



TODAY'S NEWS

Tuesday, 25th August 2026

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister McAllister](#) | [Minister Rae](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#) |
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian Financial Review](#)** (page 1) reports Private Healthcare Australia has proposed doubling the Medicare levy surcharge penalty to 3 per cent for top earners without private hospital insurance to offset opposition to the Federal Government's plan to eliminate age-based rebates for older Australians. Opposition health spokesperson Anne Ruston criticized Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler, noting that several state governments have expressed concerns that the Federal Government policy could strain the public health system.
- **[The Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 1) reports former acting inspector-general of aged care Ian Yates told a Senate inquiry that the Support at Home system is a public policy failure, arguing that the Federal Government has prioritized budget constraints over the wellbeing of older Australians and intensified waiting list delays. In response, a spokesperson for Minister for Aged Care Sam Rae stated that the Federal Government is making significant progress in reducing wait times and will invest \$47 billion this year to deliver care to more older Australians.
- **[The Canberra Times](#)** (page 1) reports military veterans and the opposition have criticized a Federal Government plan to cap veterans' annual allied health care spending at \$5000, warning it will reduce access to essential treatments for chronic conditions.
- **[The Age](#)** (page 1) reports two youth suicide clusters in Melbourne have raised serious concerns about systemic gaps and capacity limits in Victoria's youth mental health system,

where many young people seeking help are turned away from emergency departments and triage lines.

- **ABC Online** reports seven Victorian patients have been hospitalised with acute liver toxicity after using a counterfeit version of the unapproved weight loss peptide retatrutide, prompting the TGA to warn that these illicit products carry severe health risks and have not been tested for safety or manufacturing standards.
- **The Daily Telegraph** (page 11) reports disability service providers indicate that participants in regional and remote areas are receiving substandard services through the NDIS. Minister for Disability Insurance Jenny McAllister stated that the Federal Government has taken action to improve access to critical services and supports for these regional and remote communities.
- **The Australian** (page 7) reports trial results for Moderna's personalised mRNA vaccine demonstrated a major breakthrough for individualised cancer care, as clinical trials and sovereign manufacturing for mRNA therapeutics expand in Australia across various cancer types.
- **The Hobart Mercury** (page 1) reports a former Royal Hobart Hospital emergency department nurse has been reprimanded and barred from applying for health practitioner registration for at least six months following a ruling by the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The tribunal determined that the nurse's conduct, which affected multiple patients and involved falsifying drug administration records as well as providing false submissions to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, constituted professional misconduct that undermined public trust and compromised patient care.

MINISTER BUTLER

Health insurers want tax hit for wealthy

Australian Financial Review, General News, 25/08/2026, Michael Smith, Page 1

Almost one million high-income Australians would pay thousands of dollars more in tax penalties for not having private hospital insurance under a proposal by health funds opposed to the government's planned axing of age-based rebates for the elderly.

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

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

SA at war over cuts to health rebates

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 25/08/2026, Brad Crouch, Page 2

SA Health has bluntly warned the federal government its plan to slash private health insurance rebates for older Australians will further choke clogged public hospitals. [...] Health Minister Blair Boyer said he had written to his federal counterpart, SA MP Mark Butler, "making it clear that we would prefer the full rebate stay in place".

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

Will a not-for-profit takeover of private hospitals cut fees?

Newcastle Herald, General News, 25/08/2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 9

Two Hunter private hospitals are set to be owned by a not-for-profit organisation, as the push intensifies for patient fees to be reduced. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has vowed to act on the matter.

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Cutting over-65s' rebate will add pressure on ACT's public hospitals: Libs

Canberra Times, Other, 24/08/2026, Jasper Lindell

Cutting a rebate for Australians aged over 65 who take out private health insurance is a "cost-shift pure and simple" that will add to the pressure on ACT public hospitals, the Canberra Liberals say. [...] Mr Parton wrote to the federal Health Minister, Mark Butler, on August 20, urging him to reconsider.

