

Sunday, 11th 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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **The Sunday Herald Sun** (page 11) reports over 14,000 Australian women will die from ovarian cancer over the next decade, prompting calls for the Federal Government to commit 84 million dollars in research funding over four years to boost the five-year survival rate.
- **The Sunday Mail Brisbane** (page 1) reports non-clinical hospital workers in rural Queensland, including orderlies, administration, and kitchen staff, are routinely conducting patient X-rays under a fast-tracked government training scheme intended to address critical workforce shortages in regional diagnostic imaging.
- **The Sunday Age** (page 1) reports compensation payouts for patients harmed in Victorian public hospitals reached a record 254 million dollars last financial year, driven by severe workforce fatigue and high-stakes care as well as awareness of birth trauma, medical negligence, rising medical costs, and systemic hospital understaffing.
- **The Sunday Tasmanian** (page 1) reports Beyond Blue's latest Australian Mental Health and Wellbeing survey revealed that one in six Australians turned to generative artificial intelligence

for mental health support in the past year, prompting the Mental Health Council to join calls for appropriate regulatory guardrails and safety-by-design principles to ensure technological safety.

- **The Sunday Canberra Times** (page 1) reports data from Living Well reveals that four in 10 ACT residents experience loneliness, with high levels of social disconnection impacting young adults, interstate workers, and international migrants across the territory.
- **7News.com.au** reports Australian medical leaders and industry experts are warning that proposed cuts to migration could severely impact hospitals, aged care services, and regional communities due to the health sector's heavy reliance on overseas-trained workforce. South Australian Australian Medical Association President Associate Professor Peter Subramaniam highlighted that foreign-trained professionals hold up the health system—representing 30 per cent of doctors, over 40 per cent of general practitioners, and more than half of intensive care specialists—while representatives from the Federal Government note that current policy aims to rebalance the system while retaining targeted skills.
- **The Clarence Valley Independent** (page 6) reports $2.3 million community-led initiative funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing through the General Practice Incentive Fund has been launched in Grafton to improve primary healthcare access and reduce emergency department presentations across the Clarence Valley. Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health Emma McBride notes it is one of seventeen national projects supported by the Federal Government to strengthen primary care in regional areas.

MINISTER BUTLER

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ASSISTANT MINISTER MCBRIDE

$2.3 million investment to improve primary health care in the Clarence Valley

Clarence Valley Independent, General News, 09/10/2026, Emma Pritchard, Page 6

A $2.3 million community-led program aimed at delivering improved access and coordination of mainstream health care services in the Clarence Valley, was formally announced by Healthy North Coast, the Primary Health Network (PHN) for the NSW North Coast in Grafton on September 30. [...] Introduced as a collaborative project with the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD), Bulgarr Ngaru Medicare Aboriginal Corporation, and Clarence Valley Council to help improve the sustainability of primary health care services, strengthen local healthcare capacity and reduce pressure on both general practice and hospital services, funding for Clarence Health Access has been provided for one year through the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's General Practice Incentive Fund.

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DEPARTMENT

$2.3 million investment to improve primary health care in the Clarence Valley

Clarence Valley Independent, General News, 09/10/2026, Emma Pritchard, Page 6

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Tech expert questions how Canberra is handling data on the budget, health and MP travel

7News.com.au, General News, 10/10/2026, Josh Martin

A software engineer and academic, who once worked as a public servant, warns Canberra's mismanagement of Australia's data is a "national scandal". [...] The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing says it "publishes aggregate PBS claims data", and that "these files do not contain patient-level records or any information that could identify individual patients, prescribers or pharmacies".

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‘System is failing': Granddaughter calls out aged care shortage after Townsville care battle

Daily Telegraph Australia, General News, 10/10/2026, Daniel Shirkie

A family who cared for their beloved grandmother until her final days have laid bare the extreme crisis facing the elderly in aged care after facing a crushing wait time to see her homed and cared for. [...] A spokesman for the federal government's Department of Health, Disability and Ageing pointed to substantial investments made by the government during the most recent budget.

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

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Parents feel mental load

Murray Valley Standard, General News, 10/10/2026

Just one in 10 Australian parents rate their emotional wellbeing as "very good", while cost-of-living pressures are forcing some families to cut back on mental health support, new survey data from the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program has found. [...] Delivery of the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program -- to parents and carers of children in Australia is supported by funding from the Australian

Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing under the Parenting Education and Support Program.

