Australian Government
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing



TODAY'S NEWS

Saturday, 31 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

Click here to view full print articles in this report

Click here to view front pages of today's newspapers

Click here to listen to the audio briefing

Executive Summary

- **The Saturday Paper** (page 1) reports that a confidential briefing has revealed the new National Disability Insurance Scheme budget tool will be almost identical to a flawed aged-care algorithm that was recently the subject of a damning ombudsman's report.
- **Weekend Australian** (page 4) reports that Australia's aged care system is under fire for significant failures, with an advocacy group giving it an 'F' for safety after 6,436 people died last financial year while waiting for approved home care.

- **Weekend Australian** (page 7) reports that new treatments, including personalised mRNA vaccines and the first targeted therapy, are beginning to transform pancreatic cancer care, with early trials showing improved survival rates for the deadly disease.
- **Adelaide Advertiser** (page 1) reports that following the recent suicides of two teenage cousins, new statistics show the suicide rate among adolescent girls has risen 53 per cent in 15 years, with experts concerned their cries for help are being dismissed.
- **Saturday Age** (page 1) reports that the Florey Institute, a leading medical research organisation, is facing allegations of a toxic workplace culture and financial instability amid the departure of several senior scientists, raising concerns about its future.
- **Courier Mail** (page 5) reports Australian researchers have analysed more than five million immune cells to identify 1500 genes potentially linked to 16 different diseases, uncovering thousands of genetic clues that could lead to new treatments.
- **The Saturday Paper** (page 8) reports the Therapeutic Goods Administration has raised concerns about AI scribe tools used by medical professionals, particularly psychologists, finding that eight of 12 reviewed may qualify as medical devices but none have sought regulatory approval.
- **The Saturday Paper** (page 11) report that the Administrative Review Tribunal's caseload has reached a record 136,236, driven in part by a surge in NDIS appeals, raising concerns about delays and procedural fairness for applicants. NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister said that the NDIA had been funded to recruit more frontline staff, ensuring timely decision-making.

Minister Butler

Exclusive: Confidential briefing reveals NDIS 'copy and paste'

The Saturday Paper, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Rick Morton, Page 1

A briefing to state bureaucrats shows the new NDIS needs assessment tool will be almost identical to the dangerously flawed aged-care tool criticised by the Commonwealth ombudsman this week. [...] Minister for the NDIS Mark Butler will table the transitional rules when they are completed.

View PDF Read full text

Senate boots Labor's private health cuts

North West Express, General News, 29 Oct 2026, Page 6

The Senate has recently rejected the Albanese Government's cut to the private health insurance rebate for older Australians. [...] "Mark Butler should take the hint."

View PDF Read full text

Labor came to power promising a big care agenda. Four years on, how has it fared?

The Conversation, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Joshua Black

In 2022, Anthony Albanese offered Australians a future in which "no one is held back, and no one is left behind". [...] Health Minister Mark Butler, South Australian left MP and the face of Labor's care agenda, is increasingly discussed as a possible successor to Albanese .

Continue reading

Patrick McGorry Urges Support for Mark Butler

2SM, Breakfast, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Tim Webster

In an interview, Professor Patrick McGorry AO called for government reforms to address escalating mental health challenges across Australia. McGorry stated that federal authorities are listening, noting that Mark Butler is engaged with mental health. However, he stressed that Butler requires backing from the prime minister, colleagues, and the public to properly address the issue.

Play Now

Also reported by: *Cruze FM 93.5*

Therapists Raise Concerns Over NDIS Transition

ABC Radio Darwin , Morning Show, FM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Lara Stimpson

In an interview with occupational therapists Emma Podsiadly from Palm Tree OT and Holly Gawthorne from Eucalypt Occupational Therapy, concerns were raised regarding the transition to Thriving Kids and NDIS funding impacts in the Northern Territory. They highlighted that children needing significant therapies are losing NDIS access without clear support. They called on NDIS Minister Mark Butler and local minister Jenson Charles to visit and assess funding needs.

Play Now

Interview continues on:: *ABC Radio Darwin* , *ABC Radio Darwin*

Back to top

Minister McAllister

ARTful dodges

The Saturday Paper, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Karen Barlow, Page 11

After only two years in operation, the Administrative Review Tribunal has a backlog of cases to rival its predecessor, with a tsunami of NDIS appeals on the way. [...] The minister for the NDIS, Jenny McAllister, says NDIS participants will retain the right to request a review of their plan, including through the ART, and that currently only 3 per cent of ART matters require a substantive hearing.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *The Saturday Paper*

Back to top

Minister Rae

A year on, aged care reform gets a 'fail'

Weekend Australian, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 4

Until late last year John Dumbleton was a truck driver, taking big road trains around the country. Then disaster struck. [...] But Aged Care Minister Sam Rae points to progress in wait times for aged care

assessments, especially for urgent and high-priority cases, and reducing the waiting list from nearly 100,000 in March to just over 70,000.

