



Australian Government  
Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# TODAY'S NEWS

Wednesday, 28th February 2024

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## LINKS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **[The Australian](#)** (page 1) reports Health Minister Mark Butler has rejected industry criticism of delays in a decision around this year's health insurance premium rise, saying record company profits and lowered returns to customers had meant more scrutiny was needed.
- The **[Sydney Morning Herald](#)** (page 1) reports Australians spending over \$450 million to pay for medical procedures, including dental work, IVF and weight loss surgery, made up the lion's share of money withdrawn from superannuation funds last, new ATO data has shown. *Also reported by: [The Age](#)*
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 3) reports a Queensland Supreme Court ruling the state's vaccine mandates were unlawful have reignited calls for a royal commission, while legal experts believe the decision will spark similar cases in other jurisdictions. *Also reported by: [Courier Mail](#), [ABC Online](#), [Daily Mail Australia](#), [The Guardian](#)*
- **[The Australian](#)** (page 3) reports a trial using stereotactic body radiation to treat kidney cancer has stopped the growth of tumours in 100 per cent of participants, a report published by Melbourne's Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Lancet Oncology says.

- The [Herald Sun](#) (page 3) reports the government has announced a new influencer campaign about the harm caused by nicotine vapes, with Health Minister Mark saying education would be key to stopping a new generation falling into nicotine dependence. *Also reported by: [Courier Mail](#), [West Australian](#)*
- [The Australian](#) (page 5) reports mental health made up seven per cent of workplace injuries across 2021-22, a 36.9 per cent rise since 2018-19, new Safe Work Australia has shown, while more than half of those claims were related to workplace harassment or bullying.
- The [Sydney Morning Herald](#) (page 5) reports LGBTQIA+ Australians are two to four times more likely to attempt self-harm, experience suicidal ideation, or have a mental health condition than the rest of the population, new ABS data has shown. *Also reported by: [The Age](#), [ABC Online](#)*
- [The Australian](#) (page 7) reports NSW's government says the Commonwealth should continue to pay for mandatory on-the-job training recommended for nurses and teachers in the Universities Accord, while other state governments are yet to commit to the proposed training model.
- The [Sydney Morning Herald](#) (page 8) reports SafeWork NSW has been referred to the ICAC over its flawed response to tackling the risks posed to tradespeople by silicosis. *Also reported by: [The Australian](#), [Canberra Times](#)*
- [The Guardian](#) (online) reports health insurers have rejected claims of price gouging after new ABS data showed premiums tracking above inflation. *Also reported by: [The Age](#)*

## MINISTER BUTLER

### 'Bill shock delayed for Dunkley'

The Australian, General News, 28/02/2024, Jess Malcolm and Sarah Ison, Page 1

The nation's biggest health insurers fear Labor is delaying a decision on how much to increase premiums for millions of Australians in order to avoid a cost-of-living backlash before the crucial Dunkley by-election on Saturday. The Australian has spoken to six of the nation's largest funds who say it is the longest wait on a premiums call from a government in 15 years, and they do not have enough time to notify their customers of any price increases if Health Minister Mark Butler does not make a decision this week.

*Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#).*

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### The cost of avoiding skin cancer checks

Canberra Times, General News, 28/02/2024, Lanie Tindale, Page 11

Peter McLoughlin's three brothers have all had melanoma, a type of skin cancer. That is why the retired teacher, from the Canberra suburb of Monash, paid \$150 for this year's skin check. [...] Higher Medicare rebates might make skin checks be more affordable, Dr Cust said. The Canberra Times sent questions to Health Minister Mark Butler.

*Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#).*

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### Mental health being devalued by govt

Canberra Times, General News, 28/02/2024, Carly Dober, Page 16

Speaking on radio earlier this month about mental health and the Better Access scheme, the federal Health Minister Mark Butler stated that people in rural and regional areas were not being supported by psychologists, which was one of their driving factors for the government cutting the Medicare psychology sessions from 20 to 10 in 2023. We know the pandemic, and now the cost-of-living crisis has significantly impacted the mental health of many Australians, and those who were already doing it tough are not faring any better, including those living in the regions.

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## TikTok tactics turned on vaping

Courier Mail, General News, 28/02/2024, Clare Armstrong, Page 15

Australian influencers have been recruited to create social media content about the harms of nicotine vapes in an effort to curb soaring rates of addiction among teens. Sports stars, gamers and comedians will urge their millions of young followers to seek help to quit vaping and educate them about the health and environmental dangers, as part of a new awareness campaign funded by the federal government. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said education was key to stopping big tobacco companies "luring" a new generation into nicotine dependency.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#)

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## Vape policy shuns core Labor supporters

Northern Territory News, General News, 28/02/2024, Ross Fitzgerald, Page 29

Why has the ALP deserted its key constituency? In the past decade, Australia has witnessed slow wage growth, higher inflation, mortgage stress, prohibitive energy prices and a rising cost of living. [...] Yet federal Health Minister Mark Butler has ramped up even further the restrictions on vaping.

