labor shuts down telehealth debate

CathNews, Other, 12/08/2026, Rebecca Comini

The Albanese Government yesterday shut down a vote on removing telehealth barriers to voluntary assisted dying. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said the government was looking at moving on the matter, but would do so on its terms – not at the behest of the cross bench.

[Read More](#)

NDIS means test would cut spending just 12% while removing support from 40%

Health Services Daily, Other, 12/08/2026, Cate Swannell

New modelling from e61 backs Mark Butler's argument that means testing would not 'shift the dial' on the cost of the NDIS – but finds children account for 80% of potential savings.

[Read More](#)

Protect our NDIS, nationwide community rallies

Freedom2Live, Other, 12/08/2026, Heidi Bain

On 1 August, around 800 members of the disability community rallied in cities across the country, together with supporters online, to send a clear warning: if essential supports are stripped from the NDIS, people with disability will die. [...] I invite Disability Minister Mark Butler to spend a day in my shoes.

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ABC South West WA, Mornings, 12/08/2026, Chela Williams

New data from the Federal Department of Health shows Western Australia recorded the country's second-lowest GP bulk billing rate at 72 per cent in the 12 months to the end of June, compared with 84 per cent nationally. Health Minister Mark Butler says bulk billing had been in decline before the Federal Government's investments began to reverse the trend, after it reached a low of 75 per cent.

Also reported by: [ABC Midwest and Wheatbelt \(Geraldton\)](#).

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Curtin FM, 15:00 News, 12/08/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the Federal Government has no plans to introduce a sugar tax like the UK's but will instead make front-of-pack food labelling mandatory. The move follows limited industry uptake of the voluntary scheme, which was introduced when Butler was Assistant Minister for Health.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

2GB, 08:30 News, 12/08/2026

Australia's NDIS watchdog has utilised its new powers to ban an Auditor and Consultant, after they were accused of registering 200 providers with false and misleading information. NDIS Minister Jenny Aitchison says they have now received a lifetime ban from their crimes.

Also reported by: [Gove FM \(Nhulunbuy\)](#).

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Nothing to see here: Dept submission on Support at Home

The Weekly Source, Other, 12/08/2026, Caroline Egan

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's submission to the Senate Inquiry into Support at Home is troubling. [...] A month later, the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae announced the Government will consult with the sector on a new escalation pathway for aged care assessment outcomes.

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Opposition's human oversight Bill faces House of Reps

The Weekly Source, Other, 12/08/2026, Caroline Egan

When Parliament resumed on Tuesday, one of its first votes was on a Bill requiring human oversight of Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) Support at Home decisions. [...] In the final sitting days before the winter break, the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Sam Rae appeared to deflect the focus from the Opposition's Bill, and proposed a new escalation pathway for aged care assessment outcomes.

[Read More](#)

New acting head, Kate Pope, confirmed for aged care's independent oversight body

Hello Leaders Australia, Other, 12/08/2026, Marion Piper

Kate Pope PSM commenced as acting Inspector-General of Aged Care on 1 August 2026. [...] Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae welcomed the appointment.

[Read More](#)

Aged care wait times grow

CathNews, Other, 12/08/2026, Rebecca Comini

New government data has revealed the average wait time for an aged care home place has risen to 356 days. [...] Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae said demand for aged care continues to grow.

[Read More](#)

News24, Politics Now, 12/08/2026, Tom Connell, Kieran Gilbert, Andrew Clennell, Ashleigh Gillon

Interview with Federal Aged Care Minister Sam Rae. Rae discusses aged care reform, highlighting the Federal Government's ambition to reduce home care wait times to three months overall, with urgent and high-priority people continuing to receive services sooner. He says wait times have already fallen, while noting that ongoing investment and workforce measures are needed to continue improving aged care services for older Australians.

Interview continues on: [News24 \(Sydney\)](#), [News24 \(Sydney\)](#), [News24 \(Sydney\)](#).

