

Sunday, 4th October 2026

Minister Butler | Minister McAllister | Minister Rae | Assistant Minister McBride | Assistant Minister White | Special Envoy Repacholi | Department | Ageing and Aged Care | Disability and Carers | Primary Care | Population Health | Chronic Conditions and Screening | Mental Health and Suicide Prevention | Immunisation | Health Systems Strategies | Health Economics & Research | First Nations Health | Public Hospital and Health Reform | Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office | Health Workforce | Technology Assessment and Access | Medicare Benefits and Digital Health | Benefits Integrity | Australian CDC | Therapeutic Goods Administration | Office of Drug Control | Food Standards | AICIS

LINKS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **The Sunday Telegraph** (page 19) reports the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists has issued a warning that patients taking GLP-1 weight loss drugs and peptides face an 11 times higher risk of life-threatening pulmonary aspiration during surgery due to delayed stomach emptying, with the TGA announcing new compliance measures targeting suppliers and manufacturers selling unapproved products to address these emerging health risks.
- **The Sydney Morning Herald** (online) reports annual deaths in Australia reached 188,421 last year due to an ageing population, which is expected to place increasing pressure on federal budget expenditure for healthcare and aged care services. Health Minister Mark Butler highlighted that the annual cohort of Australians turning 80 has grown from about 15,000 per year 15 years ago to 90,000 next year.
- **NITV News** reports the Federal Government is implementing new safeguards within the NDIS to protect First Nations clients in remote communities from being exploited by operators. Following feedback from communities and local councils, Minister for the NDIS Jenny McAllister announced that these measures will include expanding the Remote Community Connector programme to 30 additional communities, launching a dedicated online First Nations hub, and utilising new enforcement powers to stop improper provider behavior.

- **The Sun Herald** (page 32) reports researchers at Monash University have discovered a drug-resistant gene in the bacterium Clostridioides that enables its spore form to develop resistance to antibiotics, making the spores harder to eliminate with standard disinfectants. Experts warn that rising antimicrobial resistance could drastically increase global healthcare costs, emphasizing the critical need for new antibiotic development and research funding.
- **SBS** reports a global analysis by the WHO found that 12 per cent of cancer cases worldwide in 2024 were caused by pathogenic infections, with four viruses and one bacteria responsible for the majority of these diagnoses, which the AIHW estimates at 170,000 new cases of cancer diagnosed in Australia each year.
- **ABC Online** reports Australia is experiencing a surge in childhood diseases, such as diptheria and measles, linked to declining vaccination rates and overseas travel.
- **The Northern Territory News** (online) reports that despite the Federal Government's ongoing investment in home care and regional infrastructure, the AMA's Aged Care Report Card 2026 has revealed a decline in home care packages in the NT over the past decade, causing prolonged hospital stays for elderly residents and putting severe strain on public hospitals.
- **The Sunday Age** (page 5) reports the Victorian Liberal Party has proposed a $1.27 billion plan to deliver an additional 25,000 public surgeries annually using private hospital capacity to reduce the state's elective surgery waitlist.

MINISTER BUTLER

Death rates are climbing as Australia's baby boomers reach their 80s

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 03/10/2026, Matt Wade

The annual number of deaths in Australia has risen to the highest level since the pandemic and is set to keep climbing as the baby boomers reach their 80s. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has often pointed out that when he was aged care minister 15 years ago "about 15,000 Australians turned 80 every year.

Also reported by: The Age (Online), Brisbane Times (Online), WA Today (Online)

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GPs and AI: Hope, hype and the patients in between

The Medical Republic, General News, 03/10/2026, Louise Stone

I remain appropriately critical, but I am also intrigued by our potential futures, and to me, that is where a GP thrives. [...] Mark Butler may laugh at my ancient fax machine, but no one has extracted its private data.

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MINISTER MCALLISTER

NITV, NITV News, 03/10/2026, Cameron Gooley

The Federal Government is promising a stronger and safer NDIS system to protect First Nations clients in remote communities. NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister says new safeguards will target operators accused of exploiting the scheme by overcharging clients and offering incentives.

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MINISTER RAE

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Aspirin hope for dementia

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 04/10/2026, Page 18

Low-dose aspirin was associated with a 70 per cent lower risk of dementia among older people with a particular genetic profile, a new analysis has found, raising the possibility of a more personalised approach to dementia prevention. The Monash University study's strongest finding was linked to genetics that influence platelet count.

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Unprepared for death

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 04/10/2026, Page 23

Death may well come for us all, but research has found few Australians are prepared for the moment or know how to help family members with the end of their lives. A new La Trobe University study shows 48 per cent of people have not prepared a will, 54 per cent don't know where to access palliative care, 58 per cent don't know about end-of-life paperwork, and almost 63 per cent don't know what to do when someone dies at home.

