



TODAY'S NEWS

Tuesday, 18th August 2026

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister McAllister](#) | [Minister Rae](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#) |
[Assistant Minister White](#) | [Special Envoy Repacholi](#) | [Department](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[ABC Online](#)** reports a Four Corners investigation has detailed how a controversial classification algorithm, introduced by the Federal Department of Health, Disability, and Ageing to determine in-home aged care funding, is reducing care hours and facing widespread criticism from health experts over its opaque decision-making. Aged Care Minister Sam Rae defended the mechanism, stating the Federal Government will legislate a new assessment escalation pathway and invest in reviewing the algorithm to ensure taxpayers' funds deliver the best possible outcomes for older Australians.
- **[The Age](#)** (page 6) reports scientific modelling published in The Lancet estimates that more than 2.6 million Australians will be living with a cancer diagnosis by 2050, representing a 57 per cent increase driven by population growth, an ageing demographic, and rising incidence rates.
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports that the Coalition has threatened to block the Federal Government's NDIS reforms unless an agreement can be reached on unrelated tax changes.
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 3) reports the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has recommended listing Triptorelin on the PBS following AstraZeneca's decision to withdraw Zoladex from the Australian market. Working alongside Health Minister Mark Butler, the federal Department of Health, and the Therapeutic Goods Administration, the Breast Cancer Network of Australia advocated for this solution to ensure affected women facing breast cancer,

chemotherapy, and endometriosis maintain access to an equivalent, safe, and effective publicly subsidised treatment.

- **The Australian** (page 1) reports that concerns have been raised about over-prescribing medicinal cannabis to veterans with the total value of subsidies quadrupling to \$125 million over two years and the Therapeutic Goods Administration commencing proceedings against providers for unlawful advertising.
- **The Herald Sun** (page 9) reports that the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance has warned Australia's overall measles immunity rate may be worse now than the 93.3 per cent recorded in 2019, prompting warnings as measles case notifications surge.

MINISTER BUTLER

Taylor's 'widow tax' ultimatum to PM

The Australian, General News, 18/08/2026, Geoff Chambers & Rosie Lewis, Page 1

The Coalition has delivered an ultimatum to Anthony Albanese that it will support passage of Labor's NDIS shakeup only if the government immediately repeals the "widow tax". [...] (NDIS Minister) Mark Butler's done an exceptional job of carving out the crooks and the corrupts.

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

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'I had my ovaries removed': patient's drastic action in face of drug crisis

The Australian, General News, 18/08/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 3

Relief is on the horizon for women with breast cancer who were facing a dire situation with the withdrawal of a key ovarian suppression drug, with an equivalent medication rushed through approvals processes and set to be publicly funded within weeks. [...] Breast Cancer Network of Australia led the advocacy to force a solution to the crisis for patients affected by Zoladex's withdrawal, working closely with Health Minister Mark Butler, the federal Health Department, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, clinicians, consumers, and cancer organisations.

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

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

Butler prods states to play their part in supporting NDIS reform

Australian Financial Review, General News, 18/08/2026, Phillip Coorey, Page 5

Health Minister Mark Butler has forcefully reminded the states of their obligation to help relieve the burden on the ailing National Disability Insurance Scheme, saying they agreed three years ago to a deal at a meeting of national cabinet.

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

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

Record number of fraudsters booted from NDIS as Labor negotiates path for cuts

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 17/08/2026, Nick Newling

More than 100 criminals and "dodgy consultants" operating within the National Disability Insurance Scheme have been banned as Labor seeks to crack down on fraudsters amid ongoing negotiations over the future of the \$56 billion scheme. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler, who announced changes to both youth participation in the scheme and its overall size in speeches over the past 12 months, is seeking to restrict eligibility to those who can prove permanent impairment from 2028.

Also reported by: [The Age \(Online\)](#), [Brisbane Times \(Online\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#).

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Up in smoke: Pauline Hanson's wild plan for \$22 a pack cigarettes

Pauline Hanson has vowed to slash the price of cigarettes by 75 per cent in a move she claims will fight organised crime. [...] Warning that successive tax hikes have opened the door to criminals flogging vapes and illegal cigarettes to school children, she challenged Health Minister Mark Butler to act.