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Drive, 12/08/2026, Nikolai Beilharz

Interview with Federal Aged Care Minister Sam Rae. Rae discusses the aged care system's wait times and reforms, noting that while wait times for aged care services are dropping, more work is needed to ensure older Australians can access care without unnecessary delays. He says residential aged care remains challenging due to the time required to deliver new beds, with the Federal Government announcing \$134 million to support 268 additional beds across five metropolitan Adelaide sites.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

MM2026 program reveals 'limitless possibilities'

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 12/08/2026, Page 1

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has today released the preliminary conference program for Medicines Management 2026 (MM2026), featuring more than 30 invited speakers, 10 interactive workshops, 78 contributed papers and more than 350 posters. This year's iteration marks the event's 50th edition of shaping the future of pharmacy, with pharmacist MP Emma McBride to open proceedings on Fri 23 Oct at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

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

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Heidi's lost pregnancy is a hidden pain shared by other regional women

ABC Online, Other, 12/08/2026, Harriet Dash and Georgia Loney

Psychologist Heidi Lynn Welsh knows the pain of pregnancy loss only too well. [...] Emma McBride, the federal assistant minister for mental health and suicide prevention, said options were being explored for nationally consistent miscarriage data collection.

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

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MM2026 unveils bumper program for event's 50th milestone

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 12/08/2026

Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) has released the preliminary program for Medicines Management 2026 (MM2026), with more than 100 sessions confirmed as the conference marks its 50th edition. [...] The Hon. Emma McBride MP FANZCAP (Lead&Mgmt, MentalHlth) will open proceedings on Friday 23 October.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

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DEPARTMENT

Care delay disgrace

Herald Sun, Editorials, 13/08/2026, Page 20

The treatment of elderly people with vulnerabilities cannot be left to stagnant bureaucracy and some AI-generated assessment tool. [...] Data reveal the average wait time for an aged care placement has risen to an astonishing 356 days, and the Albanese government is accused of blocking a Bill to fix a flawed AI algorithm in the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's Integrated Assessment Tool.

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'Difficult': Why Gen Z nurses are leaving nursing in droves

Just six months into her career, Natalya Tramoundanas found herself in a “dark period of nursing” as she worked inside a dementia aged care ward at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic. [...] “A key focus is growing and retaining the nursing workforce Australia needs now and into the future,” a spokesperson for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing told news.com.au.

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

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Medicare travel probe flags 962 cardiologists over billing

The Limbic, Other, 12/08/2026, Sunalie Silva

Medicare has admitted a crackdown on cardiologists claiming benefits while travelling overseas caused unnecessary distress, after a data-matching exercise flagged more than 91,000 services worth about \$14 million. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing matched Medicare Benefits Schedule claims against Department of Home Affairs travel records, catching the provider numbers of roughly 962 cardiologists during periods when they were recorded overseas.

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“Part of the job”: Aged care staff feel that management dismisses violence

HelloCare, Other, 12/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

Almost no one in Australian aged care is escaping workplace violence and aggression. [...] Critically, the union is also pushing for a cultural shift at the leadership level: a sector-wide “zero tolerance” approach, backed by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, that stops treating violence against aged care workers as an inevitable feature of the job.

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Should the shingles vaccine be free for all adults? We asked 5 experts

HelloCare, Other, 12/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

Shingles (herpes zoster) is often thought of as an older person's disease. But in the past two decades , we've seen a rise in reported cases of this viral disease – which causes a painful, blistering rash and nerve pain – among younger adults aged 25–49. [...] Allen Cheng receives funding from the Australian Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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What do ‘sharing by default’ and an AI-native health system have in common?

The Medical Republic, Other, 12/08/2026, Jeremy Knibbs

Australia has spent hundreds of millions planning and starting the build on a health data architecture for a world that no longer exists. [...] But it was drafted for the big “sharing by default” plan, and for a pre-agentic-AI world, and nothing in the public record to date suggests ADHA or the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DOHDA) has gone back to test any of this hundreds-of-millions-of-dollars architecture, roadmap suite or in-flight Telstra rebuild against what AI actually now demands of a health data system.

