



TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 20th August 2026

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister McAllister](#) | [Minister Rae](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#) |
[Assistant Minister White](#) | [Special Envoy Repacholi](#) | [Department](#)
| [Ageing and Aged Care](#) | [Disability and Carers](#) | [Primary Care](#)
| [Population Health](#) | [Chronic Conditions and Screening](#) |
[Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](#) | [Immunisation](#) | [Health Systems Strategies](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Sydney Morning Herald \(page 7\)](#)** reports that Health Minister Mark Butler has confirmed a scheme such as a “Thriving Teens” program will need to be launched within 16 months to ensure older children are not negatively affected by eligibility changes in 2028. The Federal Government's NDIS reforms were passed in parliament yesterday.
- **[The Hobart Mercury \(page 2\)](#)** reports that Tasmanian Deputy Premier Guy Barnett received treatment at Hobart's Ochre Medical Centre Urgent Care Clinic, coinciding with a milestone for the state's eight fully bulk-billed clinics reaching 200,000 patient visits. Federal MP Julie Collins and Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Rebecca White, highlighted that the Urgent Care Clinics are successfully diverting non-emergency cases away from hospital emergency departments.
- **[The Australian \(page 11\)](#)** reports that documents obtained under Freedom of Information laws indicate AHPRA viewed its LGBTIQ+ equity and inclusion strategy as a regulatory tool intended to embed “identity-affirming care” into clinical standards, and not as a workforce diversity exercise.
- **[The Sydney Morning Herald \(page 9\)](#)** reports that NSW Health Minister Ryan Park has backed an independent Auditor-General investigation into allegations of targeted disciplinary processes at Concord Hospital, following staff concerns over alleged governance failures.

- [The Daily Telegraph \(page 17\)](#) reports that NSW Mental Health Minister Rose Jackson said a review into Cumberland Hospital, where two patients escaped and allegedly killed people, generated six core recommendations to improve hospital care and security.

MINISTER BUTLER

New laws get a big tick, but job far from done

The Australian, General News, 20/08/2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 4

The NDIS reform legislation has passed through parliament big tick but delivering a key part of it could get messy. On the day the laws passed, Mark Butler has warned Queensland not to "welsh" on a \$10bn state-federal deal that will help support kids with mild to moderate autism outside the scheme.

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Butler v state on NDIS: Get your act together

The Australian, General News, 20/08/2026, Rosie Lewis, Page 4

Labor has attacked Queensland as the state that must "get its act together" to deliver support for children moved off the National Disability Insurance Scheme, amid widespread scepticism that governments will have sufficient help in place for young children, teens and adults before access to the program is due to change. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler accused Queensland of "welching" on a deal to roll out Thriving Kids an early intervention program for kids aged up to eight with mild to moderate autism in exchange for commonwealth public hospital funding.

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Confused children deserve better

The Australian, Editorials, 20/08/2026, Page 10

Research evidence is running against the use of puberty-blockers [...] The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency must be held to account by federal Health Minister Mark Butler.

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States have to do more work on NDIS, says Butler

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 20/08/2026, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 7

Federal and state governments must urgently start work on setting up new disability systems for older children, teenagers and adults with lower needs after the parliament yesterday passed laws that will remove 240,000 people from the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Health and Disability Minister Mark Butler said a scheme akin to a "Thriving Teens" program would need to get off the ground within the next 16 months to make sure older children who no longer qualified for the scheme aren't left in the lurch when eligibility changes start in 2028.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [The Saturday Paper \(Online\)](#), [CathNews \(Online\)](#), [Crikey \(Online\)](#), [SBS \(Online\)](#), [The Daily Aus \(Online\)](#), [WEB Region Canberra \(Online\)](#).

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Dying for results

Hobart Mercury, General News, 20/08/2026, Olivia Shying, Page 1

Tasmanian doctors working in rural and regional centres have spoken of patients facing huge waits on urgent medical results, which they say is costing lives. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler said the government was investing more in bulk billing, doctors and nurses for regional and rural areas.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#).

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Warning on Hanson's cig plan

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 20/08/2026, Ria Pandey, Page 12

Labor has warned against One Nation's plan to drastically slash the tobacco excise in a bid to compete

with the black market and fight organised crime. [...] But Health Minister Mark Butler dismissed Ms Hanson's plan as a "cheap headline".

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

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An algorithm is making Helen wait for her home care package. Many want it abolished

Canberra Times, Other, 19/08/2026, Dana Daniel

Retired public servant Helen Parkinson wants to keep living in her north Canberra home for as long as possible. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said, when asked why the government would not just "cancel the algorithm", that he was "still a very strong supporter of the idea of a single assessment framework".

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Exclusive: Chalmers eyes AI's productivity bounty

Capital Brief, Other, 19/08/2026

Jim Chalmers sees ai as a "game-changing technology" that can deliver huge productivity gains and massive economic benefits to future generations of Australians. [...] After starting work on "Thriving Kids" — a program outside the NDIS to designed to support children under nine with mild to moderate autism and developmental delays — Health Minister Mark Butler has now flagged a similar "Thriving Teens" program will need to be developed in the next 18 months.

[Read More](#)

Govt introduces dementia risk letters

Community Care Review, Other, 19/08/2026

The government has launched a new letter campaign to help Australians turning 50 better understand their dementia risk and combat preventable factors that can contribute to dementia – which is the leading cause of death in Australia. [...] Letter recipients will also be able to get a free personal risk assessment, accessible here In a joint statement, Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler said dementia is a national health priority for the government and the reason behind the letter.

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Butler doubles down in face of senate call for IAT ban

Health Services Daily, Other, 19/08/2026, Cate Swannell

The senate called on the Albanese government to abolish the Integrated Assessment Tool and replace it with a clinically designed system with human override, but Mark Butler is having none of it.

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'We all have a part to play': National campaign Every Moment Matters highlights role of friends, family to support alcohol-free pregnancies

Oz News Today, Other, 19/08/2026

The next phase of the nationally recognised Every Moment Matters campaign is launching across Australia, building on the campaign's success with a powerful new message: we all have a part to play in supporting alcohol-free pregnancies. [...] Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler MP said: "Every child deserves the healthiest possible start in life, and every Australian can play a role in helping make that happen."

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One Nation wants to cut the tobacco tax. Would that curb the illicit cigarette market?