[Read More](#)

Taylor demands Albanese repeal 'cruel tax' in return for NDIS bill support

MSN Australia, Other, 17/08/2026, Sarah Basford Canales

Angus Taylor says the Coalition will only support the Albanese government's proposed overhaul of the NDIS if it first removes the "widow tax" loophole from its changes to taxing investment properties. [...] It will also give the NDIS minister, Mark Butler, the power to reduce funding categories for individuals by up to 99%.

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

[Read More](#)

Government launches new campaign to help Australians reduce their dementia risk

HelloCare, Other, 17/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

Australians turning 50 are being urged to take action on their long-term brain health, with the Federal Government launching a new campaign aimed at reducing the risk of dementia. [...] Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler said growing evidence around dementia risk factors meant there was an opportunity to intervene before people developed the condition.

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Three in four Melbourne voters link tobacco tax to black market

The Indian Sun, Other, 17/08/2026

Melbourne voters overwhelmingly believe high tobacco taxes are helping drive the illicit cigarette market, according to new polling commissioned by the Australian Association of Convenience Stores, as pressure builds on governments over the link between illegal tobacco and organised crime. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said last month that the government was not considering a short-term reduction, while acknowledging the illegal trade had become a major law enforcement and public health problem.

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Your Medicare card may cover more visits as bulk billing rises following a major government investment

Your Life Choices, Other, 17/08/2026, Lexanne Garcia

There was a time, not so long ago, when visiting the doctor meant bracing for a bill. For many Australians, that sting is fading fast. Health Minister Mark Butler has announced that bulk billing rates are climbing well ahead of schedule.

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3BA FM, 17:00 Local News, 17/08/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has stated that children moved off the NDIS will still be looked after and that families have nothing to fear. The NDIS is currently being reviewed after blowing out by millions of dollars.

Similar coverage reported by: [Hot FM 91.1 \(Sunshine Coast\)](#), [River 1467 \(Mildura\)](#), [River FM \(Ipswich\)](#), [LA FM \(Launceston\)](#).

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NDIS minister to press on with reforms

The Saturday Paper, Other, 17/08/2026, Kye Halford

National Disability Insurance Scheme minister Jenny McAllister has downplayed concerns that state-based disability supports won't be ready before imminent scheme cuts, saying on Sunday the government was "not contemplating" a delay if services are not in place. McAllister said she was confident one of the main foundational support services, the Thriving Kids program, was on track to meet its scheduled start date of October 1, despite a refusal from the Queensland government to sign up to the scheme.

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Record number of fraudsters booted from NDIS as Labor negotiates path for cuts

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 17/08/2026, Nick Newling

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Also reported by: [The Age \(Online\)](#), [Brisbane Times \(Online\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#).

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Minister bats away proposal for disability inspector-general

The Mandarin, Other, 17/08/2026, Melissa Coade

Jenny McAllister told the ABC's Insiders program at the weekend that requests from advocates for a similar oversight mechanism for the disability sector as in aged care will not be fulfilled. [...] McAllister said the performance of existing regulatory agencies, such as the Quality and Safeguard Commission, and administering bodies like the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA), had lifted across "a whole range of areas" during her time leading the scheme.

[Read More](#)

NDIS 'shonks' targeted as final deals close on reforms to disability support, gambling and media funding

Thenightly.com.au, Other, 17/08/2026, Noah Secombe

Sweeping reforms to disability support, gambling advertising and media funding could finally pass parliament after months of political horse-trading. [...] NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister said increased powers for the commission legislated in April have successfully weeded out the "shonks and grifters".

[Read More](#)

Minister says NDIS deal with Coalition is close

CathNews, Other, 17/08/2026, Rebecca Comini

The Albanese Government has downplayed concerns that state-based disability supports won't be ready when needed, as it pushes NDIS reforms targeting fraud and spending through Parliament. [...] NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister said a deal between the government and the coalition to pass the changes was getting close.