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Nudge letter study made GPs ‘subjects’, not participants

The Medical Republic, Other, 12/08/2026, Holly Payne

Some of Australia's most prestigious primary care researchers are currently at odds over the ethics of studying compliance interventions on a population – namely, general practitioners – who never consented to be studied. [...] “General practitioners routinely receive peer comparison feedback from the Department [of Health, Disability and Ageing] and participants were provided only with information about their own practice relative to peers, alongside access to best-practice educational resources.

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Smartwatches to become part of Australia's digital health infrastructure

The Medical Republic, Other, 12/08/2026, Cate Swannell

Wearable devices ranging from smartwatches to home monitoring technologies will be able to connect to Australia's national digital health infrastructure under new regulations expected to come into force by February next year. Speaking at the Australian Institute of Digital Health's HIC2026 conference in Sydney last week, Simon Cleverley, assistant secretary of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's digital health branch said the regulations would enable healthcare identifiers to be linked to wearable and biometric devices for the first time.

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Wait times for resi care up, SaH down

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 12/08/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's latest wait times report shows an increase in the median and average wait times between application and commencement of residential aged care across reporting periods. Released on Tuesday, the Aged Care Act 2024 Wait Times Report – Residential care and Support at Home Second report Quarter 4 covers the period 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Also reported by: [Community Care Review \(Online\)](#).

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Medicare boost for kids' home sleep studies

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, Other, 12/08/2026, Amanda Sheppard

Respiratory and sleep physicians have a new Medicare-funded option for investigating sleep-disordered breathing in children, with two MBS items now covering unattended Level 2 polysomnography outside the sleep laboratory. [...] "The Australasian Sleep Association made an application to the MSAC for MBS listing of paediatric home-based sleep study services," the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said in a statement.

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Let's not make financial consent more complex: AMA

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, Other, 12/08/2026, Holly Payne

The AMA has rejected nearly all of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's proposals to tighten up informed financial consent, arguing that the current focus on doctors' fees is distressing clinicians to the point that they consider leaving the profession. As part of broader work addressing non-GP specialist doctor fees – the other components being referral reform and the Medical Costs Finder transparency legislation – the DoHDA is also looking at strengthening the laws on informed financial consent.

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TGA flags compliance action on AI scribes as review finds safety concerns

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, Other, 12/08/2026, Cate Swannell

The Therapeutic Goods Administration will begin compliance action against suppliers of some artificial intelligence-powered clinical scribes after finding evidence of regulatory non-compliance during a year-long review of the rapidly growing technology. Speaking at the Australian Institute of Digital Health's HIC2026 conference in Sydney earlier this month, the TGA's product quality division head Tracey Duffy said the regulator had completed 12 months of engagement with vendors and was now shifting its focus to enforcement.

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New resources for dementia care

Community Care Review, Other, 12/08/2026

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has published a new toolkit to help stakeholders engage with health, aged care and dementia care networks for the \$52.8 million grant opportunity to deliver the national Dementia Training Program. The toolkit includes key information about the grant, editorial content and social media posts, which the department is encouraging stakeholders to share through newsletters, emails, websites and social media channels.

Community organisations invited to apply for \$200 million in funding to increase participation by people with disability

Communitydirectors.com.au, Other, 12/08/2026

The federal Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is calling for submissions on how to help people with disability participate in the wider community, with \$200 million earmarked for making the best ideas happen. The government plans to spend the Inclusive Communities Fund over three years, creating more opportunities for people with disability to participate in social, recreational, arts, sporting, cultural or other community activities.