Catholic sector welcomes Labor backdown on planned merger

CathNews, Other, 24/08/2026, Rebecca Comini

More than 800,000 older Australians will still get Meals on Wheels and other programs at home after Labor abandoned a plan to merge them into its under-pressure aged care system. Health Minister Mark Butler announced a reprieve on Thursday for the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), whose future had been in doubt as the government sought to fold it into its overhaul of the Support at Home program.

[Read More](#)

One Nation mocked for latest migration confusion

Crikey, Other, 24/08/2026, Rich James

The government and Coalition enjoyed their weekend criticising the never-ending confusion that is One Nation's immigration policy. [...] The government's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) cuts might not be on the agenda but it would be no surprise if they got mentioned, given Health Minister Mark Butler continues to say it's up to the states and the territories to pick up the slack and last week called on Queensland to to "get its act together".

[Read More](#)

Surgeons warn private health changes will lead to 'avoidable deaths'

The Senior, Other, 24/08/2026, Carla Mascarenhas

One of Australia's peak medical bodies has urged the federal government to reconsider its proposed changes to the private health insurance rebate, while four state governments have also formally opposed the plan. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has defended the changes as restoring "intergenerational equity".

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

Remote regions failed by NDIS

Daily Telegraph, General News, 25/08/2026, Julie Cross, Page 11

Australians in the remote areas are getting a substandard NDIS service, with travel and staff challenges compounded by plan cuts, providers say. [...] In a statement, NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister said that the government had "taken real action to improve access to critical disability services and supports for communities in regional and remote locations".

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

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MINISTER RAE

Reforms have not fixed aged care: insider

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 25/08/2026, Brittany Busch, Page 1

Labor has forsaken the wellbeing of older Australians to improve its budget bottom line and its landmark aged care overhaul is in desperate need of fixing, the former interim aged care watchdog says. [...] A spokesperson for Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said the government was making significant progress in driving down waiting times, and would continue to build on its changes to the reforms as demand for aged care continued to grow.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [WA Today \(Online\)](#).

'Denying problems exist': concerns on aged care package

Canberra Times, Other, 24/08/2026, Tess Ikonomou

Support at Home aged care packages are a "public policy failure" as wait times remain unacceptable, a parliamentary inquiry has heard. [...] In a speech in Melbourne, Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said the government was not rolling the program into Support at Home as they believed it should remain "standalone".

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [MSN Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Senior \(Online\)](#).

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CHSP consultation to open soon

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 24/08/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

Consultation on a redesigned Commonwealth Home Support Program will begin "within the next month or so," says Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae. Appearing on day one of the Invox CHSP national conference on Monday morning, Mr Rae emphasised that the government wants "everyone" involved in the planning process of CHSP.

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IAT 'fatally flawed', may defy Aged Care Act: Eagar

Health Services Daily, Other, 24/08/2026, Cate Swannell

The algorithm determining Support at Home funding is "fatally flawed", incompatible with the recommendations of the Aged Care Royal Commission and potentially in defiance of the new Aged Care Act, Professor Kathy Eagar has told a Senate inquiry. [...] Earlier today, federal aged care and seniors minister Sam Rae defended the IAT and pointed to a rapid review of its prioritisation mechanism, which he said was expected to report within the next month.

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Nice speech, minister. Now where's the CHSP growth funding?

Health Services Daily, Other, 24/08/2026, Cate Swannell

The battle to save CHSP is over. [...] The calls follow a recent Australian National Audit Office report which found real investment in CHSP had been declining since 2021 and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing did not have an effective mechanism to monitor and respond to demand and supply pressures.