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NDIS, gambling and media reforms in spotlight

Crikey, Other, 17/08/2026, Rich James

I'm very much hoping everyone got all the nonsense out of their systems while I was away and we can return to a bit of grown-up professionalism this week (I know, I know — a man can but dream). [...] Yesterday on the ABC's Insiders programme, NDIS minister Jenny McAllister refused to commit to delaying participants' exit from the scheme if alternative services were not yet sorted.

[Read More](#)

Government races to transform NDIS

The Echo, Other, 17/08/2026, David Lowe

After six days of public hearings, the Senate inquiry into the NDIS amendments tabled its final report on Friday. [...] Noting that the NDIS was now costing taxpayers as much as the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme each year, NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister said on the weekend that the government is adamant it can move at high speed to transform the NDIS, even though complementary schemes such as Thriving Kids have not yet been agreed to by all states.

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NDIS amendments “too far, too fast”

The Medical Republic, Other, 17/08/2026, Alyssa Talakovski

Despite almost 5000 submissions, most of which opposed the bill in its current form, the Senate inquiry's final report recommended that the bill be passed. [...] However, with access changes not scheduled to commence before 1 January 2028, NDIS minister Jenny McAllister said the government had until then to "get it right".

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC News Day, 17/08/2026, Lorna Dunkley

The Federal Government has been negotiating with both the Coalition and the Greens on legislation around NDIS reforms and gambling. Federal NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister says she's confident an agreement can be reached with the Coalition on the Federal Government's proposed overhaul to the NDIS.

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Triple M Sunraysia, Matman, 17/08/2026, Matt 'Matman' Jonsen

More NDIS operators could find themselves removed under tougher fraud measures being discussed in Parliament. NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister says Labor is open to Coalition proposals as it tries to secure support for its reforms.

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ABC Radio Sydney, 13:00 News, 17/08/2026

Federal Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Jenny McAllister says she's confident an agreement can be reached with the Coalition on the Federal Government's proposed overhaul to the NDIS. Debate will start in the Senate today on Labor's reforms, which it argues are necessary to ensure the scheme remains sustainable into the future.

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

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MINISTER RAE

Inside the aged care algorithm deciding support for older Australians

ABC Online, Other, 17/08/2026, Anne Connolly & Ninah Kopel

The last time 96-year-old Audrey Staniland was assessed for in-home aged care funding was with a human clinician more than a decade ago. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae told Four Corners that the algorithm draws on the data it needs.

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

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Cruel by design: Four Corners exposed how Labor built a machine to say No to older Australians

HelloCare, Other, 17/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

Last night's Four Corners episode, The Waiting Game , should be required viewing for every federal MP who stood on a stage during the last election and promised no older Australian would be left behind. [...] The minister's masterclass in saying nothing If the algorithm is the government's blunt instrument, Aged Care Minister Sam Rae is its softening agent, and his performance, both under Anne Connolly's questioning in the program and in a chummy ABC Radio Brisbane interview that aired the same morning, is a case study in having zero emotional investment in what should be a very delicate situation.

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Government launches new campaign to help Australians reduce their dementia risk

HelloCare, Other, 17/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

Australians turning 50 are being urged to take action on their long-term brain health, with the Federal Government launching a new campaign aimed at reducing the risk of dementia. [...] Health and Ageing Minister Mark Butler said growing evidence around dementia risk factors meant there was an opportunity to intervene before people developed the condition.

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'The minister is failing': Aged care system slammed after damning report

The Senior, Other, 17/08/2026, Phoebe Loomes

A bombshell investigative report has detailed a litany of failures with the newly overhauled aged care system, as politicians say Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae is "failing older Australians". Older people are struggling to access adequate care, and have seen their care hours and funding reduced under Support at Home, according to the new report from ABC's Four Corners

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UNSW brain health pioneer joins national dementia awareness campaign

University of New South Wales (UNSW), Other, 17/08/2026

Senior Australian of the Year Scientia Professor Henry Brodaty AO is backing a new initiative encouraging Australians to take action to reduce their risk of dementia. [...] Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae said midlife was an important opportunity for Australians to consider their future brain health.

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'Bloody depressed and miserable': long aged care wait takes heavy toll

Warrnambool Standard, Other, 17/08/2026, Katrina Lovell

Jan and Rob Hamblin are like many other pensioners. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said while demand continued to grow, what mattered was how quickly older Australians could access care.