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Indian doctors gain a faster route into Australia's short-staffed clinics

Made in India Magazine, Other, 12/08/2026, Amit Batra

India is the single largest source of Australia's internationally trained doctors, ahead of the United Kingdom and South Africa. [...] The Department of Health and Aged Care's Supply and Demand Study, published in August 2024, projected a shortfall of about 2,466 full-time-equivalent GPs in 2024, rising to 5,560 by 2033 and to roughly 8,900 by 2048.

[Read More](#)

WIN Wagga Wagga, WIN News Riverina, 12/08/2026, Steve Hart

The Federal Department and Ageing says proposed changes to private health insurance rebates would remove the higher rebate for people over 65, with support based on income rather than age. COTA Australia CEO Patricia Sparrow says older Australians are concerned the change could affect premiums and cover decisions, while the department projects around 0.4% may leave private health insurance.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Half-priced aged care at home sounds like a bargain. Here's why it isn't

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 12/08/2026, Rachel Lane

For self-funded retirees, Support at Home can offer substantial savings, with government funding ranging from about \$11,000 to \$78,000 a year, depending on your assessed needs. But the value of that funding depends on how you use it – understanding where the savings are, and where they aren't.

[Read More](#)

Aged care has five separate fees—here's what they really cost

Your Life Choices, Other, 12/08/2026, Noel Whittaker

As Australia's population ages, more and more people face the challenge of helping a parent move into aged care. It's stressful for many reasons, and what people often overlook is that it can also be one of the most tricky financial decisions a family will ever make.

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Reforms claim it's improving. So why has aged care lost nearly 1,840 Enrolled Nurses?

HelloCare, Other, 12/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

On the surface, aged care reform looks like it's working. Government figures show direct care minutes per resident have climbed from 187 to 218.87 between the first quarter of 2022-23 and the final quarter of 2024-25, inching toward compliance with the sector's mandated targets.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Means test could help cut the NDIS down to size

Australian Financial Review, Editorials, 13/08/2026, Page 30

The e61 Institute's number-crunching to show what difference a means test would make to the cost of the National Disability Insurance Scheme is a case of the glass being half full.

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

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NDIS blunder over sex accused

Daily Telegraph, General News, 13/08/2026, Julie Cross, Page 5

A mum charged with a sex offence against a boy with a disability was still permitted to work with kids for months before she was banned, in a shocking blunder by the NDIS watchdog. Wendy Anne Hewetson, 50, a registered behavioural support practitioner and social worker working with vulnerable children, was charged with one count of indecent treatment of a child under 12, in May last year.

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

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Means test not worth it

Hobart Mercury, General News, 13/08/2026, Page 7

Applying means testing to the NDIS has been proposed as a way to reduce the scheme's cost, but research indicates the move would deliver only a modest saving. The e61 research finds means testing could eliminate government contributions for 40 per cent of NDIS participants, yet reduce total scheme spending by only 12 per cent (creating about \$4.5bn in savings when modelled for FY2024).

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Being squeezed out of the system

Newcastle Herald, General News, 13/08/2026, Lisa Grech, Page 28

A senate committee is soon to deliver its report into legislation to tighten eligibility for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The committee's inquiry was extended and the bill amended in a deal with the Greens in June.

Also reported by: [Illawarra Mercury \(Wollongong\)](#).

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Former disability carer worker Adam Mason jailed for nine months for sexual assault of two vulnerable clients

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 12/08/2026, Liam Beatty

A disability support worker who sexually abused a client later told police he'd fallen in love with her, a court has been told. Adam Mason, 31, was jailed for nine months and placed on a two-year community corrections order in the County Court of Victoria on Wednesday afternoon.

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Push for independent disability system inspector general

The Mandarin, Other, 12/08/2026, Melissa Coade

Dr Martin Lavery, who helped design and implement the NDIS, wants to see the scheme restored to its original intent. A key measure to get there, he says, is the creation of a new statutory-appointed NDIS inspectorate to oversee barriers to accessing services, participant interactions with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), and the performance of state and territory governments as they return to direct service delivery.