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Rae urges wavering CHSP providers: 'Come and talk to us'

Health Services Daily, Other, 24/08/2026, Cate Swannell

Federal aged care minister Sam Rae has urged CHSP providers considering withdrawing from the program – including those that have already given notice – to approach the government before making any final decisions. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing will write to every CHSP provider outlining the process and timing for extending grant agreements, while consultation on the long-term design of entry-level home care will begin within "the next month or so".

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Interim Funding Rule Removes 53,000 Clients From Official Aged Care Waitlist

Hello Leaders Australia, Other, 24/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has changed the methodology used to calculate the national in-home aged care waitlist, resulting in more than 53,000 fewer people being counted as waiting for full funding since November last year, a Four Corners investigation has confirmed. Under the Support at Home reforms, which took effect on November 1, more than 90 per cent of approved recipients are now issued an interim payment set at 60 per cent of their assessed funding level.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

Australia's mental health crisis: The heartwarming initiative helping the country's suicide capital

NEWS.com.au, Other, 24/08/2026, Ella Mcilveen

When Ken Bayley was 19, he found himself naked in a prison cell debating whether to take his own life right there and then. [...] Government under pressure to strengthen system Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride told news.com.au the Labor government had delivered \$1.1 billion to strengthen mental health care.

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

[Read More](#)

Peers at the Table podcast puts lived experience at heart of mental health conversation

Region Illawarra, Other, 24/08/2026, Kellie O'Brien

What if some of the best insights into improving mental health care came from the people who have experienced the system themselves? [...] The podcast was launched by Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Emma McBride and is supported by funding from Coordinare – South Eastern NSW PHN through the Australian Government's PHN Program.

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ASSISTANT MINISTER WHITE

No relevant coverage

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SPECIAL ENVOY REPACHOLI

No relevant coverage

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DEPARTMENT

Much-needed home for elderly cancer patients sitting empty and unused

nine.com.au, Other, 24/08/2026

Yvonne always dreamed of offering a home away from home for people going through cancer treatment. [...] Federal Health Department statement: The Australian Government understands the disappointment that Yvonne Cuschieri House is not yet operating, particularly for people with serious illness and the families who care for them.

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New aged care volunteer resources

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 24/08/2026

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has published new eLearning modules and resources to support aged care volunteers. The Supporting Older People: Volunteer Learning Guide was informed by a consultation in 2025, in which stakeholders said they would like to see consistent, flexible learning to support volunteers, providers and volunteer managers.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Uncertain on finding help

Northern Territory News, General News, 25/08/2026, Page 6

Almost one in three Australians aged 50 and over are unsure where to find information or support if changes in cognitive health affect their ability to manage their finances. The findings, released by Aware Super and the Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia, show that about 2.9 million Australians may be entering later life without a clear plan for who would help manage their money if dementia or another health conditions affected their decision-making.

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Focus needed on how reforms are implemented

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 24/08/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

While the policy of the aged care reforms absolutely has the right intent, a "perverse mismatch between legislative and policy intent and its administrative implementation" is appearing, says New South Wales Trustee and Guardian chief executive officer Brian Woods. Speaking on the second day of the Ageing Australia NSW/ACT conference 2026 in Sydney on 14 August, Mr Woods echoed sentiments expressed in former Inspector-General of Aged Care Natalie Siegel Brown's National Press Club address – that a distinction needs to be made between intent and action.

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Unpacking the aged care algorithm: How the system is weighted against those who need it most

HelloCare, Other, 24/08/2026, Jakob Neeland

This time last week, Four Corners showcased the human wreckage being caused by the aged care system's Integrated Assessment Tool's algorithm which is used to allocate funding to seniors accessing care in the home through the Support at Home Program. This investigation was damning.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

The bottom line? It's about people

Canberra Times, General News, 25/08/2026, Zoe Wundenberg, Page 15

Parliament has passed the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill 2026, with the government arguing the reforms are necessary to make the scheme stronger, fairer and more financially sustainable. The public debate that followed was entirely predictable.

Also reported by: [Border Mail \(Albury-Wodonga\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).

