



TODAY'S NEWS

Thursday, 24th September 2026

[Minister Butler](#) | [Minister McAllister](#) | [Minister Rae](#) | [Assistant Minister McBride](#) |
[Assistant Minister White](#) | [Special Envoy Repacholi](#) | [Department](#)
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[Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](#) | [Immunisation](#) | [Health Systems Strategies](#)
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LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Canberra Times \(page 1\)](#)** reports that a Health Department trial using artificial intelligence to detect Medicare billing fraud was abandoned after flagging more suspicious cases than staff could manage, despite proving effective at identifying suspicious billing. Conducted between July 2024 and December 2025, the trial identified eight potential cases of fraud of non-compliance worth \$5.2 million, leading to five being referred for further investigation.
- **[The Canberra Times](#)** reports that the Queensland State Government remains at odds with Canberra over a new disability support program for children, with the state demanding changes before it signs on, however with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says that Queensland should honour the states and territories agreement to establish additional foundational support schemes in exchange for \$25b in hospital funding, *Also reported by: [ABC Online](#), [SBS](#)*
- **[Northern Territory News \(page 8\)](#)** reports that Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Jenny McAllister says that almost 400 individuals and NDIS providers have been banned from the scheme over the past three years.
- **[ABC Online](#)** reports that Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Jenny McAllister says the Federal Government has found \$2.1 billion in savings by cracking down on fraud in the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

- [Hobart Mercury \(page 1\)](#) reports that Tasmanian waitlists for non-urgent neurological outpatients have reached as high as 2077 days, with a peak medical professional body stating that non-urgent patients risk "never being seen" at hospital for their conditions.
- [Daily Telegraph Australia](#) reports that Townsville doctors are warning of a syphilis outbreak in North Queensland, with Townsville Public Health Unit director Steven Donohue saying doctors were concerned about a number of high-risk sexual practices.

MINISTER BUTLER

'Makes no sense': dollars the issue in losing pounds

The Australian, General News, 24/09/2026, Penny Timms, Page 7

Imagine having to enrol in a clinical trial just to access a type of care that's worked well for you in the past but you can no longer afford. And not knowing if you are taking a placebo. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler estimates 600,000 people are already accessing GLP-1 drugs privately.

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AI tool flags fraud frenzy

Canberra Times, General News, 24/09/2026, Dave Allen and Dana Daniel, Page 1

A fraud detection trial using artificial intelligence in the health department's benefits integrity division raised so many red flags that the project was abandoned. [...] Health Department Secretary Blair Comley said so-called "phantom scripts" were an example of how data-matching could detect potential breaches.

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Blaming bureaucracy easy option

Canberra Times, General News, 24/09/2026, Amanda Vanstone, Page 20

When it comes to policing something as complex as the NDIS, how can public servants be all-knowing about the services that are required and possible to deliver in so many different circumstances around Australia? [...] Caption Text: NDIS Minister Mark Butler.

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Pensioners to shoulder \$1.6b of private health insurance 'cash grab'

Weekly Times, General News, 23/09/2026, Page 9

Pensioners will be hit hard by the Federal Government's controversial private health insurance rebate changes, with new analysis revealing about half of the \$3 billion in forecast savings will be clawed back from those on lower incomes. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler last week vowed to press ahead, saying while he recognised they would be a cost-of-living hit for older Australians, the federal budget's bottom line meant there was little money available for new aged care spending.

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AstraZeneca delays PBS removal of breast cancer drug Zoladex

The Australian, General News, 23/09/2026, Penny Timms

AstraZeneca has been in closed-door negotiations to get its lower-dose Zoladex implant relisted on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said women should be able to access the medicines they need without barriers and that he would "continue to make sure women have access to affordable treatment, more choice and better care".

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Big NDIS savings snagging on lone holdout state

Canberra Times, General News, 23/09/2026, Will Nicholas

A plan to shift billions of dollars worth of NDIS spending to the states is snagging on one holdout jurisdiction as a minister also warns criminal gangs have penetrated the scheme. [...] But Canberra and

Brisbane still appear divided on the issue despite the looming October 1 deadline for jurisdictions to sign up, angering Health Minister Mark Butler.

Also reported by: [Campaspe News \(Online\)](#), [Harvey-Waroon Reporter \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Midwest Times \(Online\)](#), [Kyabram Free Press \(Online\)](#), [The Area News \(Online\)](#), [Inner East Review \(Online\)](#), [The Telegraph \(Seymour\) \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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Senate inquiry: pensioners voice outrage over health rebate changes

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 23/09/2026, Carla Mascarenhas

Pensioners have lashed the federal government in a Senate inquiry examining proposed changes to the private health insurance rebate. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has repeatedly declined interview requests with The Senior on the topic.

Also reported by: [Inner East Review \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#).

[Read More](#)

Queensland lashed over Thriving Kids holdout, days out from launch

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026, Nas Campanella and Evan Young

A frustrated federal Health Minister Mark Butler has denounced the Queensland government over its refusal to sign up for the Thriving Kids program, a week before the first phase of the NDIS alternative for some children is set to begin. Announced last August, Thriving Kids is a pillar of the federal government's efforts to curb spending on the \$51 billion NDIS, and will see states and territories provide services for children under nine with developmental delay or autism who have "low to moderate" support needs.

[Read More](#)

Queensland pressured over 'thriving kids'

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026

The Federal Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme has lashed the Queensland government over its refusal to sign up for the Thriving Kids program - a week before it is set to begin. Mark Butler has made the comments to the ABC in his only interview before the start of the NDIS alternative for some children under nine.