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A former director of South Australia-based NDIS provider Integrity Care, Amy-June Collins, pleaded guilty in the District Court to reckless conduct after being charged over the neglect of client Ann-Marie Smith, who died in April 2020 after severe care failures. Charges of criminal neglect against Collins and former co-director Alison Maree Virgo were dropped, with Collins facing a maximum five-year sentence and a pre-sentence hearing later this month.

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PRIMARY CARE

Darling Downs specialist waitlist surges past 15,000 as political row erupts

The Courier Mail, Other, 12/08/2026, Tom Gillespie

Health minister Tim Nicholls has defended the state government's level of funding for Darling Downs' hospital and health service against attacks from Labor, amid revelations more than 15,000 patients across the region were waiting to see a specialist. The new statistics for the 12 months ending May this year shows a 30.8 per cent increase, with the stunning spike relating to a sudden rise in category 3 patients.

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

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Listen to family: stroke victim 'could have been saved'

West Australian, Other, 12/08/2026, Abe Maddison

A coroner has urged medical authorities to listen to the concerns of parents, after ruling that the death of a stroke patient diagnosed with a migraine could have been prevented. Kate Sylvia, 32, a school librarian at Adelaide's Pembroke College, had messaged her parents on December 2, 2021, stating: "sorry, migraine pain. Agony, dying on the bathroom floor".

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Lengthy wait times, access and cost barriers to ADHD testing in Tasmania, report finds

ABC Online, Other, 12/08/2026, Lucy MacDonald

Tasmanians are waiting too long for ADHD assessments and turning to interstate and telehealth services because of a lack of support in Tasmania, a parliamentary report has found. The report also acknowledged that since its hearings concluded, the government has authorised general practitioners (GPs) to diagnose ADHD, "which should improve access to diagnosis, treatment and support".

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Mother of school librarian misdiagnosed with migraine before fatal stroke urges clinicians to listen

ABC Online, Other, 12/08/2026, Evelyn Leckie

An Adelaide woman incorrectly diagnosed with a migraine was twice failed by the health system in the lead-up to her death from a stroke, according to a deputy coroner who recommended that families be given more opportunity to raise red flags when their "concerns are not being taken seriously". Kate Marie Sylvia, a librarian for Pembroke Middle School, died in December 2021 from a cerebral venous sinus thrombosis days after she started experiencing vomiting, a stabbing head pain and slurred speech.

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Dentists demand progress on national oral health plan, as untreated tooth decay plagues one in three

ABC Online, Other, 12/08/2026

Emily Novo was brushing her teeth before bed when she felt a slight pain above one of her wisdom teeth. She woke up the next day and could not open her mouth.

Australia's new prescribers become the pre-flight health check

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 12/08/2026

Australia's rapidly growing workforce of pharmacist prescribers is becoming the new first stop for travellers needing everyday healthcare before they fly. As Australians escape winter for Europe, Bali and Queensland, trained community pharmacists are helping patients manage everything from forgotten medication and contraception to UTIs, asthma, skin conditions and vaccinations — without automatically requiring a GP appointment.

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ABC, ABC News, 12/08/2026, Jeremy Fernandez

The Australian Dental Association is urging the Federal Government to implement the shelved National Oral Health Plan, which was drafted in 2024 and intended to begin in 2025, to address dental care access issues. The Association says more than two million Australians are delaying dental care due to cost and highlights ongoing inequity, particularly in regional areas.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 12/08/2026, Lucy Breaden/Kylie Baxter

Interview with Dr Maddi Derrick, clinical psychologist and director, Hobart ADHD Consultants. Derrick discusses ADHD service reforms in Tasmania, calling for a dedicated government task force with authority and resources to address service gaps. She says ADHD care needs clearer recommendations beyond medication access, including psychological interventions and lifestyle supports alongside medical treatment.