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Ann Marie Smith's family hopes nightmares 'frequent' Integrity Care co-director Amy June Collins

ABC Online, Other, 24/08/2026, Bethanie Alderson

The uncle of Adelaide woman Ann Marie Smith, who died from severe neglect, has told a court he hopes his nightmares "frequent" the directors of her former NDIS provider. Ms Smith died in April 2020, from causes including malnutrition, severe septic shock, multiple organ failure and other complications from her cerebral palsy while she was in full-time care.

Also reported by: [7News.com.au \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Yahoo! News Australia \(Online\)](#).

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Parents of children with disability more likely to experience psychological distress, survey finds

ABC Online, Other, 24/08/2026, Nas Campanella & Mary Lloyd

A major Australian study has found parents caring for young children with disability are twice as likely to experience psychological distress and nearly twice as likely to say they are not in good health. [...] It comes as the government prepares to divert some families from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) onto the new Thriving Kids program, which begins in October, and will be jointly delivered by the federal, state and territory governments.

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PRIMARY CARE

Veterans make a stand back in the fight

Canberra Times, General News, 25/08/2026, Dana Daniel, Page 1

Former special forces soldier Matt Pettit served more than a decade in the Australian Army, including tours of Afghanistan and Iraq. [...] Along with Royal Australian Air Force veteran Anne Taylor, he fears losing access to treatments under the Albanese government's plan to cap veterans' allied healthcare spending at \$5000 a year, with higher amounts to require demonstrated clinical need.

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Veterans deserve greater support

Courier Mail, General News, 25/08/2026, Jessica Wang, Page 2

Australians overwhelmingly believe veterans should receive more support if they are injured while in service of their country, as pressure mounts on Labor to slash the \$5000 allied health cap. Polling

commissioned by Fair Care for Veterans by Fox and Hedgehog showed 70 per cent of 2000 people surveyed said defence force personnel who are injured in the service of their country should receive "much more support" or "somewhat more support" compared to "other Australians with injuries or disabilities".

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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SBS, World News Australia, 24/08/2026, Janice Petersen

The Australian Medical Association has called for urgent action on AI deepfakes, warning they could put patients at risk. It is now calling for the introduction of a digital duty of care that places greater responsibility on online platforms after AI generated videos impersonating trusted doctors have been uploaded, potentially spreading dangerous health advice.

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

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POPULATION HEALTH

Cut the tobacco excise to cut crime

Herald Sun, General News, 25/08/2026, Jake Mccallum, Page 6

The federal government's tobacco excise should be halved in a bid to fight the exploding cigarette black-market which has sparked firebombings and murders across Victoria, a parliamentary inquiry has urged. The inquiry has called for federal intervention to "immediately reduce the excise rate" of tobacco to January 2019 levels, cutting it from \$1.52829 to \$0.86149 per cigarette, or about \$35 per pack.

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

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To fix the culture, you need to target cocaine

Newcastle Herald, Other, 25/08/2026, John Hanscombe

Consider yourself lucky, the doctor told me, extremely lucky. I'd been laid up for days with a nose that wouldn't stop running. [...] We're among the highest countries globally for per capita consumption of the illicit drug, with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2022-2023 estimating 4.5 per cent of the population aged 14 and over had used cocaine recently.

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

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NMSC: common, deadly, preventable

The Medical Republic, Other, 24/08/2026, Lincoln Tracy

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has released a new report focused on the incidence and mortality associated with non-melanoma skin cancer. The report, Estimating common non-melanoma skin cancer incidence and mortality in Australia, examined whether using linked data from a variety of sources could provide an estimate of how many people are diagnosed with common NMSC, the number of deaths from common NMSC, and whether there are differences in the number of recorded cancer deaths between different datasets.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Gag 'locks out' dying NT patients: doctors

Northern Territory News, General News, 25/08/2026, Lottie Hood, Page 5

A peak medical body has joined calls to cut two key amendments from the Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill saying the proposed legislation "undermines the doctor-patient relationship" and will lock out patients experiencing "intolerable suffering". The Australian Medical Association NT (AMA NT) released a statement on Monday reflecting a growing group of concerned politicians, advocates and patients.