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Family dementia battles drive scientists' brain health research

The Australian, General News, 03/10/2026, Lillian Saleh

They are on the cutting edge of research into Australia's biggest killer – dementia – and working on ways to make life easier for those living with the condition. Meet the young guns leading the charge to save lives and change the future of healthcare.

Also reported by: Daily Telegraph Australia (Online), The Courier Mail (Online), Adelaide Now (Online), NEWS.com.au (Online)

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Not OK, Boomers? The repercussions of a generation on its way out

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 03/10/2026

Australia's latest annual death numbers confirm the "silver tsunami" that's been building on our horizon for years has finally arrived. Baby Boomers, who entered the world in an optimistic post-war birth rate explosion, are heading into their 80s and starting to exit the world.

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AMA warns elderly Territorians face hospital harm as aged care goes ‘backwards' in the NT

Northern Territory News, General News, 03/10/2026, Lottie Hood

The Northern Territory is going "backwards" in its care for older residents and potentially causing them harm with long hospital waits, a newly published report finds. The Australian Medical Association (AMA) has published their Aged Care Report Card 2026 and while some people's expectations were low for the NT, the findings have prompted calls for urgent action.

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

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

Senior NT public servant was sole director of private NDIS company in Alice Springs for years

ABC Online, General News, 03/10/2026, James Elton

A senior Northern Territory public servant responsible for child and family services in Central Australia spent nearly three years as the sole director of a private National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider in Alice Springs, and for 15 months also owned a 50 per cent stake in the business's parent company. [...] On August 21, the department told the service it had referred the information "through the appropriate internal integrity processes" and was coordinating with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) "where relevant".

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4ZZZ, Brisbane Line (Tuesday and Saturday), 03/10/2026, Elly Pashen

Interview with Member for Yerrabi Suzanne Orr. Pashen says the Thriving Kids program has launched in Canberra to support children with disabilities and their carers, following the NDIS reforms. Orr states that the progressive rollout of the program started in October, and it is good to remind people that there is so much going on with the NDIS.

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PRIMARY CARE

Libs plan to move public patients to private wards

Sunday Age, General News, 04/10/2026, Patrick Hatch & Henrietta Cook, Page 5

Thousands of public hospital patients would be diverted to private hospitals for surgical procedureswithout paying any fees under a $1.27 billion state opposition plan to tackle Victoria's ballooning elective surgery waitlist. Liberal leader Jess Wilson said the policy, which she will announce today, would deliver an extra 25,000 surgeries a year in partnership with more than 100 private hospitals and day surgeries.

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Liberals promise free private surgery to slash waitlists

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 04/10/2026, Ryan Bourke, Page 11

The Coalition has promised to halve Victoria's blown-out elective surgery waitlist by paying private hospitals to operate on public patients. The announcement comes as ballooning waitlists continue to plague the public system, with the issue set to feature prominently in the lead-up to next month's state election.

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The big decision more women are making about their fertility

SBS, General News, 03/10/2026, Yasmine Alwakal

Egg freezing promises more time. But it comes with costs, uncertainty and unanswered questions. [...] In Australia, elective egg freezing is usually self-funded, although costs vary between clinics and some medically indicated fertility-preservation treatment may attract Medicare rebates.

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POPULATION HEALTH

Why men's health is just as important as women's when trying for a baby

7News.com.au, General News, 03/10/2026, Aimee Edwards

Too often, women carry the burden of fertility planning but a leading expert says men's health can be just as critical to successfully conceiving. Male fertility specialist Professor Rob McLachlan said male factors alone were responsible for about 30 per cent of cases in which couples experienced difficulty conceiving.

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

Wake-up call on cancer

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 04/10/2026, Page 23

More than half the nation dangerously underestimate breast cancer, new figures show. Research released by the National Breast Cancer Foundation states over half of Australians didn't realise 56 people were diagnosed with the cancer every day, and around 84 per cent of Australians underestimated the likelihood of the disease returning and spreading.

Also reported by: Sunday Mail Brisbane (Brisbane), Sunday Mail Adelaide (Adelaide)

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Sunshine Coast stroke survivor wants to help save lives like his

ABC Online, General News, 03/10/2026, Madeline Grace

When Dru Arnold was struck suddenly by slurred speech and a migraine, his first instinct was to try to sleep it off. [...] Stroke Foundation Australia's Kelvin Hill said strokes were increasing in people under 65.

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The common viral infections that are responsible for one in eight cancers

SBS, General News, 03/10/2026, Jack Revell

Roughly one in every eight cancer cases diagnosed worldwide is triggered by common viral and bacterial infections, rather than inherited genetics or lifestyle factors. [...] The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates that around 170,000 new cases of cancer are diagnosed each year in Australia.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Path to ruin

Sunday Age, General News, 04/10/2026, Grant Mcarthur & Kieran Rooney, Page 29

A trove of leaked documents reveal how the state's mental health watchdog was put on a path to ruin by the state government, with its powers, budget, staff and independence slashed to such an extent it could barely perform its safeguarding and oversight roles. As Victoria's new Mental Health Commissioner starts in her job, the records show she will be inheriting a watchdog demanded by the royal commission that has been progressively diluted over the past 18 months.