View PDF Read full text

Aged Act review needed

National Seniors Australia, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Jacintha Victor John

The Commonwealth Ombudsman has raised serious concerns about the way older Australians are assessed for government-funded aged care. [...] On 15 October 2026, Minister for Aged Care and Seniors, Sam Rae, announced an independent, clinically informed review of Support at Home classification and prioritisation mechanisms.

Continue reading

Aged care algorithm faces ombudsman scrutiny

SBS, World News Australia, TV, 30 Oct 2026, Janice Petersen

The Commonwealth Ombudsman has criticised the automated aged care assessment tool for producing unfair and unreasonable outcomes, recommending changes allowing human overrides. Aged Care Minister Sam Rae stated that ongoing improvements are being made, though the process requires patience. The government has declined to commit fully to the override recommendation, opting instead for an independent review.

Play Now

Back to top

Assistant Minister McBride

No relevant coverage.

Back to top

Assistant Minister White

Commonwealth commits to securing Free TAFE deal as state awaits TasTAFE cost review

WEB Pulse Tasmania, Internet, 30 Oct 2026

The federal government says it is committed to securing a new Free TAFE agreement with Tasmania, as the state government declines to rule out cuts to TasTAFE ahead of a cost review. Assistant Federal Health Minister Rebecca White said Free TAFE had recorded more than 11,400 enrolments and 6,200 course completions in Tasmania since January 2023, with more than $17 million in federal investment.

Continue reading

School Outreach Programme Aids Early Health Care

ABC Illawarra, Mornings, FM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Nick Rheinberger

Federal Assistant Health Minister Rebecca White stated that a south coast clinic's school outreach programme is enabling young people to access earlier care for chronic conditions and ease pressure on the healthcare system. The initiative involves Milton pelvic pain clinic nurse Susan Welford teaching reproductive health to girls across the region, prompting dozens to pursue diagnosis and treatment.

Play Now

Also reported by: ***ABC Illawarra***

Back to top

Special Envoy Repacholi

RACGP Men's Health Group Lobbying Dan Repacholi

ABC South East NSW, Breakfast, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Eddie Williams

In an interview with Alex Romain, chair of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners' newly established Men's Health Group, he outlined plans to advocate to the government. Romayne stated the group is writing to Dan Repacholi to urge a review of the National Men's Health Strategy 2020 and to call for targeted advertising campaigns directed at men.

Play Now

Back to top

Department

To employers: menopause support must outlast awareness month

Human Resources Director, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Dexter Tilo

As Menopause Awareness Month draws to a close, employers are being urged to go beyond promoting understanding of the subject to taking meaningful action that can last throughout the year. [...] The Australian Department of Health, Disability and Ageing defines menopause as a woman's "final period."

Continue reading

Movers & Shakers: Defence Delivery Agency chief unearthed

The Mandarin, Internet, 30 Oct 2026

Attorney-General's gains a deputy secretary, new cyber and arms control ambassadors, law reform commissioners, and more. [...] Pete Krajina and Marguerite Gandini are now assistant secretaries for digital services in the Department of Health, Disability, and Ageing.

Continue reading

Gov't wants to place blame for high fees and low access? Use a mirror

The Medical Republic, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Holly Payne

The AMA says that rising out-of-pocket medical costs are 'fundamentally' caused by long-term government underinvestment. [...] In a submission to the parliamentary inquiry into access and affordability of medical specialists – which is separate to the simultaneous, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing-run consultation on specialist affordability and access – the AMA did not deny that Australia's medical system was in peril.

Continue reading

Bulk billing rises as MBS access slips again

The Medical Republic, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Alyssa Talakovski

DoHDA's annual report card is out. Did GP bulk billing and workforce incentives make the grade? [...] The findings form part of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's over 400-page 2025-26 annual report, released last week.

Continue reading

New Thriving Kids guidance helps early childhood educators connect families with support

The Sector, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Fiona Alston

A new federal fact sheet outlines information and support pathways for professionals working with young children and families during the Thriving Kids rollout. [...] Published by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, the connectors fact sheet is designed for people who work with, or regularly spend time with, children and families.

Continue reading

$727M unspent, yet older Australians wait months for full home care funding

Your Life Choices, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Abegail Abrugar

Are seniors getting the support they've been promised? [...] Senate estimates has heard the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is sitting on a $727 million Support at Home underspend.