The Conversation, Other, 19/08/2026, Becky Freeman, Christina Watts and Sam Egger

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has called for a 75% cut to the tobacco tax and a freeze on any price indexation of the tax for three years. [...] Earlier today, Health Minister Mark Butler said of One Nation's proposal, "Governments aren't usually in the habit of engaging in price competition with organised crimes."

Also reported by: [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

NDIS becomes a bargaining tool in property tax law

The Medical Republic, Other, 19/08/2026, Helen Tobler

The fate of the NDIS legislation has become a political football, with the Coalition supporting Labor's NDIS amendments on the condition that Labor's "widow tax" is abolished. [...] Federal health minister Mark Butler told media on Tuesday evening that the government had reached an amendments agreement with the Coalition to secure the passage of the bill.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 19/08/2026, James Glenday and Emma Rebellato

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler about the ACTU's idea to give all renters access to a two-year minimum lease. Butler points out that they have been speaking with State and Territory governments about renter rights. He states that this is an important part of the program, which aims to ensure renters get a fair deal.

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ABC News, ABC News Hour, 19/08/2026, Joe O'Brien

The Federal Government is calling this sitting week in Parliament a huge week of delivery after securing deals with the Coalition to get its gambling laws and NDIS overhaul through Parliament. [...] Now, the Minister for Disability and the NDIS Mark Butler, was speaking in Parliament this afternoon acknowledging some of those anxieties from the community at this time.

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Channel 7, Sunrise, 19/08/2026, Monique Wright and Matt Shirvington

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Compere says more than 240,000 Australians are set to be kicked off the NDIS, as the government works in tandem with the Coalition on a controversial reform of the system. Butler says they will simply be returning the scheme to its original purpose, which is to support people with significant and permanent disability. He states that instead of supporting maybe 550,000 Australians, it was on track to get to a million Australians almost by the end of the decade.

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Channel 7, Seven News, 19/08/2026, Angela Cox and Mark Ferguson

Health Minister Mark Butler says the NDIS reforms are needed to address rising costs, with about 240,000 people, including 140,000 children with autism, expected to leave the scheme by 2031 and some participants facing reduced support. Greens Senator Jordon Steele-John criticises the planned transition to state-based Thriving Kids programs, while Queensland Premier David Crisafulli says the changes must not simply shift responsibility to another level of government.

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

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Channel 9, Today , 19/08/2026, Tom Steinfort and Sylvia Jeffreys

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. Compere says Labor's controversial NDIS reforms have now passed the Senate after substantial amendments were agreed to overnight. Butler points out that they are simply returning the scheme to its original intent. He adds that some of the eligibility rules would mean that people who need support, but not specifically for the support on the NDIS, won't proceed with the scheme going forward.

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Channel 9, Today , 19/08/2026, Tom Steinfort and Sylvia Jeffreys

NDIS reforms, deemed controversial, have recently passed the Senate, aiming to strip thousands of people of their payments. Health Minister Mark Butler says the fraud conditions are growing far too fast

and it's costing the government too much.

Also reported by: [Triple M Sunraysia \(Mildura\)](#), [ABC Illawarra \(Wollongong\)](#).

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Channel 10, 10 News, 19/08/2026, Sharyn Ghidella

Qld remains the only state or territory yet to enact the NDIS-related Thriving Kids changes, despite signing an in-principle agreement with the Commonwealth earlier this year. Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has urged Premier David Crisafulli's government to resolve the funding arrangement, with the changes transferring support payments for autistic children to the jointly funded Thriving Kids program.

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

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ABC Radio Canberra, 10:00 News, 19/08/2026

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has dismissed calls to cut Australia's tobacco excise to combat organised crime, questioning the impact of lower cigarette prices. One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has called for the excise to be cut by around \$30 per packet, as high cigarette prices are cited as contributing to smokers buying cheaper illegal products.

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ABC Radio Sydney, 23:00 News, 19/08/2026

The Federal Government is facing growing pressure from across Parliament to change the algorithm used to determine how much at home support older Australians receive. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler says some cases are confronting but continues to defend the system as providing more consistent outcomes regardless of where people live.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

Labor floats 'Thriving Teens' scheme as laws pass to remove 240,000 from NDIS

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 19/08/2026, Natassia Chrysanthos

Federal and state governments must urgently start work on setting up new disability systems for older children, teenagers and adults with lower needs after the parliament this week passes laws that will remove 240,000 people from the National Disability Insurance Scheme. [...] Minister for Health Mark Butler and Minister for the NDIS Jenny McAllister front the media after striking a deal to pass new laws on Tuesday.

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Sweeping NDIS changes get green light as Labor and Opposition strike deal to pass controversial cuts

7News.com.au, Other, 19/08/2026, Lucinda Garbutt-Young, Jacob Shteyman and Noah Secomb

Dozens of eleventh-hour amendments to a controversial bill designed to claw back runaway disability spending have passed the upper house despite outcry from advocates. [...] "There will be tough new aggravated integrity offences, including obtaining funds by deception, providing false or misleading information for abuse of position as a participant's nominee, or for intentionally destroying records," NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister told reporters before the amendments were voted on.

Also reported by: [CathNews \(Online\)](#), [Crikey \(Online\)](#).

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NDIS becomes a bargaining tool in property tax law

The fate of the NDIS legislation has become a political football, with the Coalition supporting Labor's NDIS amendments on the condition that Labor's "widow tax" is abolished. [...] Federal health minister Mark Butler told media on Tuesday evening that the government had reached an amendments agreement with the Coalition to secure the passage of the bill.

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2GB, Breakfast, 19/08/2026, Ben Fordham

Compere says the Federal Government's NDIS reforms are officially passing through Parliament. He adds that NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister mentioned that the changes will deliver an NDIS that can be considered safe and has a strong social licence.

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Drive, 19/08/2026, Nikolai Beilharz

Interview with Katrine Hildyard, SA Human Services Minister. Hildyard discusses the NDIS reforms and the rollout of Thriving Kids, which supports children aged zero to eight with autism or developmental delay without requiring a diagnosis. She says the program is being fully rolled out by 1 January 2028, alongside expanded community-based supports and continued NDIS eligibility for some children under existing rules.

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ABC Radio Adelaide, Breakfast, 19/08/2026, Sonya Feldhoff and Jules Schiller

Interview with NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister. McAllister admits that the allegations of people taking advantage of the NDIS scheme and are enacting fraudulent acts make her angry. She states that the scheme was left as a soft target by the previous government and that under their government, there have been significant investments of more than \$1.3 billion in empowering its system.