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AGEING AND AGED CARE

Trades running short of hands

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 11/10/2026, Jade Gailberger, Page 9

Victoria's shrinking pipeline of tradies and carers is fast becoming one of the state's biggest economic risks, with the nation's peak employer group saying the apprenticeship and traineeship system is in "crisis". [...] Non-trade commencements in Victoria fell 15.9 per cent in the year to March, with a 20 per cent decline in childcare worker traineeship commencements and a 25 per cent fall in aged care and disability worker traineeships.

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

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Lifestyle changes you can make to combat the risk of dementia

Sun Herald, General News, 11/10/2026, Clair Weaver, Page 20

Fifteen years ago, dementia was regarded as a grim lottery. If you made it into your twilight years, you'd wait and see if it came for you. [...] In Australia, that figure rises to 50 per cent based on our health data, according to Professor Kaarin Anstey, the only Australian on the World Health Organisation's dementia guidelines panel.

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‘It’ll kill us slowly’: What migration cuts mean in a town like Dubbo

Australian Financial Review, General News, 10/10/2026, Greg Bearup

"I've taken the Libs and the Nats kickin' and screaming to change their policies, whether it's immigration, net zero and the Voice," Pauline Hanson tells Dubbo's Bush Summit.

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A dementia diagnosis has long been a death sentence. But are things about to change?

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 10/10/2026, Amanda Hooton

At 9.30am on June 16, 2022, Megan* braced herself and clicked on the Zoom link. [...] Last year, for the first time ever, dementia became the biggest cause of death in Australia: a 39 per cent rise in the past decade alone.

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Doctors warn cutting migration could cripple Australia's health system

7News.com.au, General News, 10/10/2026, Jennifer Bechwati

Australia's doctors are issuing a dire warning as political pressure grows to dramatically cut migration, saying any major reduction could have unintended consequences, particularly for hospitals and regional communities. [...] Thirty per cent of Australia's doctors trained overseas, more than 40 per cent of GPs, and more than half of intensive care specialists.

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DISABILITY AND CARERS

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PRIMARY CARE

Kitchen, office staff X-ray sick

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 11/10/2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 1

Wardies, clerical staff and kitchen workers are routinely carrying out the medical imaging of patients, including scans and X-rays, in rural hospitals because of a critical shortage of radiographers. A government scheme is providing crash courses in radiography to non-clinical staff in hospitals that don't employ a fully qualified technician.

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

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Gaps in rural health are unacceptable

Sunday Mail Brisbane, Edition Changes, 11/10/2026, Page 68

The revelation that wardies, clerical staff and kitchen workers are routinely carrying out radiographers' duties at rural hospitals again exposes the haves and have-nots when it comes to health in this state. The haves are those in the city; the have-nots are essentially anyone who lives outside South East Queensland.

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POPULATION HEALTH

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CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND SCREENING

If nothing changes, 14,000 women and girls will die

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 11/10/2026, Kaitlyn Hudson-O'Farrell, Page 11

More than 14,000 Australian women will lose their lives to ovarian cancer in the next decade, prompting calls on the federal government to boost funding for research into the deadly disease. Ovarian cancer, Australia's deadliest women's cancer, has a five-year survival rate of just 49 per cent, compared with 90 per cent for breast, bowel and prostate cancers, yet receives a fraction of the research funding committed to other high-profile diseases.

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

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'Treatments are so limited'

Sunday Herald Sun, General News, 11/10/2026, Kaitlyn Hudson-O'Farrell, Page 11

Candice Hung had always considered herself lucky for beating ovarian cancer. But now it's back, and the Melbourne woman is once again in a fight for her life.

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SA drug to ease chemo agony

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 11/10/2026, Kate Uren, Page 3

A medical breakthrough by Adelaide researchers that offers lifesaving hope to people with advanced, aggressive cancers has passed a major milestone and is ready for human trials. Award-winning

researcher Pro-f-essor Shudong Wang and her team from Adelaide University have created a drug, AU2-94, that slows cancer growth and protects healthy, blood-forming cells during chemotherapy.