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2CC, Breakfast, 12/08/2026, Stephen Cenatiempo

Interview with Dr Michael Wright, President, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Compere mentions that the RACGP is encouraging the Pharmacy Board of Australia and State and Territory Health Ministers to highlight patient safety when it comes to their proposed pharmacy prescribing reforms. Wright points out that pharmacists are experts in medicines and if GPs collaborate with them, that's the best outcome for their patients; however, they've got a series of trials and errors or pharmacists prescribing medicine around the country.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Call for better allergy data as update released

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 12/08/2026

Allergy experts have called for inclusion of allergic disease in future national data collections to provide better evidence that will help inform policy, planning and care for those affected. The National Allergy Council (NAC) and the National Allergy Centre of Excellence (NACE) will gather today at Parliament House in Canberra.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

New clue to failure of cancer therapy

Herald Sun, General News, 13/08/2026, Page 15

Peter Mac researchers have discovered why breast cancer treatment stops working for some patients, uncovering the unexpected role of one of the body's most important cancer-fighting proteins. Its study revealed that the retinoblastoma protein - considered one of the body's natural brakes on cancer growth as it stop cells dividing uncontrollably - unexpectedly activates a group of genes that respond to the hormone estrogen.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#).

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Cancer scans save lives

Kalgoorlie Miner, General News, 13/08/2026, Rosa Griffith, Page 2

A mobile screening service aimed at detecting breast cancer in its early stages is returning to Kalgoorlie-Boulder. BreastScreen WA's free screening mammogram service will be available to all women aged 40 and over with no breast symptoms from September 18-October 22.

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Antoniette, 57, was fit and healthy. A routine scan led to a devastating diagnosis

7News.com.au, Other, 13/08/2026, Jennifer Bechwati

Lung cancer kills more Australians than breast, prostate and brain cancers combined, yet funding for the disease remains dangerously low. Advocates are demanding urgent action to find lung cancer earlier and save more lives.

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Let's talk about death and dying

Shepparton News Online, Other, 12/08/2026, Ian Johnson

The lighter side of palliative care and voluntary assisted dying was presented by Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHB) last Friday, showing that end-of-life plans don't have to be the dark and foreboding taboo topics they were in the past and they can and should be spoken about openly. Hosted at Corowa Country Women's Association (CWA) on River St to a crowd of more than 50 people, the annual Dying to Know Day event discussed the entire end-of-life process, from setting up a will all the way through to organising the funeral.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 12/08/2026, Max Futchter and Sarah Greenhalgh

Lung cancer remains Australia's leading cause of cancer death, with more than 15,000 diagnoses and 9000 deaths annually, prompting advocates to call for increased funding, earlier detection and expanded screening. A new blueprint to be unveiled in Canberra will call for broader screening access, action on tobacco and vaping, and greater investment in research, following the National Screening Program's detection of almost 250 early-stage cancers among more than 100,000 high-risk patients.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 12/08/2026, Michael Thomson

Men are at increased risk of preventable health conditions, with the Bloke Beside You campaign highlighting stroke awareness and the importance of taking responsibility for health checks. The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and Australian health guidance emphasise age-based screening, including checks for heart health, diabetes, prostate cancer and other conditions to support early detection and treatment.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Mental health breakdown

The crumbling state of Victoria's mental health system has been exposed by workers who say they are being subjected to violence weekly and the sector is more broken than it was before the royal commission. Their verdict comes as the government is asked to explain where \$40 million to deliver 2000 homes for people with mental illness has gone and the fly-in, fly-out boss of the state's flagship youth service quits.

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New virtual mental health service, WISH, makes its way to regional WA providing greater access for children

West Australian, Other, 12/08/2026, Sienna Seychell

Children and young people in regional WA will now have greater access to specialist mental health services with the launch of a new virtual tool. WISH is the name of the new service, and it is made up of a dedicated team of specialised practitioners.