Also reported by: [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#)

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## influencers to ignite anti-vaping campaign

West Australian, General News, 28/02/2024, Kimberley Caines, Page 7

Australian influencers are being deployed to help stamp out vaping among teens. The Federal Government is hoping to harness the power of social media by getting the personalities to create anti e-cigarette content targeting 14 to 20-year-olds. [...] Health Minister Mark Butler said there was "an enormous amount of misinformation and online advertising designed to lure teenagers into vaping".

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## Doctor cost hitting home

Pakenham Gazette, General News, 28/02/2024, Matt Male, Page 14

It costs more than \$36 to see a GP locally, new data shows, amid a drop in the number of clinics offering bulk-billing. But a local MP has warned rising costs to see a doctor means people are choosing between putting food on the table and visiting their GP. [...] "The increase in bulk billing is across all states and territories, including in La Trobe, with GP clinics around the country making the shift back to bulk billing," Health Minister Mark Butler said.

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## Lifesaving psychological care is still out of reach for many

Newcastle Herald, General News, 28/02/2024, Carly Dober, Page 18

Speaking on radio earlier this month about mental health and the Better Access scheme, the federal Health Minister Mark Butler stated that people in rural and regional areas were not being supported by psychologists, which was one of their driving factors for the government cutting the Medicare psychology sessions from 20 to 10 in 2023.

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## \$1.3m grant to expand award-winning program for adolescents with mental health and substance use issues

Pharmacy ITK, Other, 27/02/2024

Researchers from Monash University, RMIT and the University of Canberra, led by Professor Dan Lubman, have been awarded a Medical Research Future Fund grant to expand a program that has been shown to improve help-seeking among adolescents facing mental health and/ [...] The Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler, recently announced the \$1.3 million grant, which will fund the next stage of development for the school-based intervention MAKINGtheLINK, in partnership with Turning Point, Headspace, the Alcohol & Drug Foundation, the Victorian Department of Education, and the Australian Secondary Principals Association.

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## Big secret behind health insurance 'disgrace' hitting 14 million Aussies with higher fees

Yahoo! Finance Australia, Other, 27/02/2024, Tamika Seeto

Time is running out for health insurance customers to get a fair go, David Koch says. Nearly 14 million Aussies are about to be hit with higher health insurance premiums, but we still don't know how bad the bill is going to be. [...] In December, Health Minister Mark Butler rejected initial proposals from the industry - with planned increases believed to be as high as 6 per cent - and asked them to put forward a "more reasonable figure".

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## ABC Goulburn Murray, 07:30 News, 27/02/2024

Lavington pharmacist Jeff Nelson says he's concerned 60-day prescriptions are contributing to cost of living pressures in the community. In a statement, Federal Minister for Health Mark Butler said the government is delivering cheaper medicines through 60-day dispensing for more than 6 million Australians. He said the scheme will halve the cost of medicines for millions of Australians, including pensioners living with a chronic condition, and \$11.7m has been saved by patients already. Over 9000 patients have accessed 60-day prescriptions in the federal electorate of Indi since the scheme began.

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## Bumma Bipperra Media, National Talk Black, 27/02/2024, Trendy Trev

Interview with Professor Dan Lubman, Director, Monash Addiction Research Centre, regarding the \$1.3m grant to expand an award-winning program for adolescents with mental health substance use issues. Health and Aged Care Minister Mark Butler recently announced the grant which will fund the next stage of development for school-based intervention linking in partnership with Turning Point, headspace, the Alcohol Drug Foundation, the Victorian Department of Education and the Australian Secondary Principals Association. Lubman says the grant essentially will allow them to make sure that they will have a program that meets the needs of students, teachers, schools and is easy to deliver and is something that they hope all schools pick up.

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## MINISTER WELLS

### Wally steps up for brain safety

Courier Mail, Edition Changes - Metro, 28/02/2024, Page 21

Queensland's King of rugby league has marched on the nation's capital to warn of the insidious effects of concussion in sport. Wally Lewis joined a group of about 20 others living with probable chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a brain disease that has been linked with repeated head injuries and is particularly rampant among football players. They met with federal officials including Sport Minister Anika Wells.

