

Australian Government
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

TODAY'S NEWS

Monday, 9 November 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 Australian** (page 7) reports that a new Grattan Institute paper finds specialist fees overall have grown three times faster than inflation since 2023, with Health Minister Mark Butler making the issue a priority for the Federal Government this term. *Also reported by: Sydney Morning Herald, Canberra Times, The Guardian*
- The **Herald Sun** (page 1) reports that AMA Victoria president Dr Simon Judkins has warned that Victoria's healthcare system is "more stretched than it has ever been", as calls resound for sweeping reforms.

- **The Age** (page 2) reports that the RACGP has endorsed new guidelines for prescribing nature, with the guidelines stating that it should be offered to patients in addition to traditional medical treatment.
- **The Age** (page 9) reports that the Victorian Department of Health's website promoting the state government's new ADHD program erroneously directed patients to fifteen services that were not offering the program.
- The **Daily Telegraph** (page 15) reports new research from Flinders University reveals that Australian cancer survivors experience discrimination that affects their work, insurance applications, and social interactions.
- **The ABC** (online) reports that a new International Menopause Society report has found that around half of all middle-aged women experience chronic pain, with women 70 per cent more likely than men to experience chronic pain.
- The **Newcastle Herald** (page 1) reports that protestors have denounced Calvary Health Care's plan to end reproductive and end-of-life procedures at the recently taken over Hunter Valley Private and Newcastle Private hospitals.

Minister Butler

'Tin ear' as medical specialist fees spiral

The Australian, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Stephen Lunn, Page 7

Specialist fees continue to spiral out of control, with dermatologists and psychiatrists top of the tree for average fee hikes in the past year, a report finds. [...] Federal Health Minister Mark Butler has made reducing the fast-rising cost of specialist services a priority for this term of government.

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Also reported by: *The Australian*

The medical specialties with sky-high fees

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Brittany Busch, Page 4

Australians are paying 20 per cent more to see some specialists than they were a year ago as rising fees outpace already-high inflation, reinforcing calls for the government to do more to rein in extravagant charges. [...] Their intervention builds on momentum to overhaul specialist fees, an issue Minister for Health Mark Butler said would be a priority for Labor's second term.

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Also reported by: *Brisbane Times*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *WA Today*, *The Age*, *Age*

Costs restricting specialist care

Canberra Times, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Peter Breadon and Mia Jessurun, Page 15

Specialist doctors' fees in Australia are out of control. [...] Thankfully, federal Health Minister Mark Butler is signalling that he's up for the challenge.

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Psychiatrists and paediatricians among specialists most likely to charge 'extreme' fees, thinktank finds

The Guardian, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Melissa Davey

More than 2.2 million Australians paid an "extreme" fee to see a specialist last year, with psychiatrists and paediatricians among the most likely to routinely unreasonably charge their patients, according to new research. [...] In response to the recommendations, the federal health minister, Mark Butler, told Guardian Australia "all options are on the table to rein in climbing specialist fees".

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Similar items:

Australians are paying 'extreme' specialist fees. Here's how the government can rein in costs

The Conversation, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, 9:02 pm, Authors Peter Breadon Program Director

Call to claw back Medicare from gouging specialists

Canberra Times, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, 3:38 am, Jacob Shteyman

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Minister McAllister

Queensland digs in as NDIS reform standoff leaves families in limbo

Local Ipswich News, Internet, 08 Nov 2026

Queensland families face continued uncertainty over disability support as Premier David Crisafulli refuses to sign onto the Federal Government's $4 billion Thriving Kids program without guarantees children will not fall through the cracks. [...] Federal NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister has challenged Queensland to explain its refusal to finalise the agreement, warning families deserve certainty about future services.

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Minister Rae

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Ageing and Aged Care

The Salvation Army to withdraw from aged care after 127 years

The Weekly Source, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Caroline Egan

The Salvation Army will seek a new provider for its residential aged care and home care services early next year as it pushes ahead with retirement living developments. The faith-based Not For Profit has been providing aged care in Australia since 1899, but Territorial Commander Commissioner Miriam Gluyas said a specialist provider would be better placed to deliver services today.