[Read More](#)

Specialist fees 'rocketing': Butler

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 4

Rachel Carter specialist fees for colonoscopies and knee replacements are "taking off like a rocket" once they hit the 95th percentile, Mark Butler has said, telling the AMA that all options are on the table when it comes to reining in the worst offenders. The Minister for Health and Ageing said out-of-pocket costs for specialist consults had almost doubled, to about \$2.3 billion, over the past five years.

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CMO urges dignity in trans care

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 6

The Chief Medical Officer has urged doctors to uphold "dignity, safety and respectful care" in the face of the heightened public debate on transgender healthcare. "Transgender people have always been a part of our communities," Professor Michael Kidd told the AMA conference in Melbourne. [...] In the aftermath of the announcement, Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler asked the NHMRC to develop national clinical practice guidelines on care for trans and gender-diverse young people.

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QLD withholds from Thriving Kids participation, a week from launch

Freedom2Live, General News, 23/09/2026, Heidi Bain

Minister for Disability and the NDIS Mark Butler has communicated his frustrations with the Queensland Government over its failure to sign off on its participation in the Thriving Kids program, set

to launch in a week's time. Butler said to the ABC, "All other states and territories, Liberal and Labor alike, [are] just getting on with the business of developing their programs.

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Labor's NDIS reform plan has hit a stumbling block in Queensland

SBS, General News, 23/09/2026

Queensland's unwillingness to sign onto the government's Thriving Kids program has earned it a harsh rebuke from the health minister. Queensland is still refusing to sign onto a government plan called Thriving Kids. [...] States have agreed to chip in a combined \$4 billion into Thriving Kids over five years, helping prop up Labor's sweeping efforts to curtail what it calls runaway NDIS spending But Canberra and Brisbane still appear divided on the issue despite the looming 1 October deadline for jurisdictions to sign up, angering Health Minister Mark Butler.

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ABC News, ABC News Hour, 23/09/2026, Joe O'Brien

Interview with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler. O'Brien says the first phase of the Thriving Kids program, which is set up as part of the changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, begins next week, but some families are concerned about the change, and there's also pushback from state governments, including Queensland, which is yet to sign on. Butler states that he's frustrated with the Queensland Government for being the only state yet to sign on to the Thriving Kids program the week before it launches, and he also adds that they are losing time for Queensland parents and children.

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

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ABC News, ABC News at Noon, 23/09/2026, Kathryn Robinson

The first phase of the Thriving Kids program, which has been set up as an alternative to the NDIS for some children under nine with developmental delays or autism, will now begin next week. Queensland is yet to formally sign on to the offering, while Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says time is running out for families in the state.

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Channel 9, Nine News, 23/09/2026, Brenton Ragless

Elderly South Australian patients take the longest time in the nation to vacate them, and according to the Australian Medical Association's latest report card, the rise in wait times will only continue. The AMA has proposed that the Commonwealth should start covering the cost of elderly patients' stays, but according to Federal Health Minister Mark Butler's office, the \$2b in aged care funding that was offered to the states and territories was rejected, and they instead chose to direct that into their hospital systems.

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ABC Radio Brisbane, 16:00 News, 23/09/2026

The Queensland Government remains at odds with Canberra over a new disability support program for children, with the state demanding changes before it signs on. Earlier this year, states and territories agreed to establish additional foundational support schemes in exchange for \$25b in hospital funding, with Federal Health Minister Mark Butler stating that Queensland should honour that agreement, but Acting Queensland Disability Services Minister Ros Bates says the Queensland Government wants guarantees around long-term funding for those relying on the NDIS.

Similar coverage reported by: [2MCE \(Orange\)](#), [Curtin FM \(Perth\)](#), [ABC Radio Canberra \(Canberra\)](#), [ABC NewsRadio \(Sydney\)](#), [ABC Gold Coast \(Gold Coast\)](#), [ABC Radio Darwin \(Darwin\)](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

Sex offender among latest to be banned

Northern Territory News, General News, 24/09/2026, Julie Cross and John Rolfe, Page 8

A convicted child sex offender and a fraudster are among more than 200 individuals and businesses banned from the NDIS across Australia this year, as the watchdog ramps up efforts to clean up the scheme. [...] NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister stated the government has granted the commission "stronger powers to really take the fight to the suspected shonks and grifters trying to rip off the NDIS".

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NDIS fraud crackdown saves billions

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026, Rachel Mealey

The Minister for the NDIS Jenny McAllister says cracking down on fraud within the national disability insurance scheme has saved 2.1 billion dollars from the bottom line.

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ABC NewsRadio, Breakfast, 23/09/2026, Sarah Morris

Pre-recorded interview with Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Jenny McAllister. Compere says according to the Federal Government, almost 400 individuals and NDIS providers have been banned from the scheme over the past three years. McAllister points out that they have seen the final sentencing of the last offender in Operation Pegasus, which she mentions was a long-running investigation. She states that there have been six offenders and they were collectively sentenced to more than 31 years in jail.

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ABC Radio Canberra, AM, 23/09/2026, Isabella Higgins

Interview with Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Jenny McAllister. Compere says the Federal Government mentioned that it has found \$2.1 billion in savings by cracking down on fraud in the National Disability Insurance Scheme. McAllister says they have known that across the world, organised syndicates are targeting Government payment programmes, and Australia is no exception with the NDIS. She admits that the NDIS was left as a soft target by the previous Government, and they've been making significant investments to improve that.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

MINISTER RAE

Community calls for council to continue Meals on Wheels

Western Port News, General News, 23/09/2026, Harrison Borthwick, Page 3

Meals on Wheels volunteer Joan Doyle is leading a campaign to have the program maintained by the Mornington Peninsula council after they announced they were ending its funding. [...] But after a change of mind from the government, federal minister for aged care and seniors Sam Rae announced funding for programs such as Meals on Wheels will be reinstated.