Also reported by: Sunday Mail Brisbane (Brisbane), Daily Telegraph Australia (Online), Northern Territory News (Online), The Mercury (Online)

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I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer - at just 5

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 11/10/2026, Kaitlyn Hudson O Farrell, Page 17

The average woman diagnosed with ovarian cancer is 66 but Jemima Leydon was only five. Twenty years ago, just after starting kindergarten, she began repeatedly complaining of stomach pain.

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Toddler born to change the world

Sunday Mail Brisbane, General News, 11/10/2026, Kaitlyn Hudson-O'Farrell, Page 36

There is no one in Australia like Valentina Ruggeri. But the 2-year-old "was born to change the world", and her parents are determined to make that happen.

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Invest to save women's lives

Sunday Telegraph, Editorials, 11/10/2026, Page 79

It is the cruellest of ironies that the part of the body dedicated to initiating life could instead be the harbinger of death. And yet for more than 24,000 Australian women and girls over the next decade, that is the bitter reality they will have to face.

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Women's bladder cancer symptoms dismissed as UTIs, perimenopause

ABC Online, General News, 10/10/2026, Lauren Roberts

Four years. That is how much time passed between when Andrea Harris first presented to her GP with a suspected bladder infection, and when she was diagnosed with advanced, muscle-invasive bladder cancer. [...] In Australia, three in four people diagnosed with bladder cancer are men, but experts are concerned about the number of women, like Ms Harris, presenting with late-stage bladder cancer.

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Vertigo in Australia: Why one common condition is often misunderstood and dismissed

NEWS.com.au, General News, 10/10/2026, Andrew Hedgman

For millions of Australians, a simple turn in bed or even standing up can become a frightening battle to stay upright, as the world suddenly seems to spin without warning. For Sunshine Coast grandmother Megan Bennett, that is the reality of living with vertigo — a disorder that can begin with one small movement and leave the whole room reeling.

Also reported by: Adelaide Now (Online), West Australian (Online), Northern Territory News (Online)

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Women with PMOS should get subsidised weight loss drugs, advocates say

The Guardian, General News, 10/10/2026, Tess Ikonomou

Women living with a chronic hormonal condition should have access to taxpayer-funded weight loss medications, advocates say. The Polyendrocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome Association of Australia (POSAA) is urging for GLP-1 drugs to be approved on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for people living with the condition.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Our hidden loneliness epidemic

Sunday Canberra Times, General News, 11/10/2026, Grace Gooda, Page 1

In his lowest moments, Tushar Baraiya turned wherever he could in an effort to connect. [...] Mental Health Australia has found that 64 per cent of Australians feel disconnected from each other.

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AI 'therapy' raises fears

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 11/10/2026, bridget clarke, Page 1

An increasing number of people are turning to generative AI for mental health support, prompting calls for stronger regulations by Tasmania's peak mental health body. Conducted out of a sample group of 5000 adults, Beyond Blue's latest Australian Mental Health and Wellbeing survey found one in six Australians had used generative AI for mental health support and advice in the past year.

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Parenting on the backfoot

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 11/10/2026, Page 19

Only one in 10 Australian parents rate their emotional wellbeing as "very good", while one in five have cut back on mental health support due to cost-of-living pressures. [...] The Triple P Positive Parenting Program findings show that about one in 10 children aged four to 11 experience a mental health disorder.

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Fit kids are step ahead

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 11/10/2026, Page 20

Fitter children 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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Women's mental health essential to service delivery

West Australian, General News, 10/10/2026, Rosa Griffith

The Goldfields Women's Health Centre says mental health is an essential part of women's health care delivery, offering counselling for sexual assault, unplanned pregnancy, perinatal parenting and other general issues. Chief executive Brooke Jennings spoke to Kalgoorlie Miner during WA Mental Health Week, highlighting how the centre was breaking down financial and social barriers for local women.

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Local service provider says youth and Aboriginal population essential to mental health conversations

West Australian, General News, 10/10/2026, Rosa Griffith

Some of the Goldfields' most important youth, substance abuse and domestic violence counselling services are offered through Hope Community Services, which operates the local headspace and the Mara Pirni Healing Place. Hope chief services officer Donna Lawrence told the Kalgoorlie Miner mental health issues were present across all demographics, but there were particular challenges facing youth and Aboriginal populations in the regions.