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

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Soaring rates for skin cancers

Cairns Post, General News, 25/08/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 6

Skin cancer rates have soared, with non-melanoma detections three times more than all other cancers combined. Shocking, first-of-its-kind data highlights that Australians are playing Russian roulette with the sun.

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Australian scientists identify what's driving one of the deadliest forms of breast cancer

Daily Mail UK, Other, 24/08/2026, Laura House

Treatment options are very limited for triple-negative breast cancer if it returns. This may no longer be the case for some patients thanks to a new finding Australian researchers have discovered a 'brake' that may help prevent the spread of the notoriously aggressive triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) throughout the body.

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Barry Coulter says doctors should take a leaf out of 'Spartacus' to avoid VAD gag trouble

Northern Territory News, Other, 24/08/2026, Harry Brill

Doctors should be free to raise voluntary assisted dying with their patients, says former Deputy Chief Minister Barry Coulter, who has urged his very own Country Liberal Party to remove a controversial gag clause from the Rights of the Terminally (ROTI) Ill Bill. Ahead of one of the most highly anticipated parliament sittings in recent NT history, Mr Coulter, who was a member of the 1995 administration that passed voluntary euthanasia, has returned to the debate which he himself had to grapple with more than three decades ago.

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

[Read More](#)

'Tell your child you believe them': Why young people start to doubt their own bodies

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 24/08/2026, Kate Aubusson

For Jaimie Sheil, an outcome more terrifying than being diagnosed with some awful complication is that when she arrives at an emergency department, doctors will tell her that she is just fine. "It sounds ridiculous," said Sheil. [...] Sheil is among young adults, children and teenagers with severe chronic conditions whose symptoms have been fobbed off as just a normal part of growing up, or misdiagnosed with mental health or behavioural issues, new University of Sydney research has found.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Deaths of 10 young people raise alarm on services

Age, General News, 25/08/2026, Grant McArthur, Page 1

Two youth suicide clusters in Melbourne's east involving the deaths of 10 people, the youngest aged 13, have raised new concerns about Victoria's troubled mental health system. Youth mental health services in the east were put on alert in response to rising teenage tragedies over nine months, but health watchdogs have failed to launch a review to determine if there are any systemic issues or access issues at the heart of the cases.

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

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'Absolute crisis' looms for bush kids' health

Daily Telegraph, General News, 25/08/2026, Peter Jenkins, Page 8

Rural communities are the canary in the coalmine for a looming crisis in NSW with children in the bush waiting years to be assessed for key health issues, a top pediatrician has warned. Fellow experts are also concerned that "kids are falling through the cracks" as an alarming shortage of specialists in regional areas is delaying diagnoses for conditions including ADHD and autism.

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Bodies are on the brink

Herald Sun, General News, 25/08/2026, Sarah Booth, Page 13

Cases of a debilitating, deadly mental illness are skyrocketing among young people, but Australia does not have any public treatment programs and the condition is poorly understood, experts warn. [...] "Compared to internationally we have no BDD services in Australia.

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

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Cook denies mental health facilities are inadequate

West Australian, General News, 25/08/2026, Oliver Lane & Jessica Page, Page 3

Roger Cook has defended his Government's record on mental health and backed the decision to order a second investigation into a Perth teenager's suicide after she was discharged, alone, from Fiona Stanley Hospital. A SAC1 investigation into the death of Hailee Hildebrandt found "a lack" of youth mental health facilities led to discharge delays.

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Promising bipolar research

West Australian, General News, 25/08/2026, Page 11

Drugs for diabetes and weight loss may have additional mental health benefits, especially for people with bipolar disorder. Griffith University researchers analysed data from nearly 15,000 people with bipolar disorder who were prescribed GLP-1 medications over a 15 years.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#).