Continue reading

Govt report highlights ongoing problems in aged care

The Weekly Source, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Caroline Egan

The new Single Assessment System (SAS) and revamped My Aged Care portal both failed to meet Government performance targets in 2025-26. [...] Single Assessment System Aged care assessments, conducted under the new SAS since 2024, failed to be completed within the Government's target timeframes, according to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's 404-page 2025-26 Annual Report.

Continue reading

Aged Act review needed

National Seniors Australia, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Jacintha Victor John

The Commonwealth Ombudsman has raised serious concerns about the way older Australians are assessed for government-funded aged care. [...] On 15 October 2026, Minister for Aged Care and Seniors, Sam Rae, announced an independent, clinically informed review of Support at Home classification and prioritisation mechanisms.

Continue reading

Back to top

Ageing and Aged Care

No relevant coverage.

Back to top

Disability and Carers

Chalmers 'should be in surplus'

AFR Weekend, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Michael Read, Page 1

Former treasury secretary John Fraser has called for sweeping cuts across the public service and the $56 billion National Disability Insurance Scheme to return the budget to surplus.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: ***Australian Financial Review***

NDIS changes cause concern

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Denika Anderson, Page 11

Concerns have been raised for regional NDIS participants following two major changes to the scheme. From 1 October 2026, two NDIS funding streams were reset, with changes applied to participants' plans after they are created, reassessed or renewed.

View PDF Read full text

AI decision-making tools will only increase complaints, says ombud

The Mandarin, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Aleisha Orr

Western Australian ombud Bevan Warner said using AI to make assessments in areas of aged and disability services could arguably create a "false economy". [...] In a Q&A following his talk, when The Mandarin 's Melissa Coade asked him about the public's fatigue with government systems, he referenced Commonwealth NDIS and aged care assessments.

Continue reading

Back to top

Primary Care

New airport precinct to improve healthcare

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Arron Mclean, Page 53

Aproposed new Aeromedical Precinct at Townsville Airport is set to reinforce the airport's role as one of North Queensland's most important healthcare gateways. The precinct will be anchored by a new purpose-built Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) facility, strengthening access to lifesaving aeromedical services and supporting patients from some of Australia's most remote communities.

View PDF Read full text

State government steps in to rescue rejected Norwood Health Hub medical project

Adelaide Now, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Agnes Gichuhi

The state government has stepped in hoping to save a health hub development in Adelaide's eastern suburbs, after the local council assessment panel rejected plans earlier this month. The state planning commission will now assess Leyton Property's plan to build the Norwood Health Hub after it was refused by the Norwood, Payneham, & St Peter's Council's assessment panel in September.

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Cairns Post*, *Townsville Bulletin*, *Daily Telegraph Australia*, *Gold Coast Bulletin*, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Geelong Advertiser*, *Northern Territory News*, *The Courier Mail*, *The Mercury*, *Adelaide Now*, *Adelaide Now*

MBS update: 1 November changes

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Karen Burge

A raft of Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) changes will kick in from 1 November, with four new phone attendance items for chronic condition management being introduced along with a series of reforms impacting GPs. Incoming MBS changes include administrative and policy amendments, taking in the Federal Government's response to recommendations from the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) and new and amended MBS services agreed to in the 2026–27 Budget.

Continue reading

Liberal booed as candidates make gender equality pitch

Canberra Times, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Emily Woods

Violence, women's health and intersectionality in gender equality were hot topics at a pre-election forum where a Liberal candidate was booed as she was asked about repealing a state's treaty. Victorian political representatives from Labor, Liberals, the Greens and the Animal Justice Party laid out their plans for gender equity on Thursday evening at a pre-election forum.

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Shepparton News Online*, *Daily Mail UK*, *West Australian*, *The Border Mail*, *Ballarat Courier*, *Warrnambool Standard*, *Illawarra Mercury*, *Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser*, *Newcastle Herald*, *Bathurst Western Advocate*, *The Senior*, *Daily Liberal*, *Northern Daily Leader*

Western NSW mobile children's hearing clinic faces closure

ABC Online, Internet, 30 Oct 2026

Jody Wright knows just how lucky he is to have a healthy teenager at home. His son Eli had chronic middle ear problems as a child, and Mr Wright said a chance screening by a mobile hearing service in Dubbo, in western NSW, saved the boy's life.

Continue reading

New MRI service in Pilbara prompts calls for bulk-billed service in Geraldton

West Australian, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Sally Q Davies

With a new MRI facility planned for South Hedland, Geraldton MLA Kirrilee Warr has called for a publicly-funded MRI service to be made available in Geraldton. The Pilbara's first bulk-billed MRI service is set to begin construction soon, and will be the first MRI machine north of Geraldton.