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ABC, Four Corners, 17/08/2026, Angus Grigg

A Four Corners investigation has lifted the lid on a controversial algorithm that determines how much care elderly Australians can receive, and it cannot be overridden by the clinician doing the assessment. Professor Kathy Eagar, Australia's leading expert on healthcare algorithms, is calling for the algorithm system to be scrapped due to its flaws, while Federal Minister for Aged Care Sam Rae does not agree with the criticism.

Also reported by: [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC News \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Adelaide\)](#), [ABC \(Melbourne\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Brisbane\)](#), [ABC \(Canberra\)](#), [ABC \(Darwin\)](#), [ABC \(Hobart\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC \(Perth\)](#).

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ABC News, ABC News Afternoons, 17/08/2026, Lorna Dunkley

Dunkley is joined by Four Corners reporter Anne Connolly. Dunkley says the Federal Government has

been forced to defend a secretive and controversial algorithm that determines how much funding elderly Australians receive for their care, which is a system that cannot be overridden by the clinician doing the assessment, and she adds that the Four Corners report revealed that the system should be scrapped because it is flawed. Connolly says assessors use a particular electronic tool, and an algorithm decides the outcome and the level of funding that elder Australians receive, and she also states that Federal Minister for Aged Care Sam Rae does not agree that there's a problem with the algorithm, but he acknowledged that the Federal Government still has work to do.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 17/08/2026, James Glenday & Emma Rebellato

Healthcare algorithm expert Professor Kathy Eagar believes that the government's controversial aged care assessment tool must be scrapped. Aged Care Minister Sam Rae says the algorithm simply draws on the data it needs.

ch funding a patient should get.

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ABC Illawarra, Mornings, 17/08/2026, Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Aged Care and Seniors Minister Sam Rae. Compere says the Federal Government has mentioned that their latest supported home quarterly data revealed that wait times for care have continued to come down. Rae admits that they have an evolving community who are expecting different things on aged care and older people want to stay in their homes for longer, which is good for them and the communities.

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4BC, 11:00 News, 17/08/2026

About 40,000 people who recently turned 50 will soon receive a letter with advice on delaying or preventing dementia, which is Australia's leading cause of death. Federal Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae says 50 is a great time to start taking one's health seriously.

Also reported by: [6PR \(Perth\)](#).

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4CA AM, Breakfast, 17/08/2026, Murray Jones

Interview with Aged Care and Seniors Minister Sam Rae. Compere mentions that Dementia is causing a lot of pain from the sufferer and their families. Rae points out that Dementia is now the leading cause of death in Australia. He states that half of the Dementia cases could be avoided or delayed.

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ABC Radio Brisbane, Mornings, 17/08/2026, Steve Austin

Interview with Aged Care and Seniors Minister Sam Rae. Rae admits that Australians have not reflected enough that Dementia is now the leading cause of death in Australia. He states that they are seeing thousands of people being diagnosed, while others stay undiagnosed.

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ABC Radio Perth, Mornings, 17/08/2026, Nadia Mitsopoulos

Mitsopoulos is joined by Four Corners reporter Anne Connolly. Mitsopoulos says the Federal Government has been forced to defend a secretive and controversial algorithm that determines how much funding elderly Australians receive for their care, which is a system that cannot be overridden by the clinician doing the assessment, and she adds that the Four Corners report revealed that the system should be scrapped because it is flawed. Connolly says assessors use a particular electronic tool, and an algorithm decides the outcome and the level of funding that older Australians receive, and she also states that Federal Minister for Aged Care Sam Rae does not agree that there's a problem with the algorithm, but he acknowledged that the Federal Government still has work to do.

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

FIVEAA, 07:30 News, 17/08/2026

Australians who've recently turned 50 will soon receive a letter on lowering the risks of dementia. Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae believes that nearly half of all cases can be either delayed or prevented.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

The Central Coast power list: The 16 most influential people shaping the region's future

Herald Sun, Other, 17/08/2026

From world champion athletes and small business barons to major property players and influencers in between, the Central Coast's most influential people have been celebrated in a list honouring the people shaping the region. See who made the cut. [...] Emma McBride Emma McBride was first elected to the then Wyong Shire Council in 2008 and later that year appointed Chief Pharmacist of Wyong Hospital after joining Central Coast LHD as a Specialist Mental Health Pharmacist in 2006.