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ABC Radio Hobart, Breakfast, 19/08/2026, Tracey Strong

Interview with NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister. McAllister points out that the new legislation on the NDIS is all about securing a stable and sustainable future for it. He states that they want to be honest about the challenges that the NDIS program is facing, such as those who are taking advantage of the program and are committing fraud.

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Radio National, AM, 19/08/2026, Isabella Higgins

Pre-recorded interview with NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister, about the passage of new NDIS reforms, cutting off thousands of NDIS members due to fraudulent actions. McAllister says this is important legislation for the country, as it secures the NDIS as a scheme that is sustainable and would operate with integrity, as well as securing the social licence for the scheme.

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

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MINISTER RAE

Algorithms fail the vulnerable elderly

Canberra Times, Editorials, 20/08/2026, Page 14

One of the first actions the Albanese government undertook was commissioning the Royal Commission into the Robodebt scandal. [...] Despite the clear evidence of systemic failure, Aged Care Minister Sam Rae defended the assessment tool as efficient, accurate, and fair.

Does Labor even care?

Daily Telegraph, General News, 20/08/2026, Julie Cross, Page 10

The housing market slump sparked by the Albanese government's May budget has left some older Australians hundreds of thousands of dollars worse off, with many now forced to sell their homes to cover million-dollar aged-care entry fees. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said the government made changes in the first year by investing \$1 billion to fully cover the cost of personal care services such as showering.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#)

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Works start on aged care

PerthNow Central, General News, 20/08/2026, Sophie Gannon, Page 5

Work has begun on an 80-bed aged-care facility in the heart of East Perth aimed at supporting older West Australians with a history of homelessness. [...] Federal Aged Care and Seniors Minister Sam Rae said the new facility would help bring more aged care beds online in areas where they are needed the most.

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Warning on Hanson's cig plan

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 20/08/2026, Ria Pandey, Page 12

Labor has warned against One Nation's plan to drastically slash the tobacco excise in a bid to compete with the black market and fight organised crime. [...] But Health Minister Mark Butler dismissed Ms Hanson's plan as a "cheap headline".

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

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An algorithm is making Helen wait for her home care package. Many want it abolished

Canberra Times, Other, 19/08/2026, Dana Daniel

Retired public servant Helen Parkinson wants to keep living in her north Canberra home for as long as possible. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said, when asked why the government would not just "cancel the algorithm", that he was "still a very strong supporter of the idea of a single assessment framework".

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Senate votes to scrap aged care assessment algorithm after damning Four Corners exposé

HelloCare, Other, 19/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

The Senate has voted to demand the Albanese Government abolish its Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT), the algorithm used to determine funding and priority for older Australians seeking in-home aged care, in the latest parliamentary blow to Labor's aged care reforms. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae, interviewed on the program, maintained the waitlist "has always been calculated the way it currently is", a claim the program disputed.

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'Fatally flawed': report triggers renewed call for aged care overhaul

Namoi Valley Independent, Other, 19/08/2026, Phoebe Loomes

A bombshell investigative report has detailed a litany of failures with the , as politicians say Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae is "failing older Australians".

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Channel 9, Today , 19/08/2026, Tom Steinfort and Sylvia Jeffreys

Panel discussion with Federal Aged Care Minister Sam Rae and Nationals leader Matt Canavan. Canavan and Rae discuss One Nation's proposed tobacco tax proposal, as economists now agree that One Nation Leader Pauline Hanson's proposal has some merit. Rae says State Governments are working with the law and order issues that are real and the Federal Government is supporting that through the illicit tobacco taskforce.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

Mental health service boost for Naracoorte

Naracoorte Community News, General News, 19/08/2026, Nasik Swami, Page 2

Young people in Naracoorte will soon have improved access to mental health support, with the town selected as one of 20 regional and remote communities across Australia to receive a new headspace outreach service. [...] Assistant minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride said the government was committed to ensuring young Australians could access support regardless of where they lived.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

Urgent Care for Barnett

Hobart Mercury, General News, 20/08/2026, David Killick, Page 2

Deputy Premier Guy Barnett has become one of 200,000 Tasmanians to receive fast and free medical attention at an Urgent Care Clinic after suffering a nasty gash above his eye while playing tennis. [...] Ms Collins and federal MP Rebecca White had earlier issued a media release hailing the milestone of 200,000 visits.

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Aboriginal health groups appeal to governments to do more to close life expectancy gap

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Jane Bardon

Alice Springs town camp resident Eileen Hoosan credits treatment by her local Aboriginal community-controlled health service for having helped stop her diabetes from becoming a full-blown chronic condition. [...] The federal Health Department said when the group applied for funding last year, "there were no grant opportunities in scope for the proposal", and it advised the organisation to monitor its website for any future grants it could apply for.

[Read More](#)

Club seeks support for rural model

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 19/08/2026, Natasha Egan

After 15 years of working on a sustainable aged care solution for its regional community, the Wedderburn Lions Club is inviting government, health, aged care, media and local stakeholders to a forum to move the project forward. [...] A spokesperson for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing confirmed representatives from the department's Local Network will attend the forum on 9 October 2026.

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Canberra Times, Other, 19/08/2026, Dana Daniel

Retired public servant Helen Parkinson wants to keep living in her north Canberra home for as long as possible. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said, when asked why the government would not just "cancel the algorithm", that he was "still a very strong supporter of the idea of a single assessment framework".

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Desperately seeking health workers!

Careers with STEM, Other, 19/08/2026, David Shaw

At the moment, there's over 120 million people working in health care. [...] According to the Department of Health and Aged Care, there are currently 54,100 enrolled nurses and 303,000 registered nurses in Australia .

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New in-home end-of-life care resources

Community Care Review, Other, 19/08/2026

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is encouraging Support at Home providers to share the caring@home resources with their staff to help workers provide in-home end-of-life care. The free resources were developed with providers and include tips for managing symptoms without medication, care guides and educational videos.

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Anika Wells wanted this information to stay secret. But the FOI commissioner disagrees

Crikey, Other, 19/08/2026, Rick Morton

The ruling against Wells, related to the \$8 million Meals on Wheels scandal, tested the limits of whether 'full and frank advice' from civil servants is impeded by disclosures. Then-minister for aged care Anika Wells redacted advice and "deliberative material" from her staff and public servants in a response to a freedom of information (FOI) request, which has now been rejected by the FOI commissioner.