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Kalgoorlie Miner*

Calls for Tasmanian Healthcare Commission of Inquiry

ABC Radio Hobart, Statewide Mornings, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Leon Compton

Panel discussion with journalist Rachel Williams and David Killick, Political Editor of the Hobart Mercury, about calls for a commission of inquiry into Tasmania's healthcare system. While organisations including the AMA, ANMF, and HACSU advocate for solutions, the panel debated whether a $30 million inquiry would help, suggesting funds could instead target preventative health, chronic conditions, and workforce leadership.

Play Now

Back to top

Population Health

36Ers boss's secret during fight for title

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Antimo Iannella, Page 21

As the Adelaide 36ers were locked in a titanic struggle for this year's NBL championship, club owner Grant Kelley was facing his own formidable battle. [...] According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer for men in the nation, excluding skin cancer, affecting about 30,000 each year.

View PDF Read full text

New ABS figures show Aussies are filling their trolleys, and stomachs, with junk food such as sausages, biscuits and chocolate

News24 Australia, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Max Delaney

New figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show discretionary foods accounted for 37.5 per cent of dietary energy in Australia in 2024–25. The updated Consumption of Selected Foodstuffs figures show that more than one in three kilojoules consumed in the national diet came from foods recommended to be eaten occasionally , like meat pies, biscuits, chocolate and beer.

Continue reading

Higher STI rates in women prescribed opioid treatment

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Dr Pratiksha Nirmal

Research has highlighted how easily sexual health can fall through the gaps, with women still facing 'significant barriers' to care. Women who use drugs have higher rates of chlamydia and gonorrhoea,

according to a new study.

Continue reading

Calls for Health Star Rating System Overhaul

2GB, Drive, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Clinton Maynard

Interview with nutritionist and CEO of Food Watch Jemma O'Hanlon about Australia's Health Star Rating system. She called for the scheme to become mandatory and urged an overhaul of the underlying algorithm to better favour whole foods over ultra-processed items. O'Hanlon noted that inconsistencies undermine consumer trust, while consultations on making the ratings compulsory remain underway.

Play Now

Back to top

Chronic Conditions and Screening

Pancreatic cancer vaccine breakthrough 'just the beginning'

Weekend Australian, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Natasha Robinson, Page 7

The revolution in cancer care being ushered in by personalised mRNA therapeutic vaccines is set to extend to tumours that have for decades being almost impossible to treat including pancreatic cancer. That's the assessment of one of the world's leading clinical oncologists treating pancreatic cancer who is at the centre of efforts to create an effective mRNA vaccine to treat the disease.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *The Australian*

How to perform CPR

Sydney Morning Herald, Good Weekend Magazine, 31 Oct 2026, Paul Connolly, Page 5

Some people are disinclined to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on a person because they don't want to make things worse. "But when someone is unconscious and not breathing, they're effectively dead," says Simon Cowie, a former paramedic, now cardiac-arrest spokesperson at the Heart Foundation.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *The Saturday Age*

Easy way to save patients

Herald Sun, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Margaret Fitzherbert, Page 65

Over the years I've personally tested most of the major ways of treating cancer. In 2014 it was radiation therapy for bowel cancer. Around half of all cancer patients should receive radiation therapy during their care.

View PDF Read full text

A moment with ...

Geelong Advertiser, GT, 31 Oct 2026, Page 13

One in three adults in Australia has high blood pressure. Many people don't realise they have it, as high blood pressure usually has no symptoms.

View PDF Read full text

Life with lungs of stone

Weekend Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Alex Treacy, Page 2

Imagine if every activity you did each day left you short of breath. If every time you inhaled, your lungs were left hungry for more air.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *Gold Coast Bulletin*, *Daily Telegraph Australia*, *Northern Territory News*, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Townsville Bulletin*, *Daily Telegraph Australia*, *The Courier Mail*, *Cairns Post*, *Geelong Advertiser*, *Adelaide Now*, *The Mercury*, *Gold Coast Bulletin*, *The Mercury*

Are we using the best tech to save lives?

Central Western Daily, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Amy Rees, Page 8

She did everything women are told to do. She checked her breasts for lumps and went for regular mammograms. So when Mel Thorn was given the 'all-clear', she thought she was exactly that, all clear.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *Daily Liberal*, *Western Advocate*

Usman Khawaja has rheumatoid arthritis – what you need to know

The Australian, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Dr Steve Robson

When Australian cricketer Usman Khawaja revealed to the world that he was affected by rheumatoid arthritis, most people were shocked. [...] Rheumatoid arthritis is more common than most people realise and affects more than half a million Australians.