Also reported by: Sydney Morning Herald (Online)

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Fit kids are step ahead

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 04/10/2026, Page 8

Fitter kids are less likely to develop depression as adults, new research suggests. A University of Tasmania Menzies Institute for Medical Research study in collaboration with Adelaide University examined the cardio and muscular fitness of Australian children aged 715 in 1985, then reassessed them when they were 36-49, more than three decades later.

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Aussies lose their way

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 04/10/2026, Page 27

Nearly two-thirds of Australians (64 per cent) believe we are becoming more disconnected from each other, despite recognising the positive impact connection and belonging have on their mental health. Coinciding with Mental Health Month, the Essential survey for Mental Health Australia found only 21 per cent of people felt very connected to friends, family, neighbours or their community.

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Deadly chatter harming children

Sunday Territorian, General News, 04/10/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 15

Online chat between children that normalises self harm can lead to suicide attempts, a leading psychiatrist and researcher reports. University of Queensland Child and Youth Psychiatry Professor James Scott also said tech giants had dropped the ball on regulating posts that glorified or promoted suicide.

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Finding hope amid isolation of autism

Sunday Times, General News, 04/10/2026, Rhianna Mitchell, Page 28

For 10 years, WA mother Erica Lee has lived with the isolation that comes with loving her children desperately, knowing they need help but not always being able to find it. [....] The release is timely, coming as thousands of Australian families living with autism and developmental delay face uncertainty as their children are moved off the National Disability Insurance Scheme onto the new Thriving Kids scheme.

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Chef Zach Green launches Mental Health Week road trip across the Territory with MIFANT

Daily Telegraph Australia, General News, 03/10/2026, Lottie Hood

The Storyteller Chef, Zach Green, will be taking his skills and story on an NT road trip to mark Mental Health Week in a partnership with a local support hub. Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia NT

(MIFANT) and the Indigenous chef known for his passion in sharing culture and food traditions through flavour are teaming up this month to launch a new program.

Also reported by: The Courier Mail (Online), Adelaide Now (Online), Northern Territory News (Online), The Mercury (Online)

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HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

'Ultimate superbug': New form of antibiotic resistance uncovered

Sun Herald, General News, 04/10/2026, Angus Dalton, Page 32

In the brutal arms race between drugs and bugs, serendipity has often been on humanity's side. [...] Last week, this masthead reported that 75 jobs would be slashed as the Hudson Institute of Medical Research closes due to the "slow strangulation" of the research sector by flat state and federal funding.

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Australian DNA test flexes its muscle

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 04/10/2026, Page 21

A new DNA test developed in Australia can identify the genetic causes of inherited muscle disease in a single test, replacing a patchwork of older tests that leaves many patients undiagnosed. The world-first test developed at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research was applied to 53 Australians with known or suspected inherited muscle disease, including 31 whose previous genetic testing failed to identify a cause.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

‘A bit of a boys' club': Female doctors locked out of lucrative work at top hospitals

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 03/10/2026, Henrietta Cook

Female doctors claim a "boys' club" at two major private hospitals is locking them out of lucrative work providing anaesthesia during childbirth, which can pay up to $10,000 a day. A leaked analysis of rosters from St Vincent's Private Hospital shows that male anaesthetists secured 83 per cent of obstetric shifts over an eight-month period, with their female counterparts securing just 17 per cent of available work.

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Diseases of the past like measles and diphtheria are making a comeback

ABC Online, General News, 03/10/2026, Rachael Merritt

Contracting a case of measles and enduring the fever, cough, sore eyes and characteristic red rash was a common part of growing up before vaccination was introduced. [...] A recent outbreak in South Australia spreading within a school community has sparked concern from health authorities , but it's not the only uncommon disease that has recently spiked in cases.

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Urgent measles warning for Sydney after infected patient visits popular spots including Kmart

Daily Mail UK, General News, 03/10/2026, Joanna Hynds

A measles warning has been issued across parts of Sydney after an infected person visited several locations. The person spent time mainly in Campbelltown, in Sydney's south-west, between September 23 and 28, after contracting the virus in South-East Asia, where an outbreak is ongoing.

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Fat jab could choke you

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 04/10/2026, Tayla Couacaud & Jackie Sinnerton, Page 19

Patients taking weight-loss injections or unregulated peptides face life-threatening surgical risks due to delayed stomach emptying. [...] The Therapeutic Goods Administration recently announced new compliance measures targeting suppliers and manufacturers selling unapproved products.

Also reported by: Sunday Herald Sun (Melbourne), Sunday Mail Brisbane (Brisbane), Sunday Mail Adelaide (Adelaide)

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