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Disability and Carers

No relevant coverage.

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Primary Care

Doctors keen to prescribe a decent dose of fresh air and nature

Age, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Henrietta Cook, Page 2

When three-time cancer survivor Sarina Sorrenti and her husband, Sam Pitruzzello, visit their GP, they don't just leave with scripts for pharmaceutical medications their doctor also prescribes nature. ''Nature walking,'' GP Vicki Kotsirilos wrote on a recent script for Sorrenti, alongside a list of vitamins.

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

Website flaws stall ADHD treatment

Age, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Grant McArthur, Page 9

A state-run program aiming to reduce barriers to treatment and accelerate access to ADHD medications has run into immediate issues after a bungled Victorian government website directed patients to the wrong clinics. Premier Ben Carroll last Monday celebrated an easing of the rules that govern who can diagnose ADHD, with 150 newly trained general practitioners across the state now able to diagnose, treat and prescribe stimulants for the neurodevelopmental disorder.

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Also reported by: *Sydney Morning Herald*

Huge demand for new dedicated ADHD clinic

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Zoe De Koning, Page 3

More than 100 people are on the waitlist for a new dedicated ADHD clinic on the Surf Coast led by one of only a handful of local GPs accredited to diagnose and treat the disorder. Dr Natasha Nogueira is the clinical lead of the Geelong ADHD Clinic, which will begin accepting patients from next week out of the Banksia Medical Centre, located at 94 Geelong Rd in Torquay.

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RACGP Calls for Higher Medicare Rebates

2GB, Healthy Living, AM Radio, 08 Nov 2026, Dr Ross Walker & Ned Green

Interview with Vice President and President Elect of the Royal Australian College of GPs, Dr Ramya Raman, about primary care challenges and patient consultations. Dr Raman stated that complex presentations require longer consultations, calling for improved patient Medicare rebates and indexation. She also highlighted the need for better communication between primary, tertiary, and allied health systems.

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Health of the Nation Report Details GP Challenges

2GB, Healthy Living, AM Radio, 08 Nov 2026, Dr Ross Walker & Ned Green

The 2026 Health of the Nation report shows Australian GPs delivered 171 million services last year amid rising psychological presentations and longer consultations. While recent Medicare incentives lifted bulk billing to 63%, doctors face workforce shortages, high burnout, and online misinformation. Consequently, the RACGP has called for a national GP-based research network to safeguard evidence-based care.

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Population Health

Digital bill could 'censor' sex and drug health message

Daily Telegraph, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Jessica Wang, Page 6

Crucial public health content on abortion, drug safety, cancer and HIV could face greater censorship on social media under the proposed digital duty of care laws, advocates representing sex workers and drug safety groups have warned. Academics and advocates from the Scarlet Alliance, Relationship Australia and the Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League said there were "gaping holes" in the current laws, adding that concerns shared with Communications Minister Anika Wells, and the office of the eSafety Commissioner have been ignored.

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Also reported by: *Herald Sun*, *Adelaide Advertiser*

Experts warn of malnutrition risks on GLP-1s

Sydney Morning Herald, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Rachel Rasker

Some of the millions of Australians expected to use Ozempic and other GLP-1s could run the risk of malnutrition and muscle loss, but the extent of these complications is not being tracked, nutrition experts warn. There is a critical gap in evidence focused on the health hazards of rapid weight loss and GLP-1s (glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists), new research from the University of Newcastle found.

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Newcastle Rally Protests Calvary Healthcare Takeover

ABC, ABC News (Sunday), TV, 08 Nov 2026, Jeremy Fernandez

Hundreds of people have gathered in Newcastle's Civic Park to protest the proposed takeover of Newcastle and Hunter Valley Private hospitals by Catholic provider Calvary Healthcare. Demonstrators voiced concerns regarding community health impacts after Calvary confirmed it will not provide treatments such as elective abortions, IVF and gender reassignment procedures due to religious beliefs.

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Chronic Conditions and Screening

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

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Sarah Berry, Page 18

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).