Also reported by: [Mornington Peninsula News Group \(Online\)](#).

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Seven Australian startups share \$15.6 million to take on dementia

Biotech Dispatch, General News, 23/09/2026

Seven Australian startups will share \$15.6 million to speed up the development of new treatments, diagnostic tools and technologies for dementia and cognitive decline. [...] Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae said dementia is the leading cause of death in Australia, which makes action more important than ever.

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Ageing Australia calls for faster access to Support at Home care

The Indian Sun, General News, 23/09/2026

Ageing Australia has called for further changes to the Support at Home program, with CEO Tom Symondson telling a Senate inquiry that many older Australians continue to face lengthy waits for care and gaps between approved support and the assistance they receive. [...] Aged Care Minister Sam Rae said in June that people classified as urgent priority were receiving packages within a month, while high-priority people were waiting one to two months.

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[Back to Top](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

DEPARTMENT

600,000 patients risk losing care over \$220k grant

The Australian, General News, 24/09/2026, Page 11

We become almost inured to the large amounts of money in the hands of government. It can become a fog of incomprehensible amounts, almost endless zeros where across time millions have become billions and trillions. [...] The problem for Emerge Australia and so many other health advocacy groups is that the federal Department of Health and Aged Care has developed a new funding model under the revised chronic conditions framework where \$148m has been set aside to provide support for a raft of chronic conditions.

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AI tool flags fraud frenzy

Canberra Times, General News, 24/09/2026, Dave Allen and Dana Daniel, Page 1

A fraud detection trial using artificial intelligence in the health department's benefits integrity division raised so many red flags that the project was abandoned. [...] Health Department Secretary Blair Comley said so-called "phantom scripts" were an example of how data-matching could detect potential breaches.

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Expo to connect residents with support services

Cobden Timboon Coast Times, General News, 23/09/2026, Page 11

A free Community Expo is coming to the Theatre Royal next month, aiming to connect residents over 55, people living with a disability and families and carers with support services available in and around the Corangamite Shire. [...] State and national support services stallholders will include Senior Rights

Victoria, Self Advocates Connect, Justice Connected, Dementia Australia, Carers Victoria, Are-Able, National Disability Insurance Agency, M Power, Services Australia, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, Country Fire Authority and the Warrnambool and District Community Hospice.

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RN prescribing liability?

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 1

Assurance from AHPRA that RN prescribers will be accountable for all their clinical decisions will do little to assuage doctors' fears of being held liable for mistakes they may make, the AMA warns. [...] Templates for the partnership agreements have already been drawn up by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

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Push for more detailed alcohol labelling, after low uptake of voluntary system

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026, Lauren Roberts

Alcohol use is widespread in Australia, with about three in four people aged 14 and older consuming it over the space of a year. But public health experts say harms associated with drinking, even at low levels, are not being communicated clearly enough to consumers. [...] A spokesperson for the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing said alcohol labels were part of a "multi-pronged response" to increase awareness about and respond to alcohol-related harm, alongside other initiatives.

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DoHDA invented an AI-powered fraud detection tool. It stunk

Allergy and Respiratory Republic, General News, 23/09/2026, Holly Payne

We don't know how much it cost to create, what potential cybersecurity risks it posed or even whether it saved money. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing created an AI-powered fraud detection tool that was only correct 22% of the time, cost an unknown amount of money to produce and turned up so many false positives that it became a drain on resources.

[Read More](#)

Over 2,200 IAT review requests made

Australian Ageing Agenda, General News, 23/09/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

The department was vague about the IAT during this week's Senate inquiry hearing in Canberra, and was criticised for the lack of timely data. Discussions between senators and Department of Health, Disability and Ageing representatives about wait times, the Integrated Assessment Tool and data availability were tense in the final panel of this week's Senate inquiry hearing into Support at Home.

[Read More](#)

AN-ACC's diagnosis-blind design has a blind spot, and it's costing dementia care its funding

HelloCare, General News, 23/09/2026, Jakob Neeland

A Mirus Australia review of 573 homes shows behavioural complexity is worth less to the funding model than physical dependency, and last year's recalibration widened the gap. [...] When the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing recalibrated both the AN-ACC price and class weightings on 1 October 2025, Class 8 was the only class in the entire cognition branch to go backwards in cash terms, falling 1.9 per cent to \$177.38 a day, even as the sector-wide average variable subsidy rose 2.1 per cent over the same comparison.

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RACGP embarks on NT road trip

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, General News, 23/09/2026

From Darwin to Katherine, the college President visited practices, a local hospital, and welcomed the next generation of GPs. RACGP President Dr Michael Wright touring general practices in Darwin and

the Katherine Hospital. [...] The pilot AGPT GPT1 Supervisor Capacity Incentive was introduced from Semester 2 2026 to the end of 2027, supported through the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, with the first payments to eligible supervisors being made by the end of October.

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Medicare's AI found more leads. The workflow could not absorb them

The Mandarin, General News, 23/09/2026, Alex Antic

An agency should not claim a productivity gain simply because an AI system processes more applications or produces more recommendations. [...] A recent audit by the Australian National Audit Office examined how the Department of Health, Disability, and Ageing used AI to support Medicare compliance.