Continue reading

A routine eye exam could soon predict your risk of a heart attack. Here's how

Sydney Morning Herald, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Sarah Berry

Our eyes are the windows to our soul. They may also be the windows to our heart. Researchers believe routine eye exams may soon be able to detect and predict systemic disease, including the risk of a heart attack and the presence of atrial fibrillation (an irregular, fast heartbeat).

Continue reading

Also reported by: *The Saturday Age*

Sax Institute Launches 18 and Up Study

ABC Radio Canberra, Mornings, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Saskia Mabin

In an interview with Dr Martin McNamara, chief executive of the Sax Institute, he discussed launching the 18 and up study to follow 100,000 people aged 18 to 45. The research seeks to understand drivers behind rising mental illness and early onset cancers in younger generations, building on the institute's previous 45 and up health study.

Play Now

Biomarker Identified for Breast Cancer Treatment Response

Channel 9, Nine News, TV, 30 Oct 2026, Alicia Loxley

Garvan Institute researchers have identified the protein CDK1 as a potential biomarker indicating which breast cancer patients may not respond well to CDK4-6 inhibitors. Assoc. Prof. Liz Caldon stated that identifying high activity of this protein early helps prevent patients from receiving ineffective therapies. Researchers are now seeking more evidence to determine if testing should enter clinical practice.

Play Now

New Cancer Screening Facility at Flinders Medical Centre

Channel 9, Nine News, TV, 30 Oct 2026, Brenton Ragless

From November, thousands of residents in the southern suburbs will gain access to cutting-edge cancer screening technology at a new Flinders Medical Centre facility. The service will provide cancer diagnosis and treatment planning, reducing travel across the city for public patients. Health Minister Blair Boyer said offering care locally addresses a service gap in the growing area.

Play Now

New PET CT Scanner Opens at Flinders

Channel 10, 10 News, TV, 30 Oct 2026, Kate Freebairn

A new $7.5 million public PET CT service is opening at Flinders Medical Centre next month, boosting cancer scanning capacity in Adelaide South. The service will conduct approximately 3,000 scans annually at no cost to public patients, eliminating cross-city travel. A fourth scanner will also open at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital by mid-2027.

Play Now

Back to top

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Years-long waits for hospital beds revealed as documents 'dumped'

The Saturday Age, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Angus Delaney, Page 15

Victoria's sickest mental health patients are waiting more than a year for a hospital bed and ambulances are reaching priority response targets in just 66 per cent of cases as state parliament's annual ''dump day'' reveals the dire state of our health system. The revelations were contained within some of the 192 annual reports and reviews tabled to parliament yesterday afternoon, part of the government's yearly tradition which has been criticised for reducing scrutiny on unfavourable documents.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: ***Sydney Morning Herald***

She didn't want to die

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Angela Mollard, Page 1

For Rose Munro, the loss of 17-year-old daughter Paige Gibbins to suicide last year was painful beyond words. Three months later, Paige's cousin Allyson Harvey also took her own life, aged 18.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: ***Daily Telegraph***

Heartbreaking face of terrifying trend

Adelaide Advertiser, Editorials, 31 Oct 2026, Page 32

Cousins Paige Munro and Allyson Harvey were born six months apart and died, tragically, within three months of each other. Aged 17 and 18 when they died by suicide in the past year, these girls are the heartbreaking face of a terrifying trend.

View PDF Read full text

Eating disorders on the rise

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 31 Oct 2026, Paul Murray, Page 34

Australasia has the highest rates of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa in the world. The eating disorders accounted for 946.4 cases per 100,000 people in 2023, researchers, scientists from University of Queensland, said.

View PDF Read full text

'It's just a computer, right?' How AI is tearing Gen Z in two

Sydney Morning Herald, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Tori Malek

More than two-thirds of young people are struggling to unwind and feel an increasing sense of uncertainty around the future of artificial intelligence, while cost of living remains the number one concern for Australians aged 18 to 24, according to a new national survey. The annual Gen Z Wellbeing Index, released this week, found that 69 per cent of young Australians feel guilty for relaxing, citing worries around wasting time or feeling that they should be doing something deemed to be productive instead.

Continue reading

Income divide threatens access to timely mental health support

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Karen Burge

Researchers have identified a growing income-related divide in patients' ability to access timely mental health care, with high out-of-pocket costs preventing many from following through with their mental health treatment plans. The study used de-identified tax and Medicare data to explore 5.4 million Australians who received a GP mental health treatment plan between 2014–23.

Continue reading

SANE Australia Addresses Mental Health Stigma

2CC, Breakfast, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Stephen Cenatiempo

In an interview, SANE Australia CEO Rachel Green warned that linking psychosis to violence without established facts reinforces harmful stereotypes. She highlighted that people with complex mental illnesses are far more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators. Green called for addressing mental health funding and housing gaps rather than demonising communities through sensationalist media.