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Cancer survivors face social stigma

Daily Telegraph, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Rebecca Whitfield-Baker, Page 15

Many cancer survivors face cruel and unexpected struggles even after their cancer treatment is over, new Australian research reveals. The Flinders Uni study finds "cancer-related discrimination" is real and can impact on everything from social interactions, to work opportunities and access to insurance.

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Also reported by: *Courier Mail*, *Geelong Advertiser*, *Hobart Mercury*, *Herald Sun*

Menopause masked a devastating diagnosis

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Evangeline Polymeneas, Page 9

Doctors told Debbie Vassiliou for years that her unexplained falls, sudden clumsiness and personality changes were the taxing toll of menopause. But her family were unable to accept the diagnosis, and her daughter Amber Vandemeulengraaf, 33, sought the expert opinion of a neurologist who discovered the 59-year-old was living with a terminal neurological disorder.

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Also reported by: *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Adelaide Now*, *The Mercury*, *Northern Territory News*, *The Courier Mail*, *Daily Telegraph Australia*

Mann part of pioneering global cancer trial

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Page 5

A Bendigo man taking part in a first-in-human clinical trial for prostate cancer will share his experience at a public forum. Former school principal Matthew Mann is one of fewer than 100 patients worldwide taking part in a Phase 1b trial of a new prostate cancer treatment through the Bendigo Health Cancer Centre.

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Trial raises prostate hopes

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 2

Andrew Henderson considers himself lucky that his cancer was caught early. Five years ago, he was running his electrical contracting business when a PSA test led to a prostate cancer diagnosis.

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Mum's breast cancer diagnosis delayed

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 5

A 35-year-old Tarro woman waited three months for an ultrasound to check a breast lump because she "didn't have the money at the time". Madison Noble, a mother of two young children, was diagnosed in August with stage two triple-negative breast cancer.

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Half of middle-aged women live with chronic pain. Here's what we know

ABC Online, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Lauren Roberts

Women are up to 70 per cent more likely to experience chronic pain than men, according to a recent report from the international Menopause Society (IMS). Chronic pain is pain that lasts more than three months, or keeps recurring.

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'My friend got a diagnosis that changed her life. Then the same one changed mine.'

Mamamia, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Anna Downes

About a year ago, I wrote an article for Mamamia about my friend Jen's hysterectomy, the adenomyosis diagnosis that transformed her life, and all the ways it made me rethink my own life-long period problems. The piece ended with a vow to see a gynaecologist for myself and investigate what might be happening for me.

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Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Funding models must support sustained therapeutic care to provide the right support at the right time

Hobart Mercury, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Sarah Charlton, Page 16

Imagine finally finding the courage to ask for help, only to discover that the support you need may be months away. For Tasmanians affected by alcohol or drug use, gambling, anger, trauma or another person's addictive behaviour, this is increasingly common.

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Sleepwalking into a youth crisis

West Australian, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Rhianna Mitchell, Page 10

Doctors fear poor sleep has become normalised among young Australians, who are unaware of the toll it is taking on mental health, concentration and relationships. With recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showing half of Australian 12 to 17-year-olds are getting less than eight hours sleep a night, the Australasian Sleep Association has described the issue as a national crisis.

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Push to help those 'invisible to the system'

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Damon Cronshaw, Page 3

A Newcastle woman aims to start a support program for children bereaved by suicide who are "invisible to the system". Karissa Lewis, of Tighes Hill, said there was "no pathway" for children in NSW bereaved by suicide.

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Perth oral medicine specialist highlights growing link between teeth pain and mental health

West Australian, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Rhianna Mitchell

A Perth oral medicine specialist is seeking to raise awareness about the link between anxiety and persistent dental issues, such as teeth grinding and jaw pain. Associate Professor Ramesh Balasubramaniam said he is increasingly engaging psychologists for his patients, some of whom have undergone multiple dental treatments to fix a problem which is actually connected to the nervous system.