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DoHDA redistributes major Health Resourcing Group functions

Health Services Daily, Other, 19/08/2026, Cate Swannell

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has redistributed functions previously sitting within its Health Resourcing Group, while expanding and recasting its primary care group to include Medicare.

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TGA: AI clinical scribes coming under closer regulatory scrutiny

Insight, Other, 19/08/2026

Ai clinical scribes are coming under closer regulatory scrutiny in Australia, with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) moving to compliance action after finding some products had evolved beyond administrative transcription. The regulator's year-long review identified concerns around clinical decision-making, inadequate monitoring and a lack of transparency in how some systems are managed once deployed.

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Health restructure could delay strategic negotiations

MedNews, Other, 19/08/2026, Megan Brodie

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing Secretary Blair Comley has implemented a...

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'Is it human or AI?': a retired doctor's quest for answers to aged care bill

Newcastle Herald, Other, 19/08/2026, Matthew Kelly

Steve Willmott has just notched up 44 interactions with Services Australia staff in an effort to obtain an explanation for his mother's aged care bill. [...] "Any questions about the IAT and aged care needs assessments should be referred to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing," the spokesman said.

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How well do you know what's being claimed under your name?

The Medical Republic, Other, 19/08/2026, Holly Payne

Medicare's compliance arm was allotted \$146.8 million in this year's budget. [...] The key issues which affected the system, according to a Department of Health, Disability and Ageing-issues fact sheet, were incorrect claims, limited provider visibility of claims, fraud, and a reactive system which focussed more on identifying issues after they had occurred rather than preventing them.

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One Nation wants to cut the tobacco tax. Would that curb the illicit cigarette market?

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 19/08/2026

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has called for a cut to the tobacco tax and a freeze on any price indexation of the tax for three years. Hanson said this would make cigarettes cheaper and so undercut Australia's growing illicit tobacco market. [...] Christina Watts has received funding from the Australian Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, NSW Health, Cancer Council NSW and Cancer Council Australia for work relating to e-cigarette and tobacco control.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC News Day, 19/08/2026, Kathryn Robinson

ABC National Health reporter Stephanie Dalzell reports that an equivalent medication, triptorelin, is recommended for expanded PBS listing to support women with breast cancer and endometriosis after AstraZeneca announces it will withdraw Zoladex from the private market from November. The Federal Department of Health states that the government is committed to listing medications recommended by the PBS Advisory Committee, implying that triptorelin will most likely be listed on the PBS, though the timing is unknown.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Senate passes motion to abolish IAT

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 19/08/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Penny Allman-Payne says 'the minister is out of his depth' and that he has 'failed categorically to listen to the concerns that have been raised' during Senate estimates and the inquiry into Support at Home. The upper house has agreed to Greens spokesperson for Older People Senator Penny Allman-Payne's motion calling for the government to abolish the Integrated Assessment Tool.

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The long shadow: how childhood trauma may shape the ageing brain

For decades, dementia research has focused on what happens in mid-life and old age: blood pressure, diet, exercise, hearing loss, social connection. But a growing body of science is asking researchers, carers and families to look much further back, to childhood, for clues about who is more vulnerable to cognitive decline in later life.

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HELF webinar exposes disconnect between regulator and aged care sector

The Weekly Source, Other, 19/08/2026, Caroline Egan

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) has warned operators that Higher Everyday Living Fees (HELF) can't be used to "bump up the bottom line". The guidance was included in a webinar that the regulator hosted last Tuesday (11 August), six weeks before the 1 October 2026 deadline when extra and additional service arrangements entered into before 1 November 2025 cease, and providers must transition to HELF.

[Read More](#)

News24, AM Agenda, 19/08/2026, Trudy McIntosh

Interview with Anne Ruston, Shadow Health and Aged Care Minister. Ruston says the Coalition and Greens' Senate vote to abolish the automated aged care assessment tool highlights concerns that the algorithm is flawed and lacks adequate human oversight. She also criticises changes to the at-home aged care waiting-list count, saying that people receiving only part of their package are no longer counted as waiting for the full package.

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ABC Radio Perth, Drive, 19/08/2026, Oliver Peterson

Interview with Liz Hefren-Webb, Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner. Hefren-Webb discusses the inappropriate use of higher everyday living fees, including providers charging more for individual items than for the bundled services. She says standard care must include services such as nutritious meals, basic toiletries, laundry and clinical care, while higher fees should apply only to premium options.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

What's the best way to fix NDIS fraud? Ask providers

Daily Telegraph, General News, 20/08/2026, David Gunter, Page 13

Every time you turn around it seems there is another headline about NDIS fraud. It's the same story, millions of dollars meant for the care of vulnerable Australians, instead spent on luxury goods, homes, cars and the like.

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Home care shock

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 20/08/2026, Zoe De Koning, Page 1

Hundreds of vulnerable people, including palliative and dementia patients, have been abandoned overnight after a geelong-based home care provider collapsed, with its director bethany owen allegedly ghosting desperate staff and clients. O.p.a. holdings pty ltd, the entity behind Nightingale Home Care and now-closed Ocean Grove gift shop Ocean Soul Co, was plunged into liquidation on Tuesday.

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Vital support stripped without warning

Newcastle Herald, General News, 20/08/2026, Dylan Nicholson, Page 9

A Hunter man with autism, ADHD, depression and anxiety says he was stripped of almost all his NDIS support with no warning. The 25-year-old, who the Newcastle Herald has agreed to call Zac to protect his identity, has been supported by the NDIS since 2020. The support helped him leave the house, do his shopping, build friendships and start a course at TAFE, he said.

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When the dealin's done: Australians lose when the duopoly rules

Crikey, Other, 19/08/2026, Rachel Withers

Labor and the Coalition's 'day of deals' left Greens, independents, anti-gambling experts and disability advocates out in the cold. Will it come back to bite them?

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Widow tax loophole fixed in parliament after NDIS deal

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 19/08/2026

A tax loophole disadvantaging widowed investors has been closed following an agreement between the major parties. Budget night tax reforms grandfathered negative gearing and capital gains tax concessions for investors who held property prior to May 12, but if their marriage broke down or their spouse died, they would have lost the entitlements when a jointly owned property transferred to their name.

[Read More](#)

ABC News, ABC News, 19/08/2026, Joe O'Brien

Interview with Sophie Cusworth, CEO, Women with Disabilities Australia. Cusworth says the Federal Government's NDIS reforms will create significant challenges for people with disability, including through changes to access and eligibility that will remove hundreds of thousands from the scheme. She says cuts to social and community participation funding will reduce support for essential activities such as medical appointments, grocery shopping and work, while new eligibility requirements could create additional barriers to accessing the NDIS.