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

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Corumbene celebrates 60 years

Tasmanian Country, Other, 17/08/2026, Adam Rice

Corumbene celebrated its 60th Birthday on Saturday at its residential aged care facility on Lower Road, with distinguished guests, residents, staff, board members, families, and friends. Distinguished guests included Derwent Valley Mayor Michelle Dracoulis, Rebecca White MP, and Craig Farrell MLC, along with Corumbene CEO Alison Standen and President and Chair of the Board of Management, Ross Carlyle.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

'It's not fun': how a delayed diagnosis shaped the ACT's new Minister for Women

Batemans Bay Post, Other, 17/08/2026, Jasper Lindell

Caitlin Tough knew there was something wrong. [...] And I think federally, we've talked about Dan Repacholi as the special envoy for men's health .

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DEPARTMENT

'I had my ovaries removed': patient's drastic action in face of drug crisis

The Australian, General News, 18/08/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 3

Relief is on the horizon for women with breast cancer who were facing a dire situation with the withdrawal of a key ovarian suppression drug, with an equivalent medication rushed through approvals processes and set to be publicly funded within weeks. [...] Breast Cancer Network of Australia led the advocacy to force a solution to the crisis for patients affected by Zoladex's withdrawal, working closely with Health Minister Mark Butler, the federal Health Department, the Therapeutic Goods Administration, clinicians, consumers, and cancer organisations.

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

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Minister bats away proposal for disability inspector-general

The Mandarin, Other, 17/08/2026, Melissa Coade

Jenny McAllister told the ABC's Insiders program at the weekend that requests from advocates for a similar oversight mechanism for the disability sector as in aged care will not be fulfilled. [...] McAllister said the performance of existing regulatory agencies, such as the Quality and Safeguard Commission, and administering bodies like the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA), had lifted across "a whole range of areas" during her time leading the scheme.

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A big sector is being targeted to help feed children decent tucker

Newcastle Herald, Other, 17/08/2026, Damon Cronshaw

More than 90 per cent of Australian childcare services are struggling to meet national nutrition guidelines, Newcastle researchers say. [...] The project will be funded by a \$4.9 million Medical Research Future Fund grant, awarded through the federal Department of Health and Aged Care.

[Read More](#)

Rural Aussies die young amid major healthcare shortfall

dubbophotonews.com.au, Other, 17/08/2026, Stephanie Gardiner

In pockets of remote Australia, there are teenagers with type two diabetes, young patients on kidney dialysis and people dying of heart disease before middle age. [...] The federal health department's submission to the inquiry said its approach to improving health care outside the cities was "system-wide, long-term and reform-focused".

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Government launches new campaign to help Australians reduce their dementia risk

HelloCare, Other, 17/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

The good news: you can reduce your risk

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/10/2026, Page 108

Here's where the story shifts from concern to action. While there's no guaranteed way to prevent dementia, there is strong evidence that lifestyle choices especially those that support diabetes management can help reduce your risk or slow progression.

MA residents, staff join dental care pilot

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 17/08/2026, Natasha Egan

A six-month pilot underway at Mission Australia's Charles Chambers Court aged care home aims to reduce the burden of oral disease among residents through preventative treatment and staff education. [...] He said the aims of the pilot also align with the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards and the increased attention on oral health.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

NDIS kicks out 111 dodgy providers

Northern Territory News, General News, 18/08/2026, Page 5

More than 100 individuals, registered providers and unregistered providers were banned from the National Disability Insurance Scheme between April and June. The 111 bans were the highest number of banning orders ever issued by the NDIS Commission in a single quarter.

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NDIS provider seized in \$5m plot

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 18/08/2026, Lucy Rutherford & Jacinta Round, Page 15

An NDIS provider director was allegedly caught trying to flee to Nigeria over a \$5m fraud plot he is accused of running with another woman. Foluso Semiu Omole, 38, was denied bail in Adelaide Magistrates Court on Monday after he allegedly used his position as the director of a registered NDIS provider to lodge claims for financial gain.