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Nudge letters not going anywhere

The Medical Republic, General News, 23/09/2026, Holly Payne

The controversy around a randomised control trial study looking at nudge letters did not make it into the final report on the project. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing will likely continue to use so-called nudge letters to steer GP behaviour, with a new project report on a pathology requesting intervention failing to mention the ethical concerns it raised.

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AI billing tools under microscope

The Medical Republic, General News, 23/09/2026, Holly Payne

DoHDA might be concerned about the use of AI billing tools, but it doesn't have an enforcement plan at the ready. A new Australian National Audit Office report reveals that both the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and Services Australia have been growing increasingly nervous about the potential for AI-powered tools to contribute to MBS misuse.

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Healthdirect confirmed to deliver Medicare Thriving Kids

The Medical Republic, General News, 23/09/2026, Cate Swannell

DoHDA has confirmed Healthdirect as the delivery partner for the national information and navigation service but has backed away from implementation dates. [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing also confirmed children would not require a diagnosis to access Medicare Thriving Kids or broader Thriving Kids supports, as work continues on the service's design, workforce, and connections with state and territory services.

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Health Dept says Support at Home is improving

The Weekly Source, General News, 23/09/2026, Ian Horswill

[...] After a morning of criticism from aged care providers, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing presented a very different picture of Support at Home.

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One number exposes aged care's hospital problem

The Weekly Source, General News, 23/09/2026, Ian Horswill

[...] Health Ministers have already established a Hospital Discharge Joint Taskforce, chaired by Department of Health, Disability and Ageing Secretary Blair Comley PSM, with an 18-month work program focused on delayed discharge and patient flow.

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One number exposes aged care's hospital problem

The Weekly Source, General News, 23/09/2026, Ian Horswill

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) has put a number on a problem that State Health Ministers

were warning about only weeks ago. Hospital patient days used by people eligible and waiting for residential aged care jumped from 286,050 in 2020-21 to 460,122 in 2023-24 – an increase of more than 60% in three years. [...] Dr Danielle McMullen Health Ministers have already established a Hospital Discharge Joint Taskforce , chaired by Department of Health, Disability and Ageing Secretary Blair Comley PSM, with an 18-month work program focused on delayed discharge and patient flow.

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[Back to Top](#)

AGEING AND AGED CARE

'Not dignified': AMA calls for government to fix aged care bed block

Canberra Times, General News, 23/09/2026, Phoebe Loomes

More than 460,000 older Australians are stuck in hospital waiting for a place in residential aged care, with experts saying the backlog is hurting patients and putting unsustainable pressure on public hospitals. "Too many older Australians are spending days, weeks or longer in hospital after they have been medically cleared to leave, simply because the care they need is not available," said Danielle McMullen, president of the Australian Medical Association (AMA).

Also reported by: [Bathurst Western Advocate \(Online\)](#), [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Warrnambool Standard \(Online\)](#).

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Australian hospitals used as “holding pens” as aged care bottleneck reaches crisis point

4BC, General News, 23/09/2026, Jason Matthews

The Australian Medical Association has issued a warning over a massive bottleneck in public hospitals, where thousands of medically cleared elderly patients are stuck waiting years for scarce aged care beds. AMA President Dr. Danielle McMullen joined Jason Matthews on 4BC Breakfast and warns that urgent reform across federal and state governments is needed to speed up assessments and build critical care infrastructure for an aging population.

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Aged care system is alienating older people

Community Care Review, General News, 23/09/2026, Katarina Lloyd Jones

The social contract between older people and the government has been broken, COTA NSW CEO Gohar Yazdabadi tells the Canberra Senate inquiry hearing into Support at Home. Older people are losing trust in the aged care system, a Senate inquiry hearing held in Canberra this week has heard.

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Understanding Dementia: Symptoms, diagnosis and what to expect - Part 1

SBS, General News, 21/09/2026, Anita Barar

Dementia is one of Australia's leading causes of death. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, nearly 1.1 million people could be living with dementia by 2066.

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We asked people with dementia about voluntary assisted dying. Here's what they said

Yahoo! News Australia, General News, 23/09/2026

What do Australians with dementia think about voluntary assisted dying? Until recently, no researchers had thought to ask. Our two small studies change that.

[Read More](#)

Channel 10, 10 News, 23/09/2026, Kate Freebairn

An Australian Medical Association report revealed that older South Australians are facing the nation's longest wait for access to residential aged care. The AMA is now urging both state and federal governments to act on the situation.

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[Back to Top](#)

DISABILITY AND CARERS

Retirees get the blame, but NDIS is bigger budget cost

The Australian, General News, 24/09/2026, Adam Creighton, Page 11

The latest intergenerational report is unfortunately further evidence that Treasury has become not a source of frank and fearless advice but a political extension of the Treasurer's office. It is also a reminder of how economic discussions have become captured by stale and increasingly meaningless statistics.

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Parents share heartbreak as childhood dementia steals their happy baby boy's future

Adelaide Now, General News, 23/09/2026, Cydonee Mardon

Louis was a thriving, smiling nine-month-old – then a rare disease with a 100 per cent mortality rate began stealing everything from him, one ability at a time. For first-time parents Amy Harper and James Lovell, every new milestone their baby boy reached was a pure delight.

Also reported by: [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#), [NEWS.com.au \(Online\)](#)

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[Back to Top](#)

PRIMARY CARE

Patients wait 2077 days

Hobart Mercury, General News, 24/09/2026, Genevieve Holding, Page 1

Some Tasmanian patients are waiting nearly six years to see a neurologist longer than it takes to complete a medical degree. Waitlists for non-urgent neurological outpatients are climbing as high as 2077 days for northern Tasmanians with a peak medical professional body stating that non-urgent patients risk "never being seen" at hospital for their conditions.