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Channel 9, A Current Affair, 19/08/2026, Allison Langdon

The Federal Government's NDIS reforms, which were passed by the Senate, aim to reduce fraud and the scheme's projected growth, with the agency estimating fraud at around 8 per cent and spending more than \$1 billion fighting it since 2022. People with Disability Australia is concerned that the changes will tighten participant eligibility and remove thousands of current participants, putting people in need of essential supports at risk.

Continues on: [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#).

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ABC Pilbara, Mornings, 19/08/2026, Mikki Cusack

Pre-recorded interview with Jo Russell, disability and mental health advocate from WA. Russell says the NDIS reforms raise concerns about participant reassessments and the adequacy of supports following changes to the scheme. She says the reforms risk shifting costs to health, mental health, education, childcare and Centrelink services, while state ministers have said the necessary supports are not yet in place.

[Play Now](#)

ABC Radio Perth, Drive, 19/08/2026, Oliver Peterson

Interview with Clare Gibellini, independent disability advocate. Gibellini says she is concerned that new NDIS eligibility arrangements will require separate support systems, with insufficient time and workforce to ensure people are not left behind. She says meaningful co-design with NDIS users and the wider disability community is essential to ensure alternative programs work effectively and avoid shifting costs to health, education, justice and other government services.

Interview continues on: [ABC Radio Perth \(Perth\)](#).

PRIMARY CARE

RFDS demand is soaring

Cairns Post, General News, 20/08/2026, Finn Rice Coleman, Page 10

The combined extra mileage Queensland pilots racked up in 2025 for the Royal Flying Doctor Service could buy a oneway ticket to the moon. The same sized fleet has been flying more Queenslanders further each year, as patient demand in resourcecarce regions outpaces the state's population growth almost three-to-one.

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

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

ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, 19/08/2026, Lucy Breaden/Kylie Baxter

Interview with Dr Meg Creely, President, AMA Tasmania. Creely says the AMA supports AI that makes healthcare more accessible and efficient, particularly AI scribes that allow doctors to focus on patients while maintaining human oversight. She says AI must be used safely, with information checked by a human, and warns that AI-generated health information can be inaccurate and does not take a patient's individual circumstances into account.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Coalition eyes 80pc cut to tobacco tax

Australian Financial Review, General News, 20/08/2026, Phillip Coorey, Page 5

The Coalition is working up a policy proposal that would slash tobacco excise by 80 per cent, after its initial plan for a 75 per cent reduction was gazumped by One Nation.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [The Nightly](#)

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

The empty homes that could help solve the housing crisis

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 20/08/2026, Julie Power, Page 8

With two degrees and a successful career as an award-winning business reporter, most people assumed Jeanne-Vida Douglas had everything going for her. [...] About one-third of people seeking short-term or emergency accommodation could not find any in 2023-2024, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found.

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

Even Labor is sick of bungling Keogh

Daily Telegraph, General News, 20/08/2026, Jessica Wang, Page 2

Labor MPs have privately voiced concerns over the performance of Minister for Veterans Affairs Matt Keogh after the Coalition called for him to be dumped from the role. Anthony Albanese was forced to defend Mr Keogh's future in the portfolio, after the West Australian MP was grilled in question time on Wednesday over the proposed \$5000 cap on allied health services.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Sydney\)](#)

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Minns: Hanson right on smokes

Premier Chris Minns has backed Pauline Hanson's calls to reduce the tax on cigarettes and urged his federal counterparts to do something about the excise, which "isn't working." The One Nation leader on Tuesday promised, if elected, to cut the tobacco excise by 75 per cent, in a bid to crack down on the tobacco wars, stating Australians are "sick and tired of the firebombings, shootings and murders".

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

Unions push for rentals review

Hobart Mercury, General News, 20/08/2026, Ria Pandey, Page 12

One in 10 new homes built would be public housing and Australia's standard rental lease doubled to two years under measures put to the federal government by the nation's peak union body. In 2021, 2.9 million Australian households were renters, which the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare says is more financially viable than home ownership.

Also reported by: [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#)

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

Exercise programs play a vital part in preventing falls among older Australians

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Lottie Twyford

Falls are the leading cause of an injury requiring hospitalisation — and with them particularly common among older people, experts warn they will only become more prevalent as the population ages. [...] Already, data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows falls are the leading cause of injury requiring hospitalisation.

[Read More](#)

A Hunter school counsellor's fight to end growing loneliness in children

Newcastle Herald, Other, 19/08/2026, Jessica Belzycki

It's not uncommon for Hunter school counsellor Karen Jubb to hear students say they don't have any friends. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found that 13 per cent of people aged 15-24 reported loneliness in 2024, which was consistent with pre-2020 levels, while 17 per cent experienced social isolation.

[Read More](#)

SBS, World News Australia, 19/08/2026, Janice Petersen

The Senate voted to reject the proposed \$5000 annual cap on veterans' allied health services, citing independent Senator Jacqui Lambie's concerns about access to medical care and her ongoing dispute with the Department of Veterans' Affairs over pelvic prolapse treatment. Veterans' Affairs Minister Matt Keogh acknowledged shortcomings in support services and compensation payments, while Prime Minister Anthony Albanese supported him and the government faced opposition pressure on veterans' issues.

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

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Iron's at heart of care

Herald Sun, General News, 20/08/2026, Sarah Booth, Page 9

The key to smoother heart surgery recovery for tens of thousands of patients is as simple as a basic iron infusion, a landmark trial has shown. The cheap intervention also reduced demand for far more costly blood transfusions, saving hospitals much-needed funds and precious blood bags.

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

Parkinson's plea goes out

Hobart Mercury, General News, 20/08/2026, Bridget Clarke, Page 3

The lead scientist behind a pioneering Parkinson's disease study has issued an urgent plea for participants to help cement Tasmania's standing as a global research leader. Tasmania Parkinson's Project a University of Tasmania initiative conducting research and community outreach for those affected by the disease has recently joined the global Parkinson's Genetics Program (GP2).