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Nurse 'laughed', handed patient dangerous item before suicide: Inquest

Daily Telegraph Australia, Other, 24/08/2026, Paul Brescia

A nurse laughed and said "is this inappropriate" before returning a dangerous object to a patient in the Prince Charles Hospital intensive care mental health ward, her colleague told an inquest. But the nurse who allegedly handed the item back said she could not recall who made the decision, instead saying it was done by "the team".

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

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Late spike in flu, Covid

Herald Sun, General News, 25/08/2026, Page 9

Cases of flu, Covid and other respiratory illnesses are rising throughout Victoria in a later-than-usual peak, health officials warn. Victoria's chief health officer Dr Caroline McElroy issued an alert on Monday and said hospitals were seeing an increasing number of respiratory illnesses as community transmission of Covid and influenza spiked.

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How well do COVID antivirals actually work? Not as well as we thought

Yahoo! News Australia, Other, 24/08/2026, Laura Edwards, Allen Cheng, Bette Liu & James Wood

If you're aged over 70 or over 50 with underlying health conditions, and have tested positive for COVID, you might have been offered free or subsidised antivirals. Earlier in the pandemic, these medicines were an important way to reduce the chance of people becoming severely ill with COVID, needing to be hospitalised, or dying.

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

Bupa calls for overhaul

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 24/08/2026

Pharmacists could take on a greater role in coordinated chronic disease management and preventative care under health reforms proposed by Bupa. Building a More Accessible, Modern and Sustainable Health System, a new discussion paper from the private health insurer, has set out a roadmap for a health system better equipped.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

On brink of cancer vaccine revolution

The Australian, General News, 25/08/2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 7

Cancer medicine is on the crest of a revolutionary era as evidence of success for an mRNA vaccine in preventing the recurrence of melanoma looks certain to be replicated with other cancers. US biotech giant Moderna's announcement that its personalised vaccine, known as intismeran, prevented melanoma recurrence when given in conjunction with immunotherapy drug Keytruda electrified the stockmarket and triggered enormous consumer interest in mRNA vaccines for other cancers.

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Navigating the future: New tool for early signs of dementia

Retail Pharmacy, Other, 24/08/2026

Cognitive decline can affect more than memory. It can also make it harder to navigate familiar places and find your way – including finding your way home from the supermarket.

[Read More](#)

Channel 9, Nine News, 24/08/2026, Melissa Downes & Joel Dry

A study by Griffith University has found that semaglutide, which is sold as Ozempic and Wegovy, may help lower psychiatric hospitalisations for those with bipolar disorder by up to 21%. The research suggests the GLP-1 drug could help protect the brain while also reducing inflammation and stress.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Sydney\)](#).

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

'I've kept promise' to help hospitals

Daily Telegraph, General News, 25/08/2026, Page 7

NSW Premier Chris Minns has denied breaking a pre-election promise to fix hospital waiting times and rejected claims from a Blacktown whistleblower that he has "stabbed (nurses) in the back". The Daily Telegraph revealed on Monday that the hospitals Mr Minns used for a late-night social media blitz in Opposition are now performing worse than they did four years ago.

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Short-stay units to ease pressure on emergency departments

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 25/08/2026, Max Aldred, Page 8

A multimillion-dollar plan will expand hospital short-stay units in a bid to reduce crowding in NSW's bursting emergency departments. The NSW government yesterday announced it would direct \$130.7 million to building 22 treatment spaces this financial year.

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Apology after patient's 'bloody disgusting' experience

Western Advocate, General News, 25/08/2026, Rachel Chamberlain, Page 3

A woman has slammed Bathurst Hospital for long wait times and a rush to discharge her while she was experiencing symptoms associated with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). The Western NSW Local Health District has since apologised and reached out to Helen Birken to discuss her experience.