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IMMUNISATION

Hep B advice holds firm in Australia despite US vaccine shake-up

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 12/08/2026

Australian parents can continue trusting local hepatitis B vaccination advice, despite the United States significantly overhauling its own childhood immunisation schedule, says Hepatitis Australia in a statement released today. This comes following news reported in The Guardian that the US has removed hepatitis B vaccination from its universal childhood recommendations, shifting instead to an approach based on individual risk and "shared clinical decision-making".

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Hep B vax to stay

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 12/08/2026

Hepatitis Australia has confirmed that national recommendations around hepatitis B vaccination for infants remain unchanged in the wake of new policies introduced in the US yesterday by President Donald Trump (PD 11 Aug).

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Private health insurers access patients' full medical records in 'aggressive' audits

ABC Online, Other, 12/08/2026, Alison Branley

Private health insurers are accessing patients' confidential medical information, with some coming under fire for what has been described by the Australian Private Hospitals Association as "aggressive" audit practices. Permission to access medical records is typically baked into the terms and privacy policy, which essentially grants the insurer permission to collect wide-ranging data on their customers — from security camera vision in their shopfronts, to personal social media posts.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Channel 9, A Current Affair, 12/08/2026, Allison Langdon

Emma and Jacob Evans, siblings from Australia with STAT1 gain-of-function, a rare genetic condition that severely weakened their immune systems, underwent high-risk bone marrow transplants after doctors said it was their only chance of survival beyond their 30s. After successful transplants using stem cell donors from the registry, they were declared cured at the five-year mark and now run Steps for Second Chances to encourage young Australians to register as stem cell donors.

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Channel 10, 10 News, 12/08/2026, Hugh Riminton

Researchers at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute have developed a method to grow human heart valve tissue from stem cells, enabling the study of valve disease and potential future treatments for patients with damaged or missing valves. The technology is currently being used for research, with the long-term goal of creating tailor-made valve replacements and potentially lab-grown organs using patients' stem cells.

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

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2CC, Canberra Live, 12/08/2026, Leon Delaney

Interview with Verity Hawkins, CEO, Cancer Council ACT. Hawkins discusses Daffodil Day's 40th anniversary and its role in supporting cancer services, prevention and research in Canberra and the surrounding region. She says the fundraiser supports local cancer programs, including research grants and services for people affected by cancer, with donations raised in the ACT remaining in the community.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Funding feud erupts as waiting lists surge

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 13/08/2026, Tom Gillespie, Page 10

Health minister Tim Nicholls has defended the state government's level of funding for the Darling Downs' hospital and health service against attacks from Labor, amid revelations more than 15,000 patients across the region were waiting to see a specialist. The new statistics for the 12 months ending May this year show a 30.8 per cent increase, with the stunning spike relating to a sudden rise in category 3 patients.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 12/08/2026, Peter Overton

NSW Health is establishing seven high-volume surgical hubs at hospitals across the state to help deliver an additional 2000 operations over the next 12 months for patients waiting for planned surgery. NSW Health Minister Ryan Park says the hubs, including sites at Campbelltown, Northern Beaches, and the children's hospitals at Randwick and Westmead, are designed to provide faster care and surgery.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Mornings, 12/08/2026, Hamish Macdonald

The NSW Government is investing \$30 million to improve wait times for short-stay surgeries across the state's hospitals. The high-volume short-stay surgical model allocates planned procedures to surgical units with specific surgeons to improve efficiency and patient outcomes.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Doctors postpone hospital strike

Herald Sun, General News, 13/08/2026, Sarah Booth, Page 9

The doctors' union has postponed Thursday's hospital strike after a last-minute legal threat from the government. Victorian doctors had planned to walk off the job at key city and Parkville hospitals for 3 hours after more than a year of failed enterprise bargaining negotiations.