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'Blood on your hands': senators slam disability reform

West Australian, Other, 17/08/2026, Noah Secomb

Proposed changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme have been scrutinised across the parliament as the reforms edge closer to getting over the line. The federal government wants to pass laws to rein in the growth of the \$56 billion program, which would boot more than 100,000 participants off the scheme.

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

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PRIMARY CARE

Minister's about-face on allied health cap

The Australian, General News, 18/08/2026, Noah Yim, Page 5

Veterans Minister Matt Keogh has done an about-face and agreed to meet with veterans and advocates furious about the government's \$5000 cap on allied health after being hounded in the House of Representatives. Mr Keogh earlier on Monday stared down calls to meet with the veterans and advocates who had travelled to Canberra to protest against the changes, including Julie-Ann Finney, the decorated advocate who lost her veteran son to suicide.

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

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Step up and honour the sacrifice of veterans

Australia asks extraordinary things of the men and women who serve in its military. [...] The federal government is the custodian of that contract but it is not honouring it. In the last budget, it cut \$780m from allied health services, creating a \$5000 cap on allied health treatments for injured veterans.

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Batemans Bay hospital and emergency department to close next year despite lingering fears

ABC Online, Other, 17/08/2026, Penny Travers

When Christine Hayes suffered a stroke at her Surfside home on the New South Wales South Coast every minute counted as she waited for medical help to arrive. An ambulance came and took her to the Batemans Bay Hospital's emergency department where she says she received treatment within 20 minutes.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Cut excise to end tobacco black market, says Hanson

West Australian, General News, 18/08/2026, Andrew Greene, Page 10

Packets of legal cigarettes would cost about \$20 less according to a new One Nation plan to stamp out Australia's illicit tobacco trade by slashing the current rates of excise by 75 per cent. One Nation leader Pauline Hanson insists her party's policy, which includes pausing indexation for three years, is not about encouraging smoking but taking on organised crime gangs and smashing the black market.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

More than 2.6m Australians will be living with cancer diagnosis by 2050

Age, General News, 18/08/2026, Melissa Cunningham, Page 6

More than 2.6 million Australians are forecast to be living with a cancer diagnosis by 2050 an increase of 1 million people over the next 25 years. For the first time, researchers have used scientific modelling to estimate the prevalence of cancer in Australia in the future, including those in active treatment and people who have survived the disease, but require ongoing care.

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Leaked CLP letter reveals VAD dissent among ranks

Northern Territory News, General News, 18/08/2026, Fia Walsh, Page 7

Country Liberal Party powerbrokers are heaping pressure on their government ministers and backbenchers to reform the Northern Territory's voluntary assisted dying bill before an "unnecessarily restrictive" model is enshrined in law, leaked correspondence has revealed. Two branch chairs representing members across Darwin's northern suburbs have written to all CLP politicians and branch executives calling for the doctors' gag clause and 12-month prognosis time frame to be removed from the party's own Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#).

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Radiation's a flight risk

Herald Sun, General News, 18/08/2026, Page 16

Flight attendants and pilots have the highest risk of death from radiation-related cancer out of more than 500 occupations even higher than nuclear technologists. Harvard Medical School researchers in

the US say pilots and flight attendants accrue about 3-6 millisieverts per year of cosmic radiation, equivalent to the radiation from 30-60 standard chest X-rays and far greater than the 0.4 millisieverts from taking 10 cross-country round-trip flights per year.

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Reversing type-2 diabetes through your phone

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/10/2026, Page 11

A landmark study by La Trobe University has found that a digital program focused on nutrition and behaviour change can help reverse type 2 diabetes. The 12-month study evaluated the 'Defeat Diabetes' app. It found that nearly one in five participants achieved remission without the need for glucose-lowering medication, while 78% of users improved their overall blood glucose levels.

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Dementia and diabetes

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/10/2026, Page 106

If you're living with diabetes, this connection is worth knowing about not to alarm you, but to empower you. Because while some risk factors for dementia are beyond our control, many are not.