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HEALTH ECONOMICS & RESEARCH

Secrets of 'eternal' life lie under this battered shell

Sunday Mail Adelaide, General News, 11/10/2026, Rhys Blakely, Page 11

When Jonathan the giant tortoise hatched from his egg, Charles Darwin was still a young man and Queen Victoria was a teenager. But at the age of 194 Jonathan is still plodding along, and researchers now believe that the world's oldest living land animal could help humans live longer, healthier lives.

Also reported by: Sunday Tasmanian (Hobart)

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FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL AND HEALTH REFORM

Hospital bungles cost $1.1b

Sunday Age, General News, 11/10/2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 1

Compensation payouts for patients harmed in Victorian public hospitals have more than quadrupled over the past decade, soaring to a record $254 million last financial year as childbirth injuries take a heavy toll. New figures obtained by The Age under Freedom of Information laws reveal that the state government's insurer has spent more than $1.1 billion on settlements for injured public hospital patients and their relatives since 2015-16.

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CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

Nurse pay row action plea

Sunday Tasmanian, General News, 11/10/2026, Sue Bailey, Page 5

The health union has written to the Premier asking him to intervene in the public sector nurses dispute as further industrial action looms. [...] Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation secretary Emily Shepherd said more industrial action would be held on Monday at the Repat Hospital and nurses would highlight working double shifts.

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HEALTH WORKFORCE

Surging violence and soaring call-outs push NT paramedics to second guess jobs, boss warns

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

Reported 'unconscious' teen patients beating up paramedics with their own equipment, crew barricading themselves in homes and staff unexpectedly finding themselves at the end of a weapon – health staff are certainly at the "pointy end" of erupting violence in the NT. In the last year, the Northern Territory's road ambulance service in Darwin has reported 107 incidents of assaultsagainst staff and more than 90 in Alice Springs since January.

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

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MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

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BENEFITS INTEGRITY

Debbie Lee Royal: Award-winning Gold Coast Health nurse guilty of workplace analgesic thefts

Daily Telegraph Australia, General News, 10/10/2026, Alex Treacy

A respected clinical nurse consultant at Gold Coast Health, who is currently suspended, has pleaded guilty to dozens of charges after she was busted stealing pain medication from her workplace. Ashmore woman Debbie Lee Royal, 42, appeared in Southport Magistrates Court on October 6 where she pleaded guilty to 39 charges.

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

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AUSTRALIAN CDC

Secret strain

Sunday Mail Brisbane, International News, 11/10/2026, Sophie Elsworth, Page 66

The outbreak of pneumonic plague in Russia that left two people dead is "strange" and there is serious cause for concern but not panic, leading chemical experts say. [...] The last known case of plague in Australia, according to the Australian Centre for Disease Control, was more than a century ago.

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

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THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

Have we reached peak wellness? These wealthy investors are betting no

Australian Financial Review, General News, 10/10/2026, Brook Turner

In the waning days of a pre-pandemic world, Tal Silberman spotted opportunity on the high, windy hill of Bondi Junction, six kilometres east of Sydney's CBD.

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Politicians pass the buck as dangerous midnight nang crisis sweeps across Australia

NEWS.com.au, General News, 10/10/2026, Rebecca Borg

Two men sit in a parked car under the cover of darkness, taking turns inhaling a mysterious gas from balloons. [...] Instead, the department is leaving it up to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) to implement change.

Also reported by: Adelaide Now (Online), Northern Territory News (Online), The Mercury (Online), Daily Telegraph Australia (Online)

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OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL

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FOOD STANDARDS

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AICIS

Black market toxicity

Sunday Herald Sun, Editorials, 11/10/2026, Page 64

It's not news that smoking is bad for your health, but just what's in black market cigarettes is anyone's guess. As an illicit product, various ingredients, nicotine levels and byproducts from burning remain a mystery to consumers.

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A smoking gun ...to your head

Sunday Telegraph, General News, 11/10/2026, Remy Varga, Page 19

Black-market smokers are inhaling a toxic cocktail of pesticides and heavy metals, including a known cancer-causing chemical, as well as dangerously high levels of nicotine with every puff. Testing has revealed more than 20 dangerous chemicals in the illegal cigarettes, including mercury, copper and cadmium, as well as fungicides, insecticides and herbicides.

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

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