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

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

ABC, 7:30, 12/08/2026, Sarah Ferguson

Interview with David Ricks, CEO, pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly. Ricks discusses Mounjaro's proposed listing on Australia's PBS, saying the company wants the diabetes and obesity medicine listed but considers the pricing discussions insufficient. He says negotiations also involve concerns over PBS eligibility caps and the broader valuation of new medicines, which he argues affects investment in future research and development.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Peptide craze leads to surge in calls to poisons hotline

Australian Financial Review, General News, 13/08/2026, Euan Black, Page 3

Australia's poisons hotline received more calls related to unapproved peptides in the first six months of this year than in the two previous years combined, new data shows.

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

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Ambulance devices 'randomly shut down'

Sydney Morning Herald, Wrap, 13/08/2026, Liam Mannix, Page 1

Defibrillators that unexpectedly shut down and rebooted without warning were behind the medical watchdog's move to suspend the sale of the troubled devices that are used in NSW ambulances. Following repeated criticism from political leaders over a lack of transparency about last month's suspension of the corpuls defibrillator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration yesterday identified random shutdowns and reboots as the device's problem.

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

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'I am not happy': Top paramedic dumps on disappointing defibrillator

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 12/08/2026, Max Maddison, Amelia Ballinger, Rachel Rasker, Liam Mannix

Defibrillators used in NSW's ambulances have been failing at disappointing rates and are "by no means acceptable", a director at the emergency service has told paramedics. As NSW Ambulance on Tuesday publicly stood by the device after this masthead revealed the medical regulator had suspended its registration, a post from a senior officer cast fresh doubts over its reliability.

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Concerns continue about the efficacy of defibrillators

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 12/08/2026

The media mogul Kerry Packer was clinically dead for eight minutes after suffering cardiac arrest at a polo match in 1990. He was so grateful paramedics arrived in time to resuscitate him he donated \$2.5 million to NSW Ambulance to install defibrillators in most ambulances.

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'Frustrating': NSW Health minister seeks urgent update from TGA over defibrillators

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 12/08/2026, Rachel Rasker, Amelia Ballinger, Liam Mannix and Anthony Segaert

Defibrillators that unexpectedly shut down and rebooted without warning were behind the medical watchdog's move to suspend the sale of the troubled devices that are used in NSW ambulances. Following repeated criticism from political leaders over a lack of transparency about last month's suspension of the corpuls defibrillator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration on Wednesday identified random shutdowns and reboots as the device's problem.

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Powerhouse of the cell: ASX biotechs target the next frontier in healthy ageing

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 12/08/2026, Nadine Mcgrath

For decades, the pursuit of better health and ageing well has focused on familiar strategies including good nutrition, regular exercise, managing disease risk and maintaining overall wellbeing. [...] Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) followed suit in December 2025, adding NMN to its list of permissible ingredients for listed complementary medicines.

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

Defibs still safe despite reported shutdowns, TGA says

Daily Mail UK, Other, 12/08/2026

There have been no serious adverse patient outcomes caused by faulty defibrillators subject of recent medical regulator action, according to health authorities. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration issued a temporary halt on their sale following reports the devices were unexpectedly shutting down and rebooting during use.

[Read More](#)

ABC, ABC News, 12/08/2026, Jeremy Fernandez

TGA is investigating reports of unexpected shutdowns and reboots in corpuls3 and 3T defibrillators, temporarily suspending sales while allowing existing devices in NSW Ambulance and healthcare facilities to continue being used and serviced. Health Minister Ryan Park says no deaths or serious harm in NSW have been linked to the devices, while the TGA advised they remain safe for use in ambulances.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Drive, 12/08/2026, Thomas Oriti

Interview with NSW Health Minister Ryan Park. Park discusses the establishment of seven high-volume surgical hubs across NSW, including sites at Campbelltown, Northern Beaches, Randwick and Westmead children's hospitals, to deliver an additional 2000 operations over 12 months. He also says NSW Health expects contractors to meet their obligations after concerns over defibrillators fitted to 1400 ambulances as part of a \$55 million upgrade package, with the matter being worked through with the TGA.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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