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### Legends flock to launch Foxtel's fare with appropriate fanfare

The Australian, Other, 26/02/2024, James Madden

A host of sporting legends, actors, media powerbrokers and CEOs gathered at Parliament House in Canberra on Monday night for the unveiling of Foxtel's content slate for 2024. [...] Interim CEO of Netball Australia, Stacey West, Warner Bros boss Michael Brooks, and head of NBCUniversal, Chris Taylor also attended, as did federal Sports Minister Anika Wells, Arts Minister Tony Burke and opposition Communications spokesman David Coleman.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER KEARNEY

### **Organ donations, transplants rise in Australia – but too many families still saying ‘no’**

Weekly Times Now, Other, 27/02/2024, Samantha Landy

Brenda Pratt is "proud" her beloved husband, Tony, saved lives as an organ donor – but half of Aussie families aren't consenting to this. See how your state stacks up. [...] Ged Kearney, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, called on all Australians aged 16-plus who are eligible to register as an organ and tissue donor, but haven't, to do so.

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### **Smooth FM 95.3, 08:00 News, 27/02/2024**

Nearly 1400 lives were saved through organ donation in Australia last year and it was thanks to 513 donors. However, Assistant Federal Health Minister Ged Kearney says there's still work to do to get more organ donors signed up after the Covid pandemic.

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### **2SM, 18:00 News, 27/02/2024**

Australia's organ donation rates are still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, but in 2023, the most lives have been saved in three years. Around 1396 people across Australia received a life-saving organ donation in 2023, but the registration rate to participate is still sitting too low. Assistant Health Minister Ged Kearney says lives can be saved by registering.

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### **SENQ, 06:00 News, 27/02/2024**

Organ donation is in the spotlight today, with stats showing a 14% increase last year in those who received a transplant, with more than 1400 lives saved thanks to 513 donors. But Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Ged Kearney says we can do better.

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## ASSISTANT MINISTER MCCARTHY

### **Koori Radio, Blackchat, 27/02/2024, Lola Forester**

Forester says a new round of funding to support Australians living with cancer has opened with Assistant Minister of Indigenous Health Malarndirri McCarthy announcing the latest Supporting People with Cancer Grant initiative. She adds the deadline for submissions is on Thursday and for details and information people can go to grants.gov.au.

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## DEPARTMENT

### **Australian Department of Health and Aged Care selects Google Cloud**

## for data consolidation and compliance

ITWire, Other, 27/02/2024, David M Williams

After a competitive tender process, the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care has selected Google Cloud to consolidate its data assets for greater regulatory compliance, cost savings, and faster innovation. The rationalisation of data assets on Google Cloud is expected to yield substantial savings and efficiencies.

Also reported by: [WEB IT News Australia \(Online\)](#)

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## CORONAVIRUS

### Vaccine ruling 'just tip of the iceberg'

The Australian, General News, 28/02/2024, Ellie Dudley and Lydia Lynch, Page 3

A landmark legal decision "vindicating" dozens of Queensland paramedics and police officers who took on the state government's Covid-19 vaccine mandates is just the "tip of the iceberg" of litigation attempting to overthrow pandemic orders, experts say, with cases in similar jurisdictions likely to ride on the coat-tails of the successful action. Calls for a royal commission into vaccination mandates during the pandemic were reignited on Tuesday after the Queensland Supreme Court found the state's policy was "unlawful" for the frontline workers, meaning any disciplinary actions that relied on those policies are deemed invalid.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [The Courier Mail \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#), [7news.com.au \(Online\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#).

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### Health expert admits some Covid vaccines had serious side effects

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, David Southwell

ABC health expert Norman Swan has admitted the Covid vaccines produced unexpected side effects but considers them to be akin to 'winning the lotto three times in your lifetime'. Dr Swan was commenting on the largest ever study done into adverse reactions from Covid vaccines which was published last week. 'They uncovered side effects they hadn't quite expected and they did show up as a signal there,' Dr Swan told ABC interviewer Jeremy Fernandez on Monday.

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### Channel 9, Nine News, 27/02/2024, Michael Thomson

A bombshell ruling in favour of Queensland frontline workers who took their bosses to court over COVID-19 vaccine mandates. The declaration that directives given to police and paramedics were unlawful and had no power.

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## AGEING AND AGED CARE

### Nurse shortage

Mountain Views Mail - Healesville, General News, 27/02/2024, Callum Ludwig, Page 1

Aged care homes in Australia have been required to have a registered nurse (RN) on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week since July 2023, implemented as a key recommendation from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. For some homes, including the AdventCare home in Warburton, this requirement has proved to be impossible to fulfil due to staff shortages, despite their best efforts.

## **RMIT's earn and learn plan empowers care workers**

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Sian Powell

A model for training workers while they earn an income in the demanding aged and disability care sector has been developed by RMIT University in conjunction with industry, government and employee representatives. The plan addresses recommendations made by the aged care and disability sector Royal Commissions which found social services workers were poorly paid, poorly trained and largely employed on a casual basis.