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

Push to amend NT VAD bill

Northern Territory News, General News, 20/08/2026, Fia Walsh, Page 4

The peak body representing Northern Territory seniors has added its weight to calls for the gag clause and prognosis time frame to be removed from the Rights of the Terminally Ill (ROTI) Bill, warning the proposed model would unnecessarily restrict access and limit informed decision-making. It comes as a second Country Liberal Party backbencher has confirmed she will move amendments along those lines, saying the issue was "very important" to her constituents.

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

Jab to fix kids' hearts

Northern Territory News, General News, 20/08/2026, Page 5

Australian researchers have made a gene therapy advancement that could restore heart function in children with genetic heart disease, sparing them the need for transplants. The Murdoch Children's Research Institute research found delivering a healthy copy of the ALPK3 gene in a single injection reversed heart muscle disease in lab-grown patient heart tissue and mouse models.

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A program which treats osteoarthritis through an interdisciplinary approach is being trialled at Toowoomba Hospital

The Courier Mail, Other, 19/08/2026, Humaira Saeed

Don't miss out on the headlines from News. Followed categories will be added to My News. follow A multidisciplinary team of allied health professionals may be able to offer relief or reduce the number of surgeries for people suffering from osteoarthritis. Darling Downs Health introduced an innovative trial program which may reduce the number of patients requiring surgery.

[Read More](#)

Postal bowel screening test void because it took 28 days to arrive at the lab

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Ella Kennedy and Leon Compton

If you've done one of the free bowel cancer screening tests and returned it in the post, how long did it take for it to arrive at the lab and for you to receive your result? For Tasmanian woman Gabby Hills, her samples took 28 days to arrive at the lab in Sydney, which said they were too old to get a result from.

[Read More](#)

Mel's message for women after perimenopause was diagnosed as depression

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Lucy Bain and Karoline Kent

About half of the population experiences perimenopause and menopause, but some medical professionals are still misdiagnosing patients with other conditions. Hobart woman Mel Knuckey was diagnosed with chronic depression and says she was given "extreme treatment" before a different medical practitioner realised she had gone through perimenopause.

[Read More](#)

More young women being diagnosed with POTS but rural patients face extra toll

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Sam Bradbrook and Becc Bird

Piper Makin was unsure what was happening as her health started to deteriorate. ABC South East SA:

Elsie Adamo Piper Makin was living the typical life of a rural teenager.

[Read More](#)

Warne Legacy reaping benefits

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 19/08/2026

The Shane Warne Legacy Health Check program has brought more than 490,000 free health checks on SiSU Health stations, with new research showing that 85% of participants took action after the tests, from improving diet and increasing exercise to seeking medical advice.

[Read More](#)

'Persistence and resilience are everything': The scientist behind a promising prostate cancer treatment

SBS, Other, 19/08/2026, Felipe Canale

Vanessa Penna manages clinical trials of new treatments that hold promise for cancer patients. During this journey, she was diagnosed with a rare condition that left her unable to walk.

[Read More](#)

6PR, Afternoons, 19/08/2026, Tod Johnston

Interview with Stephen Walker, President, Dying With Dignity Western Australia. Walker discusses low community and health practitioner awareness of voluntary assisted dying (VAD) in WA, noting that a Qld survey found only 26 per cent of people who know how to access VAD. He says Dying With Dignity WA is looking for funding for a WA awareness survey and campaign. He also requests that the WA Government consider changes to the VAD Act, such as recommendations from the VAD Board and a discussion of VAD and dementia.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Hospital security ramped up

Daily Telegraph, General News, 20/08/2026, Harrison Finlay, Page 17

Security measures at Cumberland Hospital have been bolstered after two escaped patients allegedly killed three people between them in separate incidents earlier this year. NSW Mental Health Minister Rose Jackson told a budget estimates hearing yesterday that a review into the Western Sydney hospital launched after two mental health ward patients absconded and were allegedly involved in the deaths of three people has provided six core recommendations to boost hospital care and security.

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

Mental health revamp delayed

Courier Mail, General News, 20/08/2026, Judith Kerr, Page 6

A \$150m budget promise to build a mental health facility at Redland Hospital has been pushed back into planning, with the government unable to say when construction will start or whether the full funding remains intact. Health Minister Tim Nicholls could not provide a construction or completion date during a visit to the hospital on Sunday and said a new hospital master plan would have to be completed first.

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

Nurses: Rebuild the only solution

Courier Mail, General News, 20/08/2026, Paul Brescia, Page 12

Nurses have called for Brisbane's The Prince Charles Hospital mental health unit to be rebuilt from scratch as a coronial inquest into three suicides in six months reveals two people had taken their lives in bathrooms before changes were made to doors. Barry Ellery, Miranda Meyer and Kendal Quicke ended their lives between May and December 2023 while in hospital's mental health east wing unit, a secure ward including a courtyard and intensive care space for high-risk cases.

Avive deal for Hobart Clinic

Hobart Mercury, General News, 20/08/2026, Bridget Clarke, Page 7

The Hobart Clinic has named national mental health provider Avive Health as its preferred new operator, but management has stressed this remains subject to final arrangements. Founded in 2021, Avive Health operates purpose-built psychiatric hospitals in Brisbane, Melbourne and on the Mornington Peninsula, along with outpatient psychiatry suites at Byron Bay.

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

ABC Radio Hobart, Afternoons, 19/08/2026, Joel Rheinberger

Interview with Gwyneth Delpero, Assistant Director of Nursing – Clinical Service Integration at the Child Health and Parenting Service (CHaPS). Delpero discusses its statewide child health and parenting service for Tasmanian families, including routine perinatal mental health screening at the eight-week child health assessment. She says CHaPS is rolling out a digital Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale that parents can complete remotely before appointments, allowing clinicians more time for care and support.

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IMMUNISATION

Maternal RSV vax cuts infant hospitalisations by over 80%, study finds

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 19/08/2026

Australia's RSV Maternal and Infant Protection Program is delivering exactly the results it was designed for, with new research showing RSV vaccination during pregnancy reduces the risk of RSV-related hospitalisation by more than 80% in an infant's first 6 months of life.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Jobs set to go, cancer treatments slashed in tough federal cuts

Newcastle Herald, General News, 19/08/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 5

A Newcastle biotech company is set to lose more than \$6 million a year in cuts to research and development tax incentives proposed by the Albanese government. ImmVirX, which has a research and development arm in Newcastle, runs clinical trials of immunotherapy for patients with colorectal and ovarian cancer.