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RACGP demands slammed

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 1

Jamie Thannoo dr Max Mollenkopf says the RACGP has "absolutely stooged practice owners" over its accreditation demands for practices to have climate change champions. The high-profile GP claimed the new demands were an example of "absurd overreach" by the college and would result in more administrative work and higher costs.

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Why I started calling my patients the C-word

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Dr Janice Tan, Page 16

I now call my patients customers, and I've mostly stopped feeling weird about it, but it took a while. 'Patient' is the first word the profession hands you and one of the last it lets you question.

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Indigenous WA teen left with broken hip for six weeks

Doctors fought to keep a 14-year-old girl in hospital for six weeks – knowing the alternative was sending her home to sleep on the floor with an untreated broken hip. A 14-year-old girl from the Frisby Court house at the centre of the nation's Indigenous child-neglect scandal was left without medical treatment for a broken hip for six weeks, leaving doctors horrified when she was eventually taken to hospital.

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‘Operating beyond capacity’: Doctors slam ‘ruthless’ cuts to Perth’s child mental health beds

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 23/09/2026, Carla Hildebrandt

Western Australia's peak body for doctors has called on the government to reverse the "ruthless" decision to cut beds from the state's only inpatient mental health unit for children under 16, warning the system is already operating "beyond capacity". It comes after this masthead revealed Perth Children's Hospital ward 5A, the state's inpatient mental health facility for children and teenagers under 16, would reopen with 16 beds instead of 20, once its refurbishment was complete.

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‘Families are falling through the cracks’: Busselton family left waiting on specialist care for young son

West Australian, General News, 23/09/2026, Madelin Hayes

A Busselton family has been left searching for answers about their four-year-old son's health after years of hospital visits and delays for specialist care. Dallas Prestidge has spent much of his young life battling breathing problems, which first began when he was two-weeks old, according to mum Tiora Wall.

Also reported by: [Kalgoorlie Miner \(Online\)](#).

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Epworth HealthCare review triggered by Four Corners allegations backs private provider's governance

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026, Antonia O'Flaherty

An independent review of the Melbourne hospital where a gynaecologist who allegedly performed unnecessary operations on women worked has found "no significant gaps" in its governance framework. But the review made 21 recommendations, including more oversight of procedures that could affect women's fertility, which Epworth HealthCare has adopted.

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Open letter demands pharmacy prescribing review

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, General News, 23/09/2026

The RACGP, RANZCOG, and Rural Doctors Association of Victoria are calling for an evaluation of patient outcomes and systemic impact. Victoria's pharmacy prescribing model, Chemist Care Now, allows eligible patients to start or restart the oral contraceptive pill without a prescription.

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RACGP backs GLP-1 review but warns against added red tape

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, General News, 23/09/2026

It supports PBAC's review of GLP-1 prescribing patterns but says future PBS restrictions must balance appropriate use with timely access and minimal admin burden. At its November meeting, the PBAC will review the use of GLP-1 medicines for type 2 diabetes.

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4BC, Breakfast , 23/09/2026, Jason Matthews

Interview with AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen. Compere says the Australian Medical Association is now warning people about a massive bottleneck in public hospitals, as thousands of elderly patients are now stranded in hospital wards, despite being medically cleared to go home. McMullen points out

that they have presented the details through their new Aged Care Report Card, which brings together a bunch of different metrics, both those hospital bed days being occupied by people who could be somewhere else, but also stats showing things like wait times for aged care assessments have more than doubled in the past five years. She states that some emerging concerns around it are affecting Australia's most vulnerable.

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[Back to Top](#)

POPULATION HEALTH

Liver long life

The Nightly, General News, 23/09/2026, Nina Agrawal, Page 35

A poor diet, a lack of exercise and other medical conditions can harm this vital organ. The liver is a powerful organ: It filters our blood, helps maintain sugar levels, stores energy and plays an essential role in digestion.

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Don't worry, be happy the simple key to a longer life

West Australian, General News, 24/09/2026, Kim Macdonald, Page 13

A delightful 103-year-old woman currently in the midst of planning her next trip to Paris recently told me the secret to her longevity was largely about diet. Two poached eggs in the morning and a brandy at 5pm, every day for 40 years.

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Revamp for Aussie prostate cancer guidelines

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 5

Men aged 50-69 should be offered prostate cancer testing every two years, with higher-risk men starting at 45, according to new Australian guidelines approved by the NHMRC. The first update to the earlydetection guidelines in a decade includes several changes from the draft version released in 2025.

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Retail Drinks commences next major research project Online alcohol sale and delivery in Australia (tranche 2)

National Liquor News, General News, 01/09/2026, Page 42

Retail Drinks launches updated research to provide fresh evidence on Australia's evolving online alcohol sales and delivery market. Three years ago, Retail Drinks Australia partnered with Frontier Economics to produce the first comprehensive analysis of online alcohol sales and delivery in Australia.

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The shrinking consumer

Retail World, General News, 01/09/2026, Page 44

one in 10 Australian adults surveyed now reports using a GLP-1 medicine. EY-Parthenon modelling estimates adoption could reach between 17 per cent and 30 per cent of the adult population within a decade, potentially representing more than seven million Australians.'

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High cocoa prices could change chocolate-eating habits

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026, Fiona Blackwood

For many Australians, chocolate is a non-negotiable mood lifter, especially during hard times. But over the past few years, as grocery prices have continued to rise, those feeding a chocolate habit have been paying more at the check-out.