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Strokes increasing in young people due to lack of tailored prevention efforts, experts say

ABC Online, Other, 17/08/2026, Heloise Vyas

Ben Murphy's first stroke took more than three days to be identified as he was shuffled between hospitals. [...] Data from the Stroke Foundation shows more than 440,000 Australians were living with stroke as of 2023, with one in four strokes occurring in people of working age.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

'Chaotic scenes' before tragedy

Courier Mail, General News, 18/08/2026, Paul Brescia, Page 9

A coronial inquest into three suicide deaths in one wing of The Prince Charles Hospital in Brisbane over six months has revealed the unit was constantly over capacity, with trainee doctors expected to handle twice the recommended number of mental health patients. [...] The inquest, led by Coroner Megan Fairweather, is also exploring systemic issues behind the cause of their deaths and whether they have been addressed since.

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

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People with severe intellectual disabilities live 24 years less on average

The Guardian, Other, 18/08/2026, Tobi Thomas

People living with severe intellectual disabilities are dying 24 years younger on average than the wider population, a study has found, with 40% of such deaths being avoidable. The study also found that within this group, people from minority ethnic backgrounds were dying 14 years younger than their white counterparts.

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Crisafulli bid to ease violence and distress for mental health patients

The Mercury, Other, 17/08/2026, Jackie Sinnerton

Highly trained nurses are being placed in the frontline at the state's emergency departments to de-escalate distress in mental health patients and help get them vital care sooner. As increased numbers

of mental health patients land in busy EDs with suicidal thoughts, psychosis and severe anxiety, the Crisafulli government is investing \$93.1 million over four years to recruit 53 additional full-time equivalent specialised mental health nurses to emergency departments across Queensland.

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IMMUNISATION

Measles risk hits 1.7m

Herald Sun, General News, 18/08/2026, Andrew Hedgman, Page 9

Australia's shield against measles is showing cracks, with a landmark study finding about 1.7 million people were vulnerable to the virus and warning the gaps could now be even wider. The new Australian research, led by the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance, found 6.7 per cent of the population did not have enough immunity to measles in 2019, meaning almost seven in every 100 people were unlikely to be well protected if exposed.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#).

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Measles immunity warning

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 17/08/2026

Groundbreaking research led by the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) has revealed that an estimated 1.7 million Australians, or 6.7% of the population, did not have sufficient immunity to measles in 2019.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Australia's \$110m pay-for-access political industry

Australian Financial Review, General News, 18/08/2026, Ronald Mizen & Joshua Peach, Page 28

The exact cost for 25-year-old Felix Lee, heir to a mysterious billion-dollar family fortune, to sit down to dinner with Anthony Albanese last month remains a tightly kept secret.

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Scientists gutsy new move

West Australian, General News, 18/08/2026, Page 11

Researchers are a step closer to broadening their understanding of inflammatory bowel disease by using grown live models of paediatric patients' digestive systems. Using live tissue and bacteria from the intestine to create miniature 3D models, nicknamed "mini guts", researchers from Monash University and the Hudson Institute of Medical Research have been able to test how and where the specific bacteria in a patient's digestive system can affect tissue and cause inflammation.

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Type 2 diabetes? A tablet may be coming

A newly developed pill could offer a fresh approach to treating type 2 diabetes and obesity. Early research recently published in the journal Cell suggests the tablet may help to lower blood glucose and increase fat burning without reducing appetite or causing muscle loss, which are common concerns with some current GLP-1 medications like Ozempic.

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Weight-loss drugs linked to lower breast cancer risk

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/10/2026, Page 10

Popular glp-1 medications used to manage diabetes and aid weight loss, such as Ozempic and Wegovy, may offer a surprising additional health benefit. New research involving more than 110,000 women found that those taking GLP-1s were about 30 per cent less likely to develop breast cancer compared to those not taking them.

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

New Ahpra First Nations lead

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 17/08/2026

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) has appointed Nicole McCartney (pictured) as the new national director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Unit (HSU), commencing the role today.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

South West ambulance depot left unattended for 37 nights over a four-month period

West Australian, Other, 18/08/2026, Rose Patane

A Federal MP has raised alarm after a South West ambulance depot was left unattended for 37 nights over a four-month period. Forrest MP Ben Small revealed that from February to May, the Harvey St John WA ambulance depot was left unattended for multiple nights in a month.