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Also reported by: *Kalgoorlie Miner*

Prisons psychiatrist says NSW Corrections failing mentally ill inmates

ABC Online, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Kirstie Wellauer and Joanna McCarthy

Mentally ill inmates in the NSW Corrections system should be the sole responsibility of the prisons health agency, not prison officers, a leading forensic psychiatrist says. Kerri Eagle, a frequent expert witness at coronial hearings, says radical change is needed in the care and supervision of mentally ill prisoners, whose needs should only be met by people with clinical training.

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We all want to protect our children from anxiety. But could we be making it worse?

The Guardian, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Diane Young

When a child is anxious, most parents instinctively want to make things better. If your daughter is terrified of attending a birthday party, you might suggest she stay home.

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Psychedelic Research Offers New Depression Treatment Pathways

2GB, Healthy Living, AM Radio, 08 Nov 2026, Dr Ross Walker & Ned Green

Interview with Dr Tanvir Ahmed about psychedelic research for treating depression. Ahmed discussed a Nature Neuroscience study identifying distinct pathways for hallucinations and antidepressant effects. He noted that although Australia leads in permitting limited psychedelic use, targeted compounds activating beta-arrestin could remove hallucinogenic barriers and help tailor future mental health treatments.

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Immunisation

Deadly disease threat

Toowoomba Chronicle, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Jackie Sinnerton, Page 4

Parents are being warned of a potentially deadly summertime risk to their babies as the most popular holiday hotspots are the country's top breeding ground for whooping cough. New Immunisation Foundation of Australia data up to November 2026 reveals that family destinations from Byron Bay to Noosa have vaccination rates 35 per cent below the rest of the country and experts fear the respiratory disease is ready to take a grip on these packed vacation communities.

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Australia's ‘whooping cough corridor' revealed

Medianet, Internet, 08 Nov 2026

A stretch of east coast holiday destinations has given rise to concerns about a ‘whooping cough corridor’, with new vaccination data revealing alarmingly low childhood protection against the highly contagious and potentially deadly disease. The 2026 Whooping Cough Report Cardby the Immunisation Foundation of

Australia identifies eight local are as stretching from the northern rivers of New South Wales to the top of the Sunshine Coast – interrupted only by Brisbane and its surrounds – where vaccination coverage for one-year-olds is up to 35 per cent lower than Australia's best-performing areas.

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Also reported by: *Townsville Bulletin*, *The Australian*, *The Courier Mail*, *Geelong Advertiser*, *Adelaide Now*, *Daily Telegraph Australia*, *The Mercury*

Pertussis is back

Healthed Australia, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Catherine Hughes

Pertussis vaccination coverage for Australian one-year-olds has fallen below 90%, and below 65% in some communities. For babies too young to be vaccinated, much of their protection is decided in general practice, often before they are born.

Continue reading

COVID-19 Vaccines Transition to National Immunisation Programme

2GB, Healthy Living, AM Radio, 08 Nov 2026, Dr Ross Walker & Ned Green

Interview with infectious diseases physician Dr Clay Golledge about viral diseases. Dr Golledge stated that COVID-19 vaccines moved onto the National Immunisation Program on 1 October. He explained that vaccines are now only free for people over 75, those with immunosuppressive conditions, and Indigenous Australians over 60, with other individuals required to pay between $90 and $120.

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Health Systems Strategies

United voice demands choice

Newcastle Herald, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Simon McCarthy, Page 1

Georgina Caves lives in constant pain. There have been times when it is so excruciating, she describes it like holding an earthquake inside her body. She describes bleeding so much, and so painfully, that her body was covered in blood.

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Also reported by: *Newcastle Herald*

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Health Economics & Research

No relevant coverage.

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First Nations Health

No relevant coverage.

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Public Hospital and Health Reform

Health system on life support

Herald Sun, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Alex White, Page 1

Victoria’s health system is buckling under record demand, with experts warning the crisis will only deepen without sweeping reform. Pressure is building across nearly every part of the system, with patients waiting longer for ambulances, spending more time in emergency departments and facing ongoing delays for surgery and specialist treatment.

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Blueprint for hospital expansion unveiled

Courier Mail, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Hayden Johnson, Page 4

The Prince Charles Hospital will get 104 new beds, a new cardiac lab and mental health facility by 2031 under a plan the government says should end Labor's "scare campaign". Stage one of the hospital upgrade includes 104 new beds, including a 80-bed mental health facility, a bigger emergency department an expansion of the Cardiac Catheterisation Lab service.