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

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

Aboriginal health groups are urging the Federal and Northern Territory Governments to do more to address premature Indigenous deaths in the NT, including improving living conditions and funding community-based prevention programs. Research by the Menzies School of Health Research found that the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress has reduced preventable deaths over 50 years, while the unfunded Hope for Health program on Elcho Island has reported reduced weight and blood sugar among participants.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Health scare

Northern Territory News, Editorials, 20/08/2026, Page 16

Today we tell the story of more than 140 rural and regional doctors across Australia who have shared the biggest health challenges in their communities and what needs to be done to fix shocking shortfalls and gaps. Over two weeks, this masthead interviewed the doctors from many communities across regional and rural Australia.

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Ramping rates on the up

Cairns Post, General News, 20/08/2026, Greg McLean, Page 3

Ambulance ramping at Cairns Hospital has increased significantly in the past two years, latest figures reveal. Performance data from the Queensland government website shows ramping at Cairns Hospital in June occurred in 42 per cent of ambulance transfers compared to 33.4 per cent in June 2025 and 26.1 per cent in October 2024 when the Crisafulli government came to power.

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

Major reshuffle proposed at Mildura hospital as ED struggles without locum staff

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Daniel Miles and Wade Stephens

A major Victorian hospital is looking to restructure after the mysterious departure of its chief executive while its emergency department struggles with a reduction in locum and agency staff. The Mildura Base Public Hospital (MBPH), one of the largest employers in north-west Victoria, has been under the control of an acting chief executive since Terry Welch left the organisation without notice one month ago.

[Read More](#)

Human faeces left in NT hospital foyer, staff in tears and ED beds swapped for chairs – inside 2026's longest Code Yellow

Cairns Post, Other, 19/08/2026, Lottie Hood

As Darwin and Palmerston hospitals mark their eighteenth day under this year's longest Code Yellow, "wrecked" health staff are telling Territorians to listen to the cries of a health system far beyond distress. Stories of human faeces left on hospital foyer floors, bed numbers sitting above sick patients in recliner chairs instead of beds, "extraordinary" overtime hours and senior staff leaving Darwin "in droves" paint a vivid picture of the current crisis.

[Read More](#)

Auditor General sounds alarm over WA health system payments

National Indigenous Times, Other, 19/08/2026, Giovanni Torre

The Western Australian Opposition has called on the state's government to explain how almost \$1 billion in WA Health payments were allowed to pass through a system it described as "plagued by weak controls, inadequate documentation and failures to follow basic procurement requirements". An

Auditor General's report released Wednesday found WA Health was not effectively managing \$989.9 million in payments made outside its normal procurement system in 2024-25.

[Read More](#)

Liverpool Hospital becomes first in NSW to deploy new camera system connecting parents with ill babies

News24 Australia, Other, 19/08/2026, Nathan Schmidt

A "cutting-edge" technology enabling parents of critically-ill infants to see their child in real time through cameras has launched in NSW. Liverpool Hospital became the first public hospital in the state to launch the AngelEye camera system earlier this year.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 19/08/2026, Alicia Loxley

The Royal Children's Hospital has launched a virtual hub to support young women and girls with pelvic pain, providing information and nurse-led triage to connect patients with appropriate care. Over the coming months, the service will fund physiotherapists, nurses and psychologists at selected Victorian hospitals to provide multidisciplinary pain care closer to home.

[Play Now](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 19/08/2026, Hugh Riminton

Liverpool Hospital's neonatal intensive care unit in south-western Sydney has installed Angel Eye cameras across 24 cots, enabling families to view their babies remotely while staff can provide updates, photos and messages in more than 100 languages. NSW Health Minister Ryan Park says the technology aims to maintain the connection between parents or carers and their babies during difficult early weeks, with a similar video system also used at Newcastle's John Hunter Hospital.

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

[Play Now](#)

3AW, Drive, 19/08/2026, Jacqui Felgate

Interview with Dr Elise Davey, Director, Kensington Hill Medical Centre. Davey says winter influenza is contributing to pressure on Victorian emergency departments, with her clinic seeing an increase in influenza cases, which have doubled over the past fortnight. She also highlights Victorian Virtual ED, a free statewide telehealth option that can triage children remotely and refer them to the hospital as needed.

Interview continues on: [3AW \(Melbourne\)](#), [3AW \(Melbourne\)](#), [3AW \(Melbourne\)](#).

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Concord hospital faces probe amid staff unrest

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 20/08/2026, Rachel Rasker, Page 9

The NSW Auditor-General's office will investigate allegations of targeted disciplinary action within Sydney Local Health District in what appears to be a last-ditch effort to fend off a mutiny among Concord Hospital staff. Health Minister Ryan Park and senior doctors agreed to the probe one day before the hospital's Medical Staff Council (MSC) was due to hold a vote of no confidence in NSW Health leadership and demand a parliamentary inquiry into the NSW health ministry.

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

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At the back of beyond, medics hear call of the wild

Daily Telegraph, General News, 20/08/2026, Matthew Benns, Page 14

Making life or death decisions thousands of miles from the nearest hospital or help is the biggest challenge for medics when they join the Royal Flying Doctor Service. A \$15m boost from the NSW government will go towards that training including of five new British doctors who have just joined.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Northern Territory News \(Darwin\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#)

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Toll of too few workers

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 20/08/2026, Evangeline Polymeneas and Ruby Kraner-Tucci, Page 17

Doctors in South Australia say patients are going to the emergency department because they can't get in to see a GP, while others are repeatedly having to travel long distances to Adelaide for cancer tests. Eight SA doctors interviewed by The Advertiser said a shortage of healthcare workers was the biggest challenge for their region.

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

A simple health fix is saving the state millions

Hobart Mercury, General News, 20/08/2026, David Killick, Page 11

Recruiting more permanent health staff had cut the state's reliance on expensive agency staff and locums and saved \$56m in a single financial year, the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing said on Wednesday. Bridget Archer said increasing the state's nursing and midwifery staff by 163 had saved \$36m and increasing doctor numbers by 73 had saved \$18m.

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Health scare

Northern Territory News, Editorials, 20/08/2026, Page 16

Today we tell the story of more than 140 rural and regional doctors across Australia who have shared the biggest health challenges in their communities and what needs to be done to fix shocking shortfalls and gaps. Over two weeks, this masthead interviewed the doctors from many communities across regional and rural Australia.

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Beating death is key to his ambition

Cairns Post, General News, 20/08/2026, Tom Volling, Page 9

An Innisfail doctor who nearly died from toxic shock syndrome at 14 years old has been selected for a prestigious national rural medicine leadership program. Dr Jack de Guingand, who was born in Tasmania and raised in Melbourne, has been selected to represent the Far North at the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine's Emerging Leaders Conference in Adelaide in October this year.