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## **Unpaid carers burnt out**

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 27/02/2024, Natasha Egan

A study conducted by home and disability care provider The CareSide paints a picture of physical, mental and financial stress among Australia's informal carers. The organisation surveyed 707 unpaid caregivers living in Australia between November and December 2023 to learn about the level of burnout they are experiencing.

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## **Share your tech successes**

Australian Ageing Agenda, Other, 27/02/2024, Natasha Egan

Aged care providers are being encouraged to submit their innovation and technology accomplishments for an ITAC 2024 Award. The awards aim to promote and recognise innovative solutions or developments that demonstrate a focus on improving the lives of people receiving aged care support.

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## **Queensland seniors invited to savings expos**

Australian Seniors News, Other, 27/02/2024

Older Queenslanders are invited to attend a Seniors Expo or Seniors Savings Pop-up to find out more about available concessions that can help ease the cost of living. Minister for Seniors, Charis Mullen said the events focus on what seniors can receive from the State Government to ease cost-of-living pressures.

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## **The new Support at Home program is starting from 2025**

My Aged Care, Other, 27/02/2024

The new Support at Home program will be delivered in two stages from July 2025. Under the new program, older people will have better access to services, equipment and home modifications to help them remain healthy, active and socially connected to their community.

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## **Consultation on the new Aged Care Act is now open**

My Aged Care, Other, 27/02/2024

A new Aged Care Act is being introduced. It will change how aged care services are delivered to older people in their homes, community settings and residential care homes, and ensure that older Australians get the care and dignity they deserve. The Australian Government is now asking for feedback on the draft of the new Aged Care Act.

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## **Without a medical breakthrough, dementia cases will almost double by 2054**

The Senior, Other, 27/02/2024, Eileen Wood

Catherine Daskalakis, 57, was diagnosed with younger onset dementia ten months ago. "When I got my diagnosis, the first thing I did was ring the National Dementia Helpline. It was the best decision I ever made," she said. "I wanted someone who knew what I was going through. I was able to offload a

lot in that initial call. It was the start of receiving support which was invaluable. In those first few months, Dementia Australia offered me emotional help and counselling.

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## POPULATION HEALTH

### **Social media bad for teens? Experts insist otherwise**

Age, General News, 28/02/2024, Hannah Kennelly, Page 3

Most parents know about the dangers of social media for children, but experts say for kids entering their teens it is a key source of friendship and connection that should not be underestimated. Australian Institute of Family Studies researcher Dr Mandy Truong said young people's social relationships during their middle years had a "profound impact" on their health, wellbeing and academic performances.

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### **Smoking health disaster must not repeat**

West Australian, Editorials, 28/02/2024, Page 2

When the famous anti-smoking commercial post humously featured Oscar-winning Russian actor Yul Brynner first aired in 1986, 31 per cent of Australians were smokers. Produced by the American Cancer Society the year before, the advertisement featured Brynner, dying of lung cancer, speaking about the habit which had killed him.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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### **Exercise smarter! It will increase your brainpower**

The Australian, Other, 27/02/2024, Peta Bee

New research shows that jogging, yoga and dancing in the kitchen can bulk up your grey matter, boost your mood and slow age-related decline. Muscle gains, fat loss and improved fitness are the reasons most of us try to stick to some sort of exercise regimen, but several new studies underpin just how important physical activity is for our brain health too.

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### **Shocking dental effects of vaping**

Adelaide Now, Other, 27/02/2024, Sue Dunlevy

Vapes are wrecking the teeth and jaws of young people in a way similar to illicit drugs, including cocaine and methamphetamine. The damage is occurring so fast users aged in their 20s are requiring expensive crown work that is usually the preserve of older patients. "When you vape, and same with cigarette smoking and a lot of those illicit drugs as well, they cause mouth dryness," The Australian Dental Association's vaping expert Dr Sue-Ching Yeoh said.

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### **Dr Michael Mosley reveals the secrets to a good night's sleep**

West Australian, Other, 27/02/2024, Katie Hampson

Since his early 40s, Michael Mosley has struggled with insomnia. And, much like having a baby, the wildly varying pieces of advice he was getting around how to achieve a peaceful night's sleep were turning out to be of limited use. "I have tried almost everything to crack my insomnia, from following the usual advice — 'make your bedroom cool and dark, with no distracting electronic equipment' — to wearing strange headbands that are supposed to read my brainwaves and boost deep sleep," he told The West Australian.

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### **Why insurance premiums are squeezing Australians and fuelling inflation**



Insurance premiums are rising faster than inflation, squeezing homeowners, drivers and private health customers, even as some of Australia's