[Read More](#)

Migraines drive doubling of neurological conditions estimate

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, General News, 23/09/2026

New figures suggest millions more people may be suffering than previously realised, as migraines go 'under-recognised and undertreated'. Many more people than previously thought may be living with debilitating migraines without seeking appropriate healthcare. More than two million people may be living with undiagnosed migraines nationwide, according to a revised figure published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) on Monday.

[Read More](#)

Victorian Labor puts reproductive rights on election agenda as it warns One Nation could try to wind back abortion access

The Guardian, General News, 24/09/2026, Benita Kolovos

The Victorian Labor government is announcing new measures to improve access to medical abortion, as it puts reproductive rights on the election agenda and claims One Nation could use abortion as a negotiating chip with the Coalition in the event of a hung parliament. On Thursday, the deputy premier and minister for women, Gabrielle Williams, and the health minister, Ingrid Stitt, will announce a rollout of new portable ultrasound machines for the state's 20 sexual and reproductive health hubs.

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Why over-60s are outdrinking Gen Z and the one habit that helps

The Senior, General News, 23/09/2026, Carla Mascarenhas

Older Australians are drinking at "risky levels" while Millennials and Gen Z are pulling back, but one woman who beat alcoholism says "it is never too late". Heather Pickard, from Elwood in Melbourne, opted for sobriety over 30 years ago and told The Senior she's seen many older people overcome the deadly illness. [...] Harder for older people According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), older Australians are outdrinking their younger counterparts.

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[Back to Top](#)

CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Listen to experts on hearing and dementia

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 24/09/2026, Josh Mercer, Page 10

This Dementia Action Week, a Townsville audiologist is urging locals to get their hearing tested, warning untreated hearing loss has been identified as a modifiable risk factor for dementia. Specsavers Audiology owner Henriette Lategan, based at Willows Shopping Centre, said hearing loss could develop gradually and go unnoticed for years.

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Urgent health warning issued over heart disease risk after pregnancy complications

Daily Telegraph Australia, General News, 23/09/2026, Olivia Shying

Mum Natalie Cuttiford was never warned that her gestational diabetes diagnosis could increase her risk of heart disease later in life. New research shows she's not alone, and experts say the healthcare system needs to close this dangerous knowledge gap.

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

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New fit-for-purpose BreastScreen WA clinic opens in the South West

West Australian, General News, 23/09/2026, Rose Patane

A new fit-for-purpose breast screening clinic opened its doors on Monday, giving women across the

South West access to upgraded screening and assessment services. The BreastScreen WA clinic at 138 Spencer Street, South Bunbury, opened after a \$2.44 million State Government investment, replacing the old clinic at the Bunbury Health Campus.

[Read More](#)

Are Australia's alcohol warning labels too easy to ignore?

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026, Mike Kermode

When's the last time you noticed the warnings on alcohol labels? New research suggests they're too small, too easy to miss, and don't spell out risks like cancer.

[Read More](#)

It's not just a headache, so why don't we take migraines seriously?

ABC Online, General News, 23/09/2026, Grace Pashley

If you're one of the 3.9 million Australians living with migraines, you know exactly how debilitating they can be. But even though you know this, you probably have to do some convincing of the people around you.

[Read More](#)

Shift for breast screening

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Bella Rough, Page 7

The national breast cancer screening program will shift towards personalised risk-stratified screening over the next decade, under a new plan to reduce overdiagnosis. The first changes will include beginning to notify women about their breast density, piloting different screening approaches for women aged 45-49 and developing criteria to identify women for annual screening.

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Physician. fuel thyself

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Dr Susie Muir, Page 18

Every day in healthcare, I watch brilliant people run on empty. They are amazing healthcare professionals who give everything to their work and then wonder why there is not enough left in the tank for the people they love.

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Should you get a PSA test for prostate cancer?

Yahoo! News Australia, General News, 23/09/2026

Prostate cancer is common. About 200 in every 1,000 Australian men will be told they have prostate cancer by the age of 85.

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[Back to Top](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Why crisis is 'a failure of moral courage'

Ballarat Courier, General News, 24/09/2026, Dale Fraser, Page 8

Grampians Health chief executive Dale Fraser spoke at the Committee for Ballarat's recent Insights Forum earlier this month addressing mental healthcare in Ballarat. The Courier duly reported on his key observations the next day.

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'No single solution': King outlines federal support for mental health services

Ballarat Courier, General News, 23/09/2026, Catherine King

Most Australians will, at some point in their lives, struggle with their mental health. And many of us will be called upon to provide support to loved ones battling mental health difficulties.

[Read More](#)

Felix's story: The 'beautiful soul' who was gone too soon and the missed opportunities NT should learn from

The Courier Mail, General News, 23/09/2026, Lottie Hood

When Gertrude Knight looks at the sandstone urn holding her 16-year-old son's ashes in her home, she does not see the unwell version of who he became at times, but rather the "beautiful and gentle" soul she knew him to be. But also there in the remnants of her son Felix's life lie the many times their cries for help were not listened to and the "very clearly missed opportunities" to save him.

Also reported by: [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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Workers in NSW supported to deal with psychosocial problems early

The Mandarin, General News, 23/09/2026, Melissa Coade

The NSW government has invested \$127.7 million in a new call service to help workers respond to issues such as bullying, harassment, work-related stress, and mental harm in a trauma-informed way. The Psychosocial Advisory Service (PAS) can be accessed by everyday workers when they call 13 10 50, and is part of a capability and capacity uplift for SafeWork NSW.