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No Geraldton GPs get recent State-funded ADHD specialist training, with a third of new training in rural areas

West Australian, Other, 18/08/2026, Sally Q Davies

Geraldton and surrounding areas have missed out on training for specialised ADHD care, as doctors in other regions are upskilled by a State Government program. [...] The \$1.3m investment was a government election commitment developed with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners in partnership with the Australasian ADHD Professionals Association, with oversight from WA Health.

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Wide Bay surgery waitlist hits 10-year low as ambulance ramping falls

Townsville Bulletin, Other, 17/08/2026, Rebecca Nicol

Wide Bay health services are improving across the region according to new data released by the state government on Monday which it said showed ambulance ramping was down and surgery waitlists were at a 10-year low. The data for the June 2026 quarter showed ambulance ramping had dropped at Bundaberg, Maryborough and Hervey Bay hospitals compared to June 2025, a state government statement said.

[Read More](#)

CQ town left without a permanent doctor after GP resigns

Townsville Bulletin, Other, 17/08/2026, Lili Tisch-Bostock

A Parkinson's disease and cancer patient has seen 10 different doctors in one year and claims the reason behind the revolving door is that her Central Queensland town cannot retain a permanent GP. [...] State Health Minister Tim Nicholls said primary healthcare was "primarily the responsibility of the federal government," at a press conference last week.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Big tech race to integrate fitness and health data into medical ecosystem

Age, Business News, 18/08/2026, Brent Crane, Page 27

The year is 2035. You, like most people you know, have a small, button-sized device implanted in your forearm.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Is bird flu infecting humans? How would we know?

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 17/08/2026, Allen Cheng

Bird flu is circulating among birds on the Australian mainland. So with the confirmed number of

detections growing, you may be wondering about the risk of birds infecting humans. [...] Even with more 2.3.4.4b circulating in recent weeks, the Australian Centre for Disease Control still assesses the risk to humans as low.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Surge in cannabis scripts for veterans

The Australian, General News, 18/08/2026, Noah Yim, Page 1

The value of subsidies for medicinal cannabis prescriptions for veterans has almost quadrupled in two years to \$125m amid claims about bad-faith actors in the system who are putting profits before welfare and overprescribing the drug to veterans. [...] The medicines regulator the Therapeutic Goods Administration has been cracking down on medicinal cannabis providers, recently commencing proceedings against veterans' care providers, alleging unlawful medicinal cannabis advertisements.

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

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My Story "I've taken some control back of the situation which is so empowering."

Diabetic Living, General News, 01/10/2026, Page 121

Jess Kovacs, 19, had her world flipped upside down when her younger sister Annabelle was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in 2017. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved Tzielid (teplizumab) as the first noninsulin therapy available to delay the onset of clinical (stage 3) type 1 in people eight years and older with stage 2 type 1.

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Meet the doctors prescribing experimental peptides

Australian Financial Review, Other, 17/08/2026, Euan Black

Harrison Weisinger is a rare voice in the debate over peptides: a local doctor who acknowledges their risks and often-overstated benefits, but who sometimes prescribes them.

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Estimating Eligibility for GLP-1 Receptor Agonists for Chronic Weight Management and Cardiovascular Disease in Australia: Cross-Sectional Analysis of National Health Survey Data

Medical Journal of Australia, Other, 17/08/2026, JUasmin Castrillon, Chris Schilling, Sharmala Thuraisingam, Michael W. Hii, Priya Sumithran, Peter F. Choong, Michelle M. Dowsey & Cade Shadbolt

To estimate population-level eligibility for glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonist (GLP-1RA) medications among adults in Australia, according to Therapeutic Goods Administration-approved indications for chronic weight management and secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease in individuals with overweight or obesity.

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Dapsone shortage and SSSI

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 17/08/2026

Link Medical Products has advised the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) that Dapsomed (dapsone) 25mg tablets will be in shortage until 31 Dec 2026 due to manufacturing issues. An anti-infective medicine which also has anti-inflammatory effects, Dapsomed is used to treat dermatitis herpetiformis, leprosy and actinomycotic mycetoma, and is the only...

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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