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Minns announces \$130 million plan to relieve strain on hospital emergency departments

7News.com.au, Other, 24/08/2026, Hayley Taylor

If you have ever landed in a NSW emergency department with a small head injury, infection or during an allergic reaction, you are likely to have been transferred to a short stay unit. [...] NSW Premier Chris Minns has just announced a \$130.7 million investment into Emergency Department Short Stay Units (EDSSU) for hospitals across the state.

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The plan to divert more patients from Sydney's busiest emergency rooms

Sydney Morning Herald, Other, 24/08/2026, Megan Gorrey

Emergency department short-stay units will be expanded at six hospitals in Sydney and regional NSW, under a \$130 million state government plan to help ease overcrowding and shorten wait times. An extra 22 spaces for patients requiring short-term observation and quick treatment will be delivered at emergency wards at St George, Campbelltown, Nepean, Maitland, John Hunter and Wyong hospitals in the next 12 months.

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The NSW Government is spending \$130m to create more short-stay spaces in hospitals and take some pressure off busy emergency departments, but Opposition Leader Kellie Sloane says emergency departments are in crisis and they need more than band-aid solutions. Premier Chris Minns and Health Minister Ryan Park are defending the NSW Government's record on health as patients continue to experience long wait times and overcrowding, claiming that the increase in wait times is due to aged care bed block.

Also reported by: [Channel 7 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 9 \(Sydney\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Sydney\)](#), [News24 \(Sydney\)](#).

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 24/08/2026, James Glenday & Emma Rebellato

Tasmania's Opposition has blamed the Tasmanian Government for its long emergency department wait times at the Royal Hobart Hospital. Tasmania's Health Department dashboard data from six days last week revealed that a third of patients with life-threatening conditions were treated within recommended times.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 24/08/2026, Michael Thomson

The brand-new St John of God Midland Private Hospital will give private patients around Midland access to state-of-the-art facilities. The hospital officially opens tomorrow, with the first patients receiving treatment on Thursday.

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ABC Radio Sydney, Breakfast, 24/08/2026, Craig Reucassel

Emergency departments at six Sydney and Hunter Valley public hospitals will be able to treat 20,000 extra patients thanks to an increase in the number of short-stay beds. Health Minister Ryan Park says short-stay beds improve patient flow.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

Tas nurse barred for drug swap

Hobart Mercury, General News, 25/08/2026, Rob Inglis, Page 1

A former nurse who stole opioid painkillers prescribed for patients at the Royal Hobart Hospital, replacing the doses with water or saline solution, has been barred from the profession after claiming they "never put the public health at risk". [...] The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia suspended the nurse's registration in June 2023 and referred the matter to TASCAT after completing an investigation in August last year, determining the person had engaged in professional misconduct.

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

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Disturbing emergency department drug swap exposed

Burnie Advocate, General News, 25/08/2026, Matt Maloney, Page 2

A former emergency department nurse who stole strong painkillers and injected patients with saline instead has been banned from reapplying for registration. The Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (TASCAT) made the determination following a disciplinary referral by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

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Country kids deserve access to great regional unis

Daily Telegraph, General News, 25/08/2026, Renée Leon, Page 13

This week, i heard someone in the city say that regional students would be better off going to a city university as it would 'open more doors' for them. But country kids deserve to have access to quality universities in their own backyard just as much as those who grow up in metropolitan areas do.

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Simulation of vertical cliff rescue

Northern Territory News, General News, 25/08/2026, Lottie Hood, Page 3

Paramedic interns were a bit on edge on Monday in Darwin as they started a week of intense simulation exercises with a vertical cliff rescue. Six St John NT Intensive Care Paramedic (ICP) interns are joining several other agencies to work through a series of complex scenarios throughout Operational Readiness Week.