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NT Health calls for surge workforce at Darwin, Palmerston hospitals amid 'immense' staff pressures

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026

The head of the Northern Territory Health Department has issued an urgent call-out for almost 60 qualified health workers to relieve frontline staff under "immense pressure" at the Darwin and Palmerston hospitals. In a sector-wide email sent on Tuesday, seen by the ABC, NT Health acting chief executive Susan Bowden called for expressions of interest from qualified nurses, midwives and pharmacists in the NT to take on up to two weeks of duties at Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) and Palmerston Regional Hospital (PRH).

[Read More](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Breast cancer patients offered PBS reprieve after removal of lifesaving drug Zoladex

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Stephanie Dalzell

Women with breast cancer left contemplating drastic surgery because of uncertainty over a critical drug have been offered a lifeline, with an equivalent medication on track to be subsidised. The move is set to provide a long-term treatment solution to breast cancer and endometriosis patients who have grappled with uncertainty in recent months over access to the drug Zoladex.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Covert gender activism wags the care watchdog

The Australian, General News, 20/08/2026, Gary Geelhoed, Page 11

Documents released under Freedom of Information legislation reveal that the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency has treated its LGBTIQ+ equity and inclusion strategy not as a workforce diversity exercise but as a regulatory instrument designed to embed "identity-affirming care" into clinical standards. Internal minutes show AHPRA officials stating that if they "get the standards right, and ensure more identity-affirming care, we won't receive the complaints in the first place".

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Survivors of 1980s contaminated blood scandal applaud announcement of long-awaited Senate inquiry

ABC Online, Other, 19/08/2026, Hannah Meagher and Jennifer Feller

Lyn Hatch has waited four decades for answers. In 1989 her teenage son Martin died from AIDS-related illnesses after being treated with contaminated plasma products. Yesterday's announcement of a Senate inquiry into Australia's contaminated blood disaster has brought hope that thousands like her might finally achieve some justice.

[Read More](#)

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Pharma giants bet up on new peptides

Australian Financial Review, General News, 20/08/2026, Page 37

Drugmakers believe two new drugs could follow a similar path to GLP-1s. One peptide has recently transformed medicine.

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

A vital service on wheels

ABC - Australasian Bus and Coach, General News, 01/08/2026, Page 58

Australian Red Cross Lifeblood's mobile donor centres do far more than travel between towns. [...] Lifeblood says every mobile collection facility must meet strict Therapeutic Goods Administration requirements.

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

The ASX companies bringing a new lens to medical imaging and pathology

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 19/08/2026, Nadine McGrath

ASX healthcare companies are working to transform medical imaging and pathology [...] The imaging software gained approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in June and has clearance in the EU, UK, Canada and New Zealand.

[Read More](#)

Surge in demand drives shortage of pneumonia, shingles medicines

Canberra Times, Other, 19/08/2026, Carla Mascarenhas

A critical shortage of the pneumonia in some parts of the country is "temporary", say authorities, as some pharmacies have run dry. [...] The (TGA) publishes a list of these medicines on its website.

[Read More](#)

Cannabis psychosis risk rises with age

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 19/08/2026, Chloe Hava

Cannabis use is linked to significantly earlier onset of psychosis, and age is a key factor – found new research from the University of New South Wales. [...] Yet a recent systematic review found no evidence that medicinal cannabis is effective for anxiety, depression or PTSD, and TGA guidance states THC-containing products are 'generally not appropriate' for patients with psychotic or active mood and anxiety disorders.

[Read More](#)

Aussie Idefirix kidney transplant success

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 19/08/2026

Swedish biopharma company Hansa has announced that the first commercial patient in Australia has received a living donor kidney transplant following treatment with Idefirix (imlifidase), representing an important milestone for patients facing barriers to transplantation. The desensitisation treatment is approved by the TGA for use in highly sensitised adult kidney...

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

Cannabis isn't 'safer' in your 20s and 30s – it's linked to an earlier onset of psychosis

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 19/08/2026

People who use cannabis in their 20s and 30s are developing psychosis years earlier than non-users, according to our new study, published today in the journal Biological Psychiatry. This challenges the idea that delaying cannabis use until your mid-20s – when people believe their brain has finished developing – is a safer option to avoid the risks of psychosis.

[Read More](#)

2GB, Drive, 19/08/2026, Clinton Maynard

Interview with Carly Stevens, researcher and medical student, UNSW. Stevens discusses research showing cannabis is associated with accelerated onset of psychosis, with the effect appearing stronger among people over 25 and greatest over 30. She adds that the study also found a link between high-potency cannabis and severe mental health disorders, but it does not distinguish potency due to a lack of data.

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FOOD STANDARDS

Food recall: Mr Chen's Szechuan Chilli Oil 250g, Walter's Artisan Bread Banana Loaf 430g pulled from shelves

West Australian, Other, 19/08/2026, Chloe Maher

Australia's food safety watchdog has pulled two products from supermarket shelves across the country over fears of undeclared allergens. Food Standards Australia and New Zealand issued a recall notice for Chen Foods Mr Chen's Szechuan Chilli Oil 250g after it was discovered the product's label did not disclose the presence of peanuts.

[Read More](#)

National Science Week shines spotlight on food safety

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 19/08/2026

This week is National Science Week (15–23 August), and as the campaign unfolds, the Food Safety Information Council is urging Australians to brush up on the fundamentals of food hygiene — habits the Council says are grounded in science, even as technology reshapes how outbreaks are detected.

[Read More](#)

Parasite linked to 'mushy fish' could be much more widespread than thought

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 19/08/2026

If you're a keen angler and regularly catch yellowtail kingfish (*Seriola lalandi*), you may have encountered instances of the fish's flesh turning mushy and unpalatable once cooked. Some have said it's a bit like trying to eat wet newspaper.

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AICIS

'Potent' toxin at 10 childcare centres

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 20/08/2026, Carrie Fellner, Page 1

Lead contamination exceeding national thresholds has been discovered in the soil at 10 childcare centres across Broken Hill but only four have been cleaned up as authorities leave remediation decisions in the hands of the centres' operators. Sampling data shows the toxic metal, linked to lowered IQ and behavioural difficulties in children, was discovered at nearly 10 times the national health investigation threshold at one centre.

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