Play Now

Back to top

Immunisation

Prevention is better than cure

Courier Mail, Qweekend, 31 Oct 2026, Kristy Symonds, Page 12

For Queensland's Chief Health Officer, Dr Marianne Gale, tackling vaccine hesitancy to boost declining immunisation rates has been a priority in her first year. Also high on her agenda is supporting Queenslanders to enjoy healthier lifestyles.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *The Courier Mail*

Back to top

Health Systems Strategies

Age-based rebates back in the headlines

Canberra Times, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Noel Whittaker, Page 44

Private health insurance rebates are back in the headlines, with a fierce political battle unfolding in Canberra. Labor wants to cut the rebate for Australians aged 65 and over; the Coalition and Greens oppose the move.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *Border Mail*, *Daily Liberal*, *Central Western Daily*, *Western Advocate*, *Bendigo Advertiser*, *Daily Advertiser*, *Burnie Advocate*, *Launceston Examiner*, *Ballarat Courier*, *Northern Daily Leader*, *Newcastle Herald*

IVF set to be banned at private hospital

Newcastle Herald, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 10

Calvary Health Care's takeover of Newcastle Private Hospital is set to ban treatment for more than 1000 IVF patients a year, causing widespread anger in the community. Dr Denise Nesbitt, an obstetrician and fertility specialist, said "this discriminates primarily against women".

View PDF Read full text

Back to top

Health Economics & Research

Scientists at war with top institute

The Saturday Age, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Liam Mannix, Page 1

Top names at one of Australia's best-known science organisations are walking, or being pushed, out amid allegations of a toxic culture and intense financial pressure. In July last year, the Florey Institute employed 43 ''group heads'', or heads of laboratories, reporting to five top ''research priority area'' heads.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *Sydney Morning Herald*

Gene clue to diseases

Courier Mail, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Page 5

Australian researchers have analysed more than five million immune cells to uncover thousands of genetic clues that could help explain why people develop diseases and point to new ways to treat them. Across three studies, UNSW professors Joseph Powell, Daniel MacArthur - who is director of the Centre for Population Genomics - and Dr Hope Tanudisastro identified nearly 1500 genes potentially linked to 16 diseases, including cancers, autoimmune conditions and neurological disorders.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Herald Sun*

Researcher makes impact

Weekend Post, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Molly Frew, Page 2

A 'surprise' win in Melbourne has shone a spotlight on Cairns researcher Dr Chanika Alahakoon, whose work on diabetes-related foot disease is influencing care for vulnerable patients across Australia. Dr Alahakoon recently won the Healthcare Impact Award at the 2026 Women of Colour in STEM Awards in Melbourne for her research on diabetes-related foot disease.

View PDF Read full text

New study challenges what we thought we knew about Long COVID

SBS, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Cameron Carr

US research has put fresh scrutiny on Long COVID diagnoses, but we still don't have a clear picture of who the condition affects. Without a reliable test, some Long COVID cases could be underreported, leading to knock-on effects.

Continue reading

Back to top

First Nations Health

Indigenous families devastated by NT's legislated cruelty

The Australian, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, John Lawrence

In the 39 years I have practised law in the Northern Territory, much of my work has involved representing Indigenous clients from all backgrounds; town and the bush. [...] Many of our homeless are Indigenous,

many of whom come from the bush into Darwin in order to receive treatment for their serious and urgent health needs, which is not available to them out bush.

Continue reading

Telehealth innovator Esther Oh named WA's Australian of the Year 2027 for work transforming healthcare

West Australian, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Oliver Lane

The West Australian woman who was the brains behind state-of-the-art smart glasses that allow specialists to provide urgent care to patients hundreds of kilometres away has been unveiled as the State's Australian of the Year finalist. [...] The tech has since been rolled out in remote Aboriginal communities, preventing cases which could have required amputation if not acted upon quickly

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Kalgoorlie Miner*

Kimberley students join growing movement to strengthen Indigenous mental health workforce

National Indigenous Times, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Phoebe Solon

Young Indigenous psychology students from some of Australia's most remote communities gathered in Sydney this month for a three-day conference focused on building a culturally informed mental health workforce. The 2026 Westerman Jilya Student Conference brought together around 70 current and former recipients of the Dr Tracy Westerman Indigenous Psychology Scholarship Program, culminating in the 2026 Westerman Jilya Institute Indigenous Child Suicide Prevention Fundraising Gala, which saw a special performance from Midnight Oil.