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Fighting the rural health gap

Daily Liberal, General News, 23/09/2026, Amy Rees, Page 1

A country mum has unmasked a significant gap in the NSW Health system for adolescents living in rural areas, a flaw that almost cost her teenage son his life teenage The fight against rural health gap

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Kidd's call for compassion a welcome step

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 17

Thank you, Professor Michael Kidd. At last, a sober voice on trans medical care.

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[Back to Top](#)

IMMUNISATION

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[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Channel 9, Nine News, 23/09/2026, Mark Burrows

Pre-eclampsia is one of the most common complications for women during pregnancy, often diagnosed after 20 weeks. A world-first trial led by RWH researchers will target the biological process thought to

cause the condition.

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

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[Back to Top](#)

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

‘Support what we know works’: AMSANT calls on services sector to back Aboriginal community control

National Indigenous Times, General News, 23/09/2026, Giovanni Torre

The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory has urged the broader community services sector to put Aboriginal community control into practice by embedding it in their own policies, programs and services. In a keynote address at the Anglicare Australia National Conference in Garramilla/

[Read More](#)

Thorpe introduces bill to end shackling of women during childbirth in prison

SBS, General News, 23/09/2026, Dan Butler

Thorpe's bill to ban shackling incarcerated people during labour and childbirth remains before the Senate, with advocates warning the practice disproportionately harms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Gunnai, Gunditjmara and Djab Wurrung Senator Lidia Thorpe says there must be a "clear prohibition" on shackling incarcerated people during labour and childbirth, without exception.

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[Back to Top](#)

PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Shellharbour challenges hospital plans

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 24/09/2026, Glen Humphries, Page 9

The Shellharbour Hospital was the focus of Tuesday night's city council meeting, with several motions linked to it. One of them dealt with the council's draft submission to the state government's proposal to rezone that area.

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ABC News, News Breakfast, 23/09/2026, James Glenday and Emma Reballato

Tasmanian public nurses have now voted to go on strike. The union representing the nurses is asking for better working conditions.

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[Back to Top](#)

CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

HEALTH WORKFORCE

RACGP demands slammed

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 3

The requirements were at odds with college pledges to cut red tape in general practice. "The RACGP has absolutely stooged practice owners under the new sixth accreditation standards," he wrote.

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New AI standards for GP practice accreditation

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 3

Rachel Carter gp practices must have processes for doctors to obtain and record informed patient consent to the use of AI to meet the RACGP's new accreditation standards. The sixth edition of the standards for general practices contains a total of 86 mandatory criteria and three 'aspirational' criteria.

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Beyond black and white

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 8

Meet Dr Rachel Marr, a GP turned forensic investigator. Rachel Carter FOR a discipline underpinned by scientific rigour and exactitude, Dr Rachel Marr acknowledges that sometimes the findings she makes are clouded by uncertainties.

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A surgeon retires. Who takes his place?

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 12

Carmel Sparke between learning the violin, bushwalking, mountain biking and Spanish lessons, Dr Matthew Nott's retirement plans are coming together. There is just one significant blot.

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Refocus on proctored exams?

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 14

Bella Rough medical schools will have to prioritise proctored exams and workplace assessments to stop students outsourcing their learning to AI, an Australian expert warns. The breakneck improvements in AI's abilities have made take-home written assessments "essentially a write-off", says Associate Professor David Kok, a radiation oncologist and medical education expert.

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The adverse effects of RN prescribing

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 17

New rn prescribers will be responsible for every decision they make, AHPRA says There are many nuances in safe prescribing. Of course, it's based on correct history taking, examination and diagnosis.

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GP college's climate push fuels debate

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 17

Dr Max Mollenkopf hits out at RACGP over demand for 'climate change champions' I am a pretty much retired rural doctor who founded an accreditation agency, Quality Practice Accreditation, after the vocational registration debacle that saw many excellent GPs excluded. I am also an environmentalist.

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

Dr Dominique Lee on surviving sexual assault

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Page 42

Page 41 Words caught and my voice became strangled. I could speak to journalists in private, but the thought of exposing my truth to a room full of strangers seemed unthinkable.

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

WA nurse banned after using elderly patient's credit card for online shopping spree

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 23/09/2026, Holly Thompson

A nurse who was working at a West Australian hospital on a geriatric medical ward has been barred from practicing until 2028 after she stole a patient's credit card to go on an online shopping spree. Ferzana Khan was working a shift from 1pm until 9.30pm back in June 2024 and was responsible for placing the belongings of a patient in a draw in her room.

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

[Read More](#)

Philip Daplyn: Ex-Notre Dame lecturer, nurse de-registered after sexual relationship with immigration detainee

West Australian, General News, 23/09/2026, Hannah Cross

A mental health nurse tasked with teaching WA's future nursing workforce has been banned from practising for four and a half years after he had a sexual relationship with a vulnerable patient being held in immigration detention. Philip Daplyn began the inappropriate relationship soon after his patient was transferred to the immigration detention centre where he worked in November 2017.

[Read More](#)

Nurse Ferzana Khan banned from practising after stealing geriatric patient's credit card for shopping spree

Kalgoorlie Miner, General News, 23/09/2026, Hannah Cross

A Perth nurse convicted of fraud after stealing a vulnerable patient's credit card details to go on an online shopping spree has been banned from the profession for 18 months. Ferzana Khan was working on a geriatric medical ward at a hospital in the Perth metro area on June 22, 2024, when she found a patient's credit card on the floor towards the end of her shift, which was due to end at 9.