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

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Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office

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Health Workforce

Melbourne walk to launch brain health fellowship in memory of young doctor

The Australian, Internet, 08 Nov 2026

A family's loss becomes a call to better understand and help prevent unexpected deaths among young doctors and health workers Walkers dressed in green will gather near Victoria's Parliament House this Sunday for the National Brain Health Walk 2026, which will end with the announcement of a new fellowship

in memory of Dr Lasith Kulasekara (to be graduated on 8th Dec 2026) . Dr Kulasekara was a young medical graduate whose sudden passing deeply affected his family, friends and the medical community.

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Also reported by: *The Courier Mail*, *Townsville Bulletin*, *Daily Telegraph Australia*, *The Mercury*, *Adelaide Now*, *Geelong Advertiser*

She's met royalty but ordinary Aussies inspire nurse

The New Daily, Internet, 08 Nov 2026

Nurse Karen Barlow quietly watches a towering rural dad comfort his young son, who has a broken arm after jumping on a bunk bed with his rambunctious brothers. As the father and son travelled with the Royal Flying Doctor Service from their remote town for treatment in Dubbo, western NSW, Ms Barlow was moved by their deep connection.

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Technology Assessment and Access

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Medicare Benefits and Digital Health

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Benefits Integrity

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Australian CDC

You give cruise a bad name

Age, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Henrietta Cook and Kieran Rooney, Page 2

You give cruise a bad name It was sold as an "unforgettable" opportunity to cruise the open seas with local and international rock stars including Billy F Gibbons from ZZ Top, Glenn Hughes from Deep Purple, Australian Crawl frontman James Reyne and pop darling Kate Ceberano. But many of the guests aboard the Rock the Boat cruise, which completed a seven-day round trip from Sydney to Nouma, found the experience unforgettable for other reasons.

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Conversationists warn bird flu could put vulnerable Aussie species at risk of extinction despite case slow

West Australian, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Abe Maddison and Andrew Stafford

While the number of bird flu events across Australia have plummeted, conservationists fear vulnerable species are at risk of extinction with the true scale of the outbreak hidden. The H5N1 strain was first confirmed on home soil on June 19 after a migrating brown skua washed up on a remote beach near Esperance in WA.

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Also reported by: *Kalgoorlie Miner*

Bird flu playing chicken with Aussie poultry, wildlife

The Border Mail, Internet, 08 Nov 2026, Andrew Stafford

While the number of bird flu events across Australia have plummeted, conservationists fear vulnerable species are at risk of extinction with the true scale of the outbreak hidden. The H5N1 strain was first confirmed on home soil on June 19 after a migrating brown skua washed up on a remote beach near Esperance in WA.

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Also reported by: *West Australian*, *Daily Liberal*, *Warrnambool Standard*, *Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser*, *Northern Daily Leader*, *Bathurst Western Advocate*, *The Senior*, *Ballarat Courier*, *Yahoo! News Australia*, *Illawarra Mercury*, *Canberra Times*, *Newcastle Herald*, *The New Daily*, *Canberra Times*, *Kalgoorlie Miner*

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Therapeutic Goods Administration

Why people trust weight-loss drug advice on social media, even when it may be misleading

The New Daily, Internet, 08 Nov 2026

Imagine scrolling through social media and seeing dramatic weight-loss results from people taking Mounjaro, Wegovy or Ozempic. They share photographs, discuss side effects and recommend ways to get the best results.

Continue reading

Painless scanner a new hope

West Australian, General News, 09 Nov 2026, Jennifer Bechwati News, Page 14

A breast scan that takes just seconds and avoids painful compressions could help Australian doctors uncover hidden cancers and spare some patients repeat surgery. [...] The technology reached a milestone in September, when the Therapeutic Goods Administration approved the system's inclusion in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods.

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Also reported by: *West Australian*, *7News.com.au*, *Kalgoorlie Miner*

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Office of Drug Control

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