Continue reading

Back to top

Public Hospital and Health Reform

Legacy wobbling on shaky pillars

Courier Mail, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Hayden Johnson, Page 36

Halfway through his term, Premier David Crisafulli confronts a sobering reality check as election pledges on housing, crime, health and cost of living buckle under intense delivery strain. [...] No election commitment is as challenging for the state government as its pledge to bring ambulance ramping down to 30 per cent by 2028.

View PDF Read full text

Also reported by: *The Courier Mail*, *Townsville Bulletin*, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Cairns Post*, *Geelong Advertiser*, *Gold Coast Bulletin*, *Adelaide Now*, *Daily Telegraph Australia*, *The Mercury*, *Northern Territory News*

Back to top

Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office

No relevant coverage.

Back to top

Health Workforce

Royal Hobart Hospital nurses walk off the job over emergency medical unit cuts

Daily Telegraph Australia, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, David Killick

Nurses have walked off the job to protest government cuts to staffing in the Royal Hobart Hospital's Emergency Medical Unit. The EMU sits beside the Emergency Department to give patients who need extra time in care to be stabilised and sent home, rather than waiting on a trolley in a corridor or taking a ward bed.

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Gold Coast Bulletin*

AMA Victoria Calls for Healthcare Reforms

3AW, Breakfast, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Ross Stevenson & Russel Howcroft

Interview with Dr Simon Judkins, Victorian President of the AMA, about sweeping reforms sought to fix the state's healthcare system. Judkins called for boosted resourcing in regional and rural healthcare, improved IT infrastructure, and better access to GPs and emergency departments. He noted that quarterly 24-hour emergency department stays had risen to 3,500 patients.

Play Now

ACT Ambulance Service Addresses Workforce Challenges

ABC Radio Canberra, Breakfast, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Ross Solly

In an interview with David Dutton about ACT Ambulance Service staffing shortages, Dutton stated that the organisation is actively recruiting to achieve a fully funded staff complement by 30 June next year. He noted that growing demand, burnout, and occupational violence contribute to workforce pressures, while recruitment initiatives include graduate intakes and plans to expand the paramedic pipeline.

Play Now

Little Wings and Clown Doctors Support Regional Healthcare

Channel 10, 10 News, TV, 30 Oct 2026, Sandra Sully

A partnership between Little Wings and Clown Doctors Australia is delivering paediatric medical care and entertainment to regional New South Wales. Flying from Bankstown to towns including Nyngan, medical professionals and clown doctors provide vital services to children lacking local access to healthcare. Little Wings chief executive Clare Pearson noted the initiative significantly reduces stress and anxiety for visiting families.

Play Now

Union Strike and Frontline Healthcare Remuneration

2CC, Canberra Live, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Leon Delaney

In an interview with ACT Greens leader Jo Clay, a strike involving doctors, nurses, and other government workers was discussed following pay cut proposals. Clay stated that the government expanded without a sustainable plan for frontline staff, noting that offering pay cuts and voluntary redundancies is not an effective way to manage the public sector workforce.

Play Now

Back to top

Technology Assessment and Access

Aussies want a stable PBS

The West Australian (Saturday edition), General News, 31 Oct 2026, Justin Langer, Page 32

Almost four in five Australians want the maximum price of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicines to remain frozen at $25 or be reduced further. The YouGov polling also shows 51 per cent of Australians believe the maximum PBS prescription price should be frozen at $25.

View PDF Read full text

Patients feeling PBS price pinch

Pharmacy Daily, Internet, 30 Oct 2026

With new national polling showing that Australians are concerned about the planned increase in the cost of PBS medicines in Jan 2027, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has doubled down on its campaign to freeze the maximum price at $25.

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Pharmacy Guild of Australia*

Back to top

Medicare Benefits and Digital Health

No relevant coverage.

Back to top

Benefits Integrity

Qld doctor Sophara Roath suspended after being charged with raping patient in clinic

Daily Telegraph Australia, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Vanda Carson

A Queensland doctor accused of attacking a male patient during a rectal examination has been suspended from practise. Sophara Roath, who worked from Our Medical in Loganholme, south of Brisbane, had his registration to work as a doctor suspended by the healthcare watchdog on October 23.