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TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Channel 9, Nine News, 24/08/2026, Peter Overton

Eight-month-old Bohdi Higginson, a Central Coast baby who was diagnosed with KCNT1-related catastrophic epilepsy, becomes the first person in the world to receive a precision medicine treatment. There is now hope that this will open the door to treatments for other children with similarly rare diseases.

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

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

No relevant coverage

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Psychologist banned for sex with 'profoundly vulnerable' patient breaks silence when the Mail arrives on her doorstep: 'So much more to it'

Daily Mail UK, Other, 25/08/2026, Karleigh Smith

A female psychologist who has been banned from treating patients for two years after embarking on a sexual relationship with a 'profoundly vulnerable' male patient has been unmasked. [...] According to the tribunal, Soukoulis self-notified the relationship to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) after she found out her relationship had already been disclosed to a GP.

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Channel 10, 10 News, 24/08/2026, Sandra Sully

The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has officially passed the 100-day mark, with little sign of it slowing down. About 5000 cases have been confirmed and at least 2000 people have died.

Also reported by: [Channel 10 \(Brisbane\)](#), [Channel 10 \(Adelaide\)](#).

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ABC Radio Melbourne, Breakfast, 24/08/2026, Bob Murphy & Richelle Hunt

A move to protect Vic's little penguin against bird flu is seen, as about 1000 birds have received their first doses of the vaccine. There are plans to vaccinate 5000 little penguins against the H5N1 virus at Phillip Island and St Kilda, with hundreds of said birds being rounded up and provided shots every night.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

From lab to table: Algae a cheaper taste sensation

Australian Financial Review, General News, 25/08/2026, Brittney Levinson, Page 8

Lab-grown meat has been available to sell and eat in Australia for a little over a year, but producers say cost is one of the things holding it back from becoming mainstream.

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

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Cancer Council outpaced by F1 nicotine ads

Cairns Post, General News, 25/08/2026, Thomas Sargeant, Page 8

Australians are having addictive nicotine products promoted to them by stealth, the Cancer Council has claimed, with race cars and sporting uniforms featuring their logos. [...] A TGA spokesman said the government "is concerned about any advertising that encourages tobacco and nicotine use".

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Childhood dementia hope

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 25/08/2026, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 13

A breakthrough discovery by Australian researchers is giving hope to parents of children with a devastating disease. The medical researchers have found several TGA approved medicines now used to treat a range of conditions from severe vertigo and dizziness to adult dementia might help slow brain damage in kids with the deadly Sanfilippo syndrome.

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Doctors fear possible contaminated counterfeit peptide batch after seventh case of acute liver damage

ABC Online, Other, 24/08/2026, Caitlyn Gribbin, Rachel Carbonell & Andi Yu

Another black market peptide user has suffered a severe liver injury, with doctors concerned a possible "contaminated batch" might be to blame. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA) chief medical advisor Robyn Langham told the ABC "the localised nature" of the liver issues in Victoria suggested "a batch problem".

[Read More](#)

The hidden underbelly of Australia's weight-loss drug boom

SBS, Other, 24/08/2026, Atitaya Teepawat

The 48-year-old says she had gained weight during perimenopause and believed her Australian GP

was unlikely to prescribe a weight-management medicine because she did not meet the relevant clinical criteria. [...] In response to an SBS Thai query, a Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) spokesperson said: "It is not legal to import GLP-1 medicines or peptide products into Australia for commercial purposes without appropriate authorisation and declaration."

[Read More](#)

Tirzepatide users on oral contraceptives face pregnancy risk

Australian Pharmacist, Other, 24/08/2026, Marisa Wikramanayake

Therapeutic Guidelines highlights that tirzepatide (Mounjaro) could interfere with the efficacy of oral contraceptives. [...] 'The interval of 4 weeks for these precautions has been recommended by the manufacturer of Mounjaro, Eli Lilly, the Therapeutic Goods Administration and by the United Kingdom's College of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare.

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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