[Read More](#)

Gold Coast cosmetic doctor Daniel Vanegas fined after forging script for addictive painkiller

Northern Territory News, General News, 23/09/2026, Vanda Carson

A Gold Coast beauty clinic doctor has been fined and reprimanded for misconduct after he forged the signature of a colleague on a script for an addictive painkiller blamed for multiple celebrity deaths. Daniel Alejandro Vanegas Elorza, known as Daniel Vanegas, was busted with the forged script for 20 tablets of oxycodone at a Chemist Warehouse on 22 April 2024.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Online\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Online\)](#).

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Greater prescribing scrutiny urged

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 23/09/2026

Peak doctors' groups in Victoria have penned an open letter ahead of the Nov state election criticising the expansion of pharmacy prescribing of contraceptives, arguing that access "must not come at the expense of patient safety, quality of care, or informed choice". The Royal Australian College of GPs, Royal Australian.

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[Back to Top](#)

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS

Cure for PBS authority line headache?

Australian Doctor, General News, 11/09/2026, Bella Rough, Page 7

GPs using Best Practice can request PBS authorities in under a minute without touching the phone, the

software company claims. Widely regarded as a major time sink, prescribers made 4.3million calls and 2.4 million online requests for PBS authority approval in 2023/24.

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RACGP backs GLP-1 review but warns against added red tape

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, General News, 23/09/2026

It supports PBAC's review of GLP-1 prescribing patterns but says future PBS restrictions must balance appropriate use with timely access and minimal admin burden. At its November meeting, the PBAC will review the use of GLP-1 medicines for type 2 diabetes.

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[Back to Top](#)

MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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[Back to Top](#)

BENEFITS INTEGRITY

No relevant coverage

[Back to Top](#)

AUSTRALIAN CDC

Syphilis outbreak: Townsville Public Health Unit urging locals to get tested ASAP

Daily Telegraph Australia, General News, 23/09/2026, Daneka Hill

Townsville doctors have declared a syphilis outbreak in North Queensland, saying the highly infectious disease has gone 'mainstream' and jumped into normally low-risk groups that don't realise they have it. Townsville Public Health Unit director Steven Donohue said doctors were concerned about a number of high-risk sexual practices.

[Read More](#)

A 'failed' system: why preventable diseases persist in remote Australia

SBS, General News, 23/09/2026, Angelica Waite

Health Experts say dangerous, yet highly preventable diseases are persistently present in many remote communities in Australia. Rheumatic Heart Disease is one such disease that's largely eradicated in the developed world, but Australia still has some of the highest rates globally, and it's disproportionately impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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[Back to Top](#)

THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Biocurious: The hemp sector is poised to bloom amid supportive local reforms

Northern Territory News, General News, 23/09/2026, Tim Boreham

Often confused with more potent cannabis varieties, low-THC hemp is poised to have its day in the sun for industrial and medical uses. Liberalised regulation spells an opportunity for local providers of the

protein-rich, low-THC cannabis plant Veterinary provider HempPet sniffs an IPO opportunity [...] In a dissenting report, the Australian Greens went a step further, recommending the oversight of hemp be passed from the Office of Drug Control/Therapeutic Goods Administration to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

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

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Cannabis pill for pain

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 23/09/2026, Page 16

Australia could be months away from a decision on a new CBD pain-relief tablet after an Australian pharmaceutical company submitted the medicine to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for registration Aussie firm Promethean BioPharma has completed clinical trials for a new CBD pain relief tablet in what it is hailing as a "world's first". The company's scientists have developed a cannabisbased medicine that contains no THC the chemical that causes the drug's high sensation.

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

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TGA pulls the plug on popular cold and flu ingredient

Australian Pharmacist, General News, 23/09/2026, Chloe Hava

Following extensive safety and stakeholder review, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has made the decision to remove Andrographis paniculata from the Therapeutic Goods (Permissible Ingredients) Determination, effective 17 September 2026. Around 70 listed medicines currently contain the herb, with most marketed as cold, flu and immune-support products.

[Read More](#)

TGA acts on Andrographis

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 23/09/2026

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has removed herbal supplement Andrographis paniculata from the list of permitted ingredients in new medicines due to safety concerns. The regulator conducted a review of Andrographis following numerous reports of anaphylaxis linked to the herb, including a fatality (PD 09 Apr), before deciding to de-list.

[Read More](#)

ABC Radio Hobart, Afternoons, 23/09/2026, Joel Rheinberger

Interview with Royal Hobart Hospital endocrinologist Professor Roland McCallum. McCallum says the Therapeutic Goods Administration is Australia's equivalent of the FDA in America, and it found in its latest survey that a number of people are buying GLP-1 drops or patches online, and he adds that the products are not being sold through a pharmacist or a doctor's prescription. He notes that people should be suspicious about the authenticity of the said products.

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[Back to Top](#)

OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

Adulterated drugs

Pharmacy Daily, General News, 23/09/2026

Australia's first comprehensive drug checking trial within a medically supervised injecting facility has found that one in five drug samples (21%) contained unexpected substances, including potentially life-threatening adulterants and synthetic drugs. Conducted at Uniting's supervised injecting centre in Sydney, the testing detected unexpected substances such as phenacetin in drugs bought.

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FOOD STANDARDS

Australia helps shape food standards at Codex meeting

Food & Beverage, General News, 01/09/2026, Page 11

Australia has helped shape more than 300 new and updated international food standards covering food labelling, food hygiene, food additives, veterinary drug residues, and fish and fishery products at the 49th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC49) in Geneva. A total of 188 countries adopted the standards and guidance at the meeting.

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