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Gold Coast Bulletin*, *The Mercury*

Back to top

Australian CDC

Pharma group Abbey Labs seeks higher florfenicol dose for Tasmanian salmon

ABC Online, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Jano Gibson

An animal health company has applied to "increase the dose rate" of the controversial antibiotic florfenicol in salmon farms in Tasmania, the federal regulator has confirmed. Florfenicol was first used in the state's south-eastern waters in November last year after an emergency permit was approved by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

Continue reading

Back to top

Therapeutic Goods Administration

The AI therapist

The Saturday Paper, General News, 31 Oct 2026, Ahona Guha, Page 8

For a few years now, the way psychology is being practised has changed imperceptibly, the creep so subtle that we initially didn't notice it. [...] These scribing devices have recently drawn the attention of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

View PDF Read full text

More than 1.3 million cigarettes and tens of thousands of nicotine products seized during Queensland crackdown

News24 Australia, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Olivia Arigho

More than 1.3 million cigarettes and 37,000 illegal vapes have been seized during raids on two Brisbane storage facilities. [...] The seizures were made earlier this month during a joint operation involving the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), Queensland Health and Queensland Police.

Continue reading

Nature's Sunshine joins Andrographis recall

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Megan Haggan

NSW-based health supplements brand, Nature's Sunshine, is the latest sponsor to withdraw a product containing Andrographis paniculata from the market. Nature's Sunshine Andrographis has become the 34th product to be pulled from pharmacies shelves in just over a month, following the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA's) announcement that new medicines containing Andrographis paniculata (Andrographis) would [...]

Continue reading

Coroner Urges TGA Crackdown on Peptides

ABC, Late Night ABC News, TV, 29 Oct 2026, Jade Barker

A coroner has urged the Therapeutic Goods Administration to review unapproved peptides and consider stricter regulations following the death of actor Richard Norton. Norton suffered a fatal cardiac arrest at Melbourne's Alfred Hospital after injecting prescribed, unapproved peptides CJC-1295 and ipamorelin. The Australian Medical Association warned of peptide risks, while Norton's prescribing doctor received a caution from the Medical Board of Australia.

Play Now

Calls for Tighter Restrictions on Unapproved Peptides

Channel 9, Today, TV, 30 Oct 2026, Tom Steinfort & Sylvia Jeffreys

Interview with Dr Nick Coatsworth, Medical Expert, about calls for tighter restrictions on unapproved peptides following actor Richard Norton's fatal reaction. Dr Coatsworth stated that the Therapeutic Goods Administration faces challenges regulating unapproved synthetic peptides, which are accessible online and lack proven human trials. He stressed the importance of stricter regulation and public education to prevent dangerous adverse effects.

Play Now

Coroner Recommends Stricter Regulation on Peptides

2GB, Mornings, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Mark Levy

In an interview with Dr Nick Coatsworth about peptide safety, discussion focused on a Victorian coroner recommending the Therapeutic Goods Administration consider tougher restrictions on unapproved peptides following the death of Richard Norton. Coatsworth noted these synthetic substances lack human safety trials. He argued that tightening regulation alone is ineffective, urging government-directed university trials to assess safety.

Play Now

Health Concerns Raised Over Unproven Peptides

2GB, Breakfast, AM Radio, 30 Oct 2026, Ben Fordham

In an interview with Dr Ross Walker, warnings were issued regarding the use of unproven peptides due to severe health risks. Walker reported 1,180 emergency department presentations linked to adverse reactions, including cases resulting in liver transplants, skin grafts, and amputations. Fordham urged listeners to consult medical professionals before using these substances.

Play Now

Back to top

Office of Drug Control

No relevant coverage.

Back to top

Food Standards

Urgent recall issued for six Maria’s Pasta products over fears of metal contamination

7News.com.au, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Demi Huang

Six popular pasta products sold in Victoria and online have been recalled over fears they may contain metal fragments. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) issued the recall for six Maria's Pasta products on Friday, warning they could cause injury or illness if consumed.

Continue reading

Bombards frozen desserts pulled from shelves after metal found inside

Kalgoorlie Miner, Internet, 30 Oct 2026

A popular dessert has been urgently pulled from shelves at supermarkets across the country after pieces of metal were found inside. The recall is for various 150g Bombards frozen desserts, which were available for purchase nationwide at Woolworths and independent food retailers including IGA, Harris Farm and Drakes Supermarket and online.

Continue reading

Back to top

AICIS

$443,000+ to move Ayr's town water into the future - and away from PFAS risk

Daily Telegraph Australia, Internet, 30 Oct 2026, Daneka Hill

More than $400,000 is being spent by Burdekin Shire Council to plan out Ayr's future water supply, including where to put new borefields and how to address PFAS in the groundwater. At the council meeting on Tuesday, October 27, councillors voted unanimously to award a $443,605 contract to Beca HunterH2O Pty Ltd to develop a 30-year road map.

Continue reading

Also reported by: *Townsville Bulletin*, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Cairns Post*, *Adelaide Now*, *Northern Territory News*, *The Courier Mail*

Back to top

Subject to copyright. For internal use only. See **Copyright Terms of Use**. Always review the original source before acting on the content.