

Australian Government
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

TODAY'S NEWS

Tuesday, 10 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 5) and **Herald Sun** (page 4) report that health ministers from most states and territories have sent a letter to federal Health Minister Mark Butler and Aged Care Minister Sam Rae, demanding urgent action on the aged care crisis which they blame for worsening hospital bed block. Minister Rae told the South Australian government he was unable to attend a crisis meeting being held today.
- **Canberra Times** (page 10) reports that the government has been urged to revoke medicare subsidies from overcharging doctors after a report detailed a widespread surge in specialist fees, with Health

Minister Mark Butler suggesting that all options were on the table to bring down costs.

- **Daily Telegraph** (page 9) reports the Salvation Army will withdraw from providing residential aged care services in Australia, citing significant capital investment requirements and growing regulatory demands.
- **Sydney Morning Herald** (page 2) reports that a trial is under way to assess stab-resistant vests for NSW paramedics, advancing Jeff Tougher's campaign for stronger protections following his son Steven's murder while on duty in 2023.
- **Courier Mail** (page 2) reports that Queensland's promised health workforce plan remains unreleased a year after an analysis found the state needed at least 6,000 more doctors and 46,000 healthcare workers by 2032.
- **The Herald Sun** (page 5) reports that Melbourne Lord Mayor Nick Reece has called for a review of deinstitutionalisation policies and raised the possibility of reinstating psychiatric asylums to better manage people with acute mental health conditions.
- **Newcastle Herald** (page 3) reports that NSW Health Minister Ryan Park says the government cannot force Calvary to provide reproductive and end-of-life services at Newcastle Private, warning that doing so could jeopardise other healthcare services across the Hunter.

Minister Butler

Aged care crisis meeting snubbed

The Australian, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Lachlan Leeming, Page 5

Demands by Peter Malinauskas for an urgent meeting with his commonwealth counterparts to discuss the state's spiralling aged care crisis have been snubbed, as furious health ministers from across the country join forces to push the federal government into taking immediate action. [...] Health ministers sent a joint letter to Mr Rae and Health Minister Mark Butler on Friday, following up from a meeting of ministers held in September.

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Also reported by: *The Australian*

States demand action from Canberra on aged care

Herald Sun, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Julie Cross, Page 4

Health ministers from every state and territory bar NSW have called for urgent action from the federal government on the aged care bed crisis, with the South Australian premier wading into the fray by hosting emergency talks on Tuesday. In a leaked letter to Health Minister Mark Butler and Aged Care Minister Sam Rae sent on November 6, the various state and territory ministers blamed the commonwealth's "insufficient" aged care funding for the worsening situation.

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Also reported by: *Courier Mail*, *Adelaide Advertiser*, *Northern Territory News*

Courageous GST prescription for health impasse

Adelaide Advertiser, Editorials, 10 Nov 2026, Page 18

Twin crises in the aged-care and health systems are intensifying and colliding, exacerbated dramatically by a disastrous failure to confront financial reality. [...] In a joint letter to federal Health and Ageing Minister

Mark Butler, they "urge commonwealth action to support infrastructure investment and accommodation supply", saying "it is unacceptable that older Australians are effectively living in hospitals".

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Call to claw back Medicare from price-gouging specialists

Canberra Times, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Jacob Shteyman, Page 15

Leaders have been urged to reach for the stick to bring price-gouging doctors into line as soaring specialist fees drive more Australians away from care. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said all options were on the table to rein in climbing specialist fees.

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Also reported by: *CityNews*, *Central Western Daily*, *Daily Liberal*, *Western Advocate*, *Northern Daily Leader*, *Daily Advertiser*, *Burnie Advocate*, *Newcastle Herald*, *Warrnambool Standard*, *Ballarat Courier*, *Border Mail*

The 31st patient: why the HMR cap is a clinical risk

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Pooja Sharma, Page 20

Canberra has created momentum. [...] At PSA26, Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler announced that HMR and RMMR follow-up services will be permitted via telehealth from 1 November 2026.

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Specialist fees are rampant – government must act to fix our broken health system

The New Daily, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, John Menadue

Queensland is trying to entice doctors, nurses and allied health professionals to work in the state. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler has said he is willing to test the Constitution boundaries.

Continue reading

The Zap: latest health and aged care news, plus key consultations – and a bonus quiz

Croakey, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Melissa Sweet & Charles Maskell-Knight

Australia is going backwards when it comes to the proportion of health funds being allocated to public health, according to data recently released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler issued a statement on the 12-month anniversary of the introduction of universal Medicare GP bulk billing incentives, saying half of all general practices now exclusively bulk bill, compared with 30 percent before the incentives began.

Continue reading

Report Calls for Action on Specialist Fees

2CC, Canberra Live, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Leon Delaney

In an interview with Mia Jessurun, Associate in Grattan Institute's Health Program about medical specialist costs, a new report called on the federal government to address extreme out-of-pocket fees and expand specialist training pipelines. Noting Health Minister Mark Butler previously described specialist fees as out of control, she highlighted ongoing consultations and proposed clawing back Medicare rebates from doctors charging excessive fees.

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Minister McAllister

No relevant coverage.

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Minister Rae

Aged care crisis meeting snubbed

The Australian, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Lachlan Leeming, Page 5

Demands by Peter Malinauskas for an urgent meeting with his commonwealth counterparts to discuss the state's spiralling aged care crisis have been snubbed, as furious health ministers from across the country join forces to push the federal government into taking immediate action. [...] Health ministers sent a joint letter to Mr Rae and Health Minister Mark Butler on Friday, following up from a meeting of ministers held in September.

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Herald Sun, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Julie Cross, Page 4

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Also reported by: *Courier Mail*, *Adelaide Advertiser*

New Halls Creek Aged Care Facility Funded

Koori Radio, Blackchat, FM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Lola Forester

The Albanese Labor Government will fund a purpose-built 40-bed residential aged care home in Halls Creek, Western Australia, announced by Assistant Minister Rebecca White and Minister Sam Rae. Backed by $42.5 million via the aged care capital assistance programme, the Yugar Yungi Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation will construct the facility for older First Nations people.

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Assistant Minister McBride

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Assistant Minister White

New Halls Creek Aged Care Facility Funded

Koori Radio, Blackchat, FM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Lola Forester

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Special Envoy Repacholi

Cancer patients at risk

Townsville Bulletin, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Nikita McGuire, Page 8

Specialist cancer nurses in Townsville have sounded the alarm over a federal government decision to shift funding from the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, warning the change will leave vulnerable regional men abandoned. [...] Special Envoy for Men's Health and Federal Hunter MP Dan Repacholi rejected claims that services were being reduced, saying the government was moving positions into an overarching national model.

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

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Department

Only claim for dispensed medicines: PBS

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Page 10

Pharmacists are being warned that "a PBS (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) claim should only be submitted when a medicine has actually been supplied to a patient". Speaking during a pre-conference

workshop ahead of Pharmacy Connect in early September, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing Benefits Integrity Division assistant director Emily Bofinger told delegates that inappropriate claiming patterns were becoming increasingly identifiable.

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ADHA report flags aged care gaps & disability delays

Pulse+IT, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Reesh Lyon

The Australian Digital Health Agency's latest annual report shows 57 per cent of residential aged care homes were registered with My Health Record at the end of June this year – however, hospitals are not accessing information uploaded by aged care providers at the same rate it is being supplied. [...] The Agency also released its National Allied Health Digital Uplift Plan in December 2025, developed with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and Allied Health Professions Australia.

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Ageing and Aged Care

Costs force Salvos to move out of aged care

Daily Telegraph, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Julie Cross, Page 9

The Salvation Army is pulling out of residential aged care in Australia after more than 100 years leaving more than 1500 residents at 19 facilities uncertain of their future. Almost 2000 people receiving care at home from the charity will also be affected.

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

Serious signal to government

Hobart Mercury, Editorials, 10 Nov 2026, Page 14

The Salvation Army's decision to leave residential aged care after more than a century should ring alarm bells well beyond its 19 facilities. When one of Australia's most recognisable and mission-driven providers says the sector is no longer sustainable, it is a warning that aged care policy, funding and regulation are drifting out of balance.

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In crisis

Northern Territory News, Editorials, 10 Nov 2026, Page 28

Up to 70 to 80 older Territorians are stuck in NT hospital beds each day, not because they need acute medical care, but because there's nowhere else for them to go. That's not just an aged care failure - it's a hospital capacity crisis that's choking the Territory's health system.

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A service few know about until isolated

Launceston Examiner, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Lauren Richardson, Page 3

When her husband's care needs became too much to handle alone, Shirley Davies moved into the city for extra support. [...] Still living in Kings Meadows three years later, she navigates her own appointments and social calendar with the help of Community Transport Services Tasmania (CTST).

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High loneliness risk

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Allan Murphy, Page 4

One may well be the loneliest number that you'll ever do, but according to research by an aged care and disability support provider, Mildura is one of the loneliest places to be in Australia. Research undertaken by Just Better Care, a government-funded in-home aged care program that helps older Australians live safely and independently at home, found Mildura ranked fifth overall from more than 450 local government areas surveyed across Australia.

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Australia's aged care bed crisis hits boiling point for families waiting years

ABC Online, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Amelia Walters

Horrendous, horrible and sleepless nights. This was how 74-year-old Betty Cameron described the past two years trying to find her husband a residential aged care bed in South Australia.

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From 198 aged care beds to 112 retirement living apartments

The Weekly Source, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Ian Horswill

In a sign of the times, a site approved for residential aged care is going to have a more profitable future. The change of direction raises an uncomfortable reality for Australia's aged care sector.

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Aged Care and Hospital Pressure Solutions

News24, Credlin, TV, 09 Nov 2026, Peta Credlin

Interview with Simon Judkins, President, AMA Victoria about healthcare system pressures, emergency department delays and discharging elderly patients. Judkins highlighted the complexity of moving elderly patients into aged care facilities and accessing NDIS and community packages. He advocated for innovative solutions, including deploying geriatricians in emergency departments and funding in-reach programmes into aged care facilities.

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Matt Canavan Criticises Aged Care Staffing Mandates

ABC News, Afternoon Briefing, TV, 09 Nov 2026, Patricia Karvelas

In an interview with Matt Canavan, Nationals Leader, he called for reviewing regulations, arguing excessive red tape harms regional services. Canavan stated that the Labor Party's mandate requiring 24-hour registered nurses was not an Aged Care Royal Commission recommendation and forced the closure of an aged care centre in Mount Morgan, displacing residents to Rockhampton.

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National Aged Care Bed Shortages Impact Families

ABC Radio Adelaide, Breakfast, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Sonya Feldhoff & Jules Schiller

More than 10,000 residential aged care beds are needed nationally, with around 500 people currently waiting in South Australian hospitals. While a federal government spokesperson said it supports constructing about 5,000 beds annually, South Australia's Health Minister Blair Boyer stated that only 800 were delivered across the country last year.

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Also reported by: *ABC Radio Adelaide*

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Disability and Carers

No relevant coverage.

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Primary Care

Growing number of GPs helping patients with ADHD

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Natalie Croxon, Page 2

Even after Medicare rebates, Asher Macela was once out of pocket hundreds of dollars to see a psychiatrist for repeat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder medication scripts twice a year. The Keiraville business owner now has a much cheaper alternative.

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'We need to speak up before these models become the norm'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Page 9

Eli Lilly's decision to offer a direct-to-consumer service risks fragmenting care, garnering opposition from across pharmacy, and other health sectors. Pharmacists are being urged to raise concerns over the new LillyDirect platform with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

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Workforce issues barrier to scope expansion

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Page 12

A review of a year-long Tasmanian pilot, which saw endorsed community pharmacists treating uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs), showed most surveyed patients thought service was "excellent" (80%). However, pharmacists reported several barriers to ongoing implementation remain.

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Eye care: looking beyond the presentation

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Leanne Philpott, Page 32

Red, dry, irritated eyes can seem like straightforward pharmacy presentations, particularly when patients arrive already knowing which over-the-counter (OTC) product they want. But what appears minor may not always be suitable for self-management.

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Mum & bub: pharmacy's role in breastfeeding

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Sheshtyn Paola, Page 46

Jacqueline Meyer runs a lactation service to support the mums in her local community near Byron Bay, NSW, from the independent pharmacy she recently purchased with husband Wesley. Bangalow Pharmacy is also a charity partner of the Miracle Babies Foundation, a national organisation that provides services and support to families in neonatal hospitals around the country.

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'We sincerely apologise': patient information stolen in clinic hacking attack

Warrnambool Standard, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Sophia Baker

Sensitive patient data, including health and personal information, has been stolen from a Warrnambool medical clinic in a ransomware attack. Epichealth medical clinic, which operates the Warrnambool Medicare Urgent Care Clinic , revealed in a statement it "recently experienced a cyber incident" where "an unauthorised third party" accessed a part of its IT systems

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It's getting more expensive to see specialist doctors. What can be done to curb costs?

SBS, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Rashida Nour

Fees to see specialist doctors have gone up by around 4 per cent in the past year. Almost a million Australians are avoiding care due to the high cost, according to a think tank.

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Victoria scraps S8 permit requirements for GPs prescribing some ADHD meds

Australian Doctor, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Ciara Seccombe

GPs will now need an 'ADHD treatment instruction' to continue prescribing certain stimulant medications. GPs in Victoria no longer require a permit to prescribe dexamphetamine, lisdexamfetamine and methylphenidate after the state government relaxed S8 prescribing rules in a bid to improve patient access.

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Discussions on Health Training Places and Fees

ABC Radio Adelaide, Mornings, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Rory Mcclaren

Panel discussion with Associate Professor Peter Subramaniam, President of the AMA SA, and Peter Breadon, Health Program Director at Grattan Institute, about training places and health system reforms. Subramaniam stated that his organisation is engaged in constant discussions with Federal Health Minister

Mark Butler, colleges and hospitals to secure more places. He also called for monitoring excessive doctor fees, greater financial transparency and expanding services in public hospitals.

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Interview continues on:: *ABC Radio Adelaide*

Calls for Tasmanian Health Commission of Inquiry

ABC Radio Hobart, Statewide Mornings, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Leon Compton

In an interview with Tasmanian shadow health minister Sarah Lovell, Lovell discussed backing an Australian Medical Association proposal for a commission of inquiry into Tasmania's health system. Lovell stated that despite federal investments in urgent care clinics, Medicare clinics and hospital funding, a comprehensive inquiry is needed to examine federal-state intersections and address worsening outcomes.

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RACGP Endorses Nature Prescriptions Guidelines

3AW, Breakfast, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Ross Stevenson & Russel Howcroft

Interview with Dr Michael Clements, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Vice President, Chair of their Rural Council, about endorsed guidelines encouraging GPs to prescribe nature. Dr Clements said clear evidence shows spending time outdoors aids physical and mental health treatment plans. He noted that specific recommendations encourage patients to engage in outdoor activity, mindfulness, and social connection.

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Population Health

Higher dementia risk for smokers

Northern Territory News, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Page 3

Smokers face a higher risk of dementia, with researchers calling for brain health to feature prominently in anti-smoking campaigns. A review of 61 studies led by Curtin University found people who smoke had a 31 per cent higher risk of developing dementia, a 40 per cent higher risk of Alzheimer's disease and a 52 per cent higher risk of vascular dementia.

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Inquiry Examines Declining Hospital Stays After Birth

Radio National, Life Matters, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Hilary Harper & Beverley Wang

Interview with Hannah Dahlen, professor of midwifery at the University of Western Sydney, and Alecia Staines, founder of the Maternity Consumer Network, about declining hospital stays following childbirth and postpartum care. They highlighted submissions to a Senate inquiry examining women's health, noting that shorter stays can succeed if mothers receive ongoing community midwifery and relational support at home.

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Calls to Review Rising Alcohol Excise Taxes

2GB, Afternoons, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Michael McLaren

Interview with Steven Fanner, Executive Director of the Spirits Council of Australia, about rising alcohol excise taxes driving illicit trade. Fanner warned that automatic six-monthly tax increases and rorting of the remission scheme incentivise unregulated, potentially dangerous illicit alcohol. Drawing parallels with the illicit tobacco market, he urged the government to review tax settings and tighten compliance rules.

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Chronic Conditions and Screening

New trial drug slashes prostate cancer recurrence by almost 60 per cent

Newcastle Herald, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Damon Cronshaw

Charlestown's 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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Oral Wegovy approval welcomed by peak body

Pharmacy Daily, Internet, 09 Nov 2026

Diabetes Australia has welcomed the recent Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approval of the oral form of semaglutide (PD 04 Nov) as a step forward in the treatment of obesity and related chronic conditions. Diabetes Australia Group CEO Justine Cain said the approval of oral Wegovy would help many in the community who were hesitant about injections and could improve accessibility to a medicine class emerging as an important tool in managing a range of chronic health conditions.

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Tackling asthma deaths will take multi-disciplinary approach

Retail Pharmacy, Internet, 09 Nov 2026

484 Australians lost their lives in 2025 due to asthma, according to new Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data released today by the National Asthma Council Australia. Comprised of 315 females and 169 males, sadly, the figures are almost identical to the 481 asthma deaths recorded in 2024.

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Similar items:

Asthma mortality remains ‘alarmingly high': NAC

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, 2:40 pm, Megan Haggan

Asthma and Hay Fever Warning Issued

Channel 7, Seven News, TV, 09 Nov 2026, Rosanna Mangiarelli & Will Goodings

Professor Amanda Barnard from the National Asthma Council Australia has issued a warning for South Australians living with asthma amid hay fever season. New figures reveal 46 people died from asthma last

year, with experts noting that too many patients rely on a single treatment instead of using both an anti-inflammatory reliever and a symptom reliever.

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Lyn Swinburne on Breast Cancer Advocacy

Radio National, Breakfast, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Sally Sara

Interview with Lyn Swinburne, founder of Breast Cancer Network Australia and former chair of the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne, about improving breast cancer care and communication. Diagnosed in the 1990s, she recounted major gaps in patient support, which prompted her advocacy. Swinburne also detailed a 2001 campaign that successfully lobbied the government to make the drug Herceptin accessible.

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Interview continues on:: ***Radio National***, ***Radio National***

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Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Reece moots asylum solution

Herald Sun, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Regan Hodge, Page 5

Lord Mayor Nick Reece has floated the idea of the return of asylums for those suffering critical mental health issues before declaring Melbourne "a safe city". Mr Reece on Monday proposed the return of the controversial psychiatric centres to combat the soaring mental health "crisis" in the wake of the fatal alleged stabbing of food delivery rider Jianming Feng.

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Suicide prevention shouldn't wait until a child is in crisis

Newcastle Herald, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Karissa Lewis, Page 18

We say we want to reduce suicide in Australia. So why aren't we systematically identifying children who have lost a parent to suicide? A 2022 review of 20 studies published in The British Journal of Psychiatry found that children bereaved by parental suicide face almost three times the risk of dying by suicide later in life compared with children whose parents are both living.

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Work starts on new mental health unit

Burnie Advocate, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Freddie Moffat, Page 2

The Health Minister has inched closer to the light at the end of the Spencer Clinic tunnel with work starting on its replacement. The first sod has been turned on the $40 million development at the North West Regional Hospital (NWRH), seven weeks after a fire took the existing mental health treatment capacity offline.

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Experts warn of ‘sleep crisis' impacting the mental health of young Australians

West Australian, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Rhianna Mitchell

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 is a national crisis.

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Also reported by: *Kalgoorlie Miner*

'Invisible to the system': push to bridge gap for children bereaved by suicide

Newcastle Herald, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Damon Cronshaw

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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Mental Health Concerns Raised Following Fatal Attack

Channel 10, 10 News, TV, 09 Nov 2026, Jennifer Keyte

Fresh questions have emerged over tackling Melbourne's escalating mental health crisis after Roberto Urbano appeared erratically in court charged with murdering delivery driver Jianming Feng. The magistrate heard the accused has schizophrenia, prompting Lord Mayor Nick Reece to highlight acute mental health issues as a troubling common thread in three recent CBD attacks.

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Immunisation

Protecting the vulnerable

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Page 53

Vaccination rates are falling among those most at risk from vaccine-preventable diseases. So who are these vulnerable population groups, and what can pharmacy do to reverse these trends?

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Alarm over whooping cough holiday hotspots

Pharmacy Daily, Internet, 09 Nov 2026

New vaccination data has revealed alarmingly low childhood protection against whooping cough, where for the first time in over 25 years, the proportion of Australian one-year-olds who are up-to-date with whooping cough vaccination has dropped below 90%. The data also found widespread anti-vaccine sentiment in a stretch of east coast holiday destinations, giving rise to concerns about a 'whooping cough corridor' ahead of the summer vacation period.

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Whooping cough risks rise in holiday hotspots

Channel 7, Sunrise, TV, 09 Nov 2026, Monique Wright & Matt Shirvington

In an interview with GP Dr Zac Turner, medical experts raised concerns about whooping cough spreading across popular Australian holiday destinations during the busy Christmas period. Vaccination rates from Byron Bay to Noosa are up to 35 per cent below the national average. Turner stated low rates pose significant risks to vulnerable populations, including infants, children and those over 65.

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Health Systems Strategies

Park has no power to dictate services

Newcastle Herald, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Dylan Nicholson, Page 3

NSW Health Minister Ryan Park says the government has no power to dictate which services Calvary Health Care provides at Newcastle Private, warning that imposing conditions could cost the Hunter other services including cardiac surgery, renal dialysis and chemotherapy. Speaking to ABC Newcastle radio yesterday, a day after a large rally against the takeover in Civic Park, Mr Park said the government's role was limited to deciding whether Calvary was a "fit and proper" organisation to hold a hospital licence.

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Also reported by: ***Newcastle Herald***

Debate Over Tasmanian Health Inquiry Calls

ABC Radio Hobart, Drive, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Lucy Breaden/Kylie Baxter

Interview with Professor Richard Eccleston, director of the Tasmanian Policy Exchange at the University of Tasmania, about calls for an independent commission of inquiry into Tasmania's health system. Health Minister Bridget Archer rejected the proposal as costly and ineffective for immediate care. Eccleston noted structural reform and an evidence-based plan are needed to address severe budget and service pressures.

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Health Economics & Research

Music therapy found to ignite brain wiring in dementia patients

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Sarah Berry & Clair Weaver, Page 12

Mandy Noffs was many things. [...] But a new Australian study suggests it may have a more powerful impact on the brain than previously realised, altering neural wiring to compensate for dysfunction and even recruiting alternative pathways to help complete tasks.

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Also reported by: *Sydney Morning Herald*

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First Nations Health

First Nations mental health pharmacist support: your input needed

Pharmacy Daily, Internet, 09 Nov 2026

Concern over insufficient education for pharmacists around supporting and communicating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, especially in relation to supporting their mental health and wellbeing, has led to the development of a new training package, with the project team now calling for pharmacist input. Co-led by Indigenous Health Professor Faye McMillan from the University of Technology Sydney and Dr Sarira El-Den from The University of Sydney Pharmacy School, the project team has set to determine whether targeted pharmacist training improves their ability to provide culturally responsive mental health support.

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Public Hospital and Health Reform

Health care needs surgery

Herald Sun, Editorials, 10 Nov 2026, Page 24

Labor governments have long claimed to prioritise support for hospitals and health but, like so many other aspects of service delivery, quality and access have fallen in a heap over recent years. [...] Overall, patients admitted and treated in state hospitals increased from 1.637 million in 2014-15 to 2.256 million in 2025-26, up almost 38 per cent, while emergency department presentations climbed from 1.609 million to a record 2.037 million, up 26.6 per cent.

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Coroner told of scary times at hospital

Burnie Advocate, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Sean Ford & Freddie Moffat, Page 3

A doctor urging a big boost to emergency services at the Mersey Community Hospital has outlined nerve-racking episodes, including one where a patient was in danger of dying. In a submission to the coronial inquest into the Hillcrest Primary School tragedy, Dr Andrew Jeremijenko described an example from his time at the hospital that he said showed the seriousness of his concerns.

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Health boost for Mallee

Sunraysia Daily, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Lochlainn Heley, Page 4

Mallee health services will benefit from more than $4 million in the latest round of the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, supporting health service delivery and upgrades. The 2025-26 round of funds was recently allocated last month, distributing $150 million across 43 regional and rural health services.

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Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office

No relevant coverage.

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Health Workforce

Vest trial offers hope in fight to protect NSW paramedics

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 10 Nov 2026, David Barwell, Page 2

For Jeff Tougher, the fight to protect paramedics has been a long and often frustrating journey, but more than three years after his son Steven was murdered while on duty, he remains determined. After years of campaigning for stronger protections for emergency workers, a trial examining the suitability of stab-resistant vests for NSW paramedics is finally under way, marking a significant step in a campaign that has attracted support across the state.

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Also reported by: *Sydney Morning Herald*

Medical staffing plan on waitlist

Courier Mail, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Hayden Johnson, Page 2

A landmark plan to address Queensland's critical health workforce shortage still hasn't been released, despite 12 months passing since Health Minister Tim Nicholls revealed the scale of the challenge. The Workforce Gap Analysis, released by Mr Nicholls at Redcliffe Hospital 365 days ago, revealed Queensland would need to hire at least 6000 new doctors and 46,000 healthcare workers by 2032.

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

Fast-tracking degree

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Ann Wason Moore, Page 10

Southern Cross University is set to become one of the first universities in Australia to adopt a new five-year psychology qualification to accelerate graduates into the mental health workforce. The Gold Coast university is preparing to adopt a proposed overhaul of psychology training that would replace the current six-year path to registration with a single integrated five-year degree.

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Grattan Institute Calls for Specialist Fee Regulation

ABC Radio Brisbane, Mornings, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Steve Austin

Interview with Mia Jessurun, an associate in the Grattan Institute's Health Program, about a paper calling on the federal government to regulate excessive medical specialist fees. Jessurun stated that specialties such as psychiatry and dermatology are charging extreme fees driven by workforce shortages. She recommended penalising extreme outliers through Medicare rebate repayments and expanding the specialist training pipeline.

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GPs Pitch to Treat More Conditions

ABC Radio Sydney, Breakfast, AM Radio, 09 Nov 2026, Craig Reucassel

Ahead of the election, the College of General Practitioners is calling on the government to allow general practitioners to treat more complex conditions rather than referring patients to specialists. The college stated that expanding GPs' scope across areas like paediatrics, dermatology, and geriatrics would ease pressure on specialists and reduce patient waiting times.

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Technology Assessment and Access

No relevant coverage.

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Medicare Benefits and Digital Health

No relevant coverage.

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Benefits Integrity

No relevant coverage.

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Australian CDC

Measles on the rise, Part 1: recognising a highly infectious disease before it spreads

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, General News, 01 Nov 2026, Dr Sonal Patel Bpharm, Page 82

This article is the first in a two-part series. It focuses on measles epidemiology, transmission, clinical presentation, diagnosis and complications. The second article, published at ajp.com.au/cpd, focuses on measles management, including infection control, public health notification, post-exposure prophylaxis, vaccination and the pharmacist's role in preventing onward transmission.

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Therapeutic Goods Administration

'Serious risk': plea to toss peptides

Geelong Advertiser, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Sarah Booth, Page 12

Authorities have urged Australians to throw away a popular peptide brand after testing revealed their contents did not match their label. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) last week issued the warning about Synedica-branded peptide products black market injectables sold as performance and image-enhancing drugs.

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Digital mental health tools under scrutiny

Pharmacy Daily, Internet, 09 Nov 2026

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has completed a review of its approach to regulating digital mental health tools (DMHTs) – software such as apps and websites that offer assessment, therapy or self-management strategies to support mental health care – and has released a consultation paper for stakeholder feedback. While generally regulated as medical devices when used for diagnosis, prevention, monitoring, prediction, prognosis or treatment of a person, some DMHTs are excluded from TGA regulation if they are based on established clinical practice guidelines that are displayed in a way that can be reviewed by the user.

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TGA warns of safety risks after rejecting GPs' bid for isotretinoin prescribing rights

Australian Doctor, Internet, 09 Nov 2026, Heather Saxena

The TGA has rejected an RACGP application to allow GPs to prescribe isotretinoin for moderate or severe acne, citing patient safety concerns and the risk of misuse by telehealth businesses. Last year, the college lodged an application to the watchdog's scheduling committee for GPs with additional training to prescribe the drug, arguing that it would improve access and was within their scope of practice.

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Office of Drug Control

No relevant coverage.

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Food Standards

Warning on raw milk food poisoning

Herald Sun, General News, 10 Nov 2026, Page 16

One in six Australians consume raw cow's milk, which is illegal to sell as human food. Cow's milk hasn't undergone a pasteurisation process, which typically heats the milk to 72C for about 15 seconds to kill any harmful bacteria that might be present.

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Also reported by: *Hobart Mercury*, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Northern Territory News*, *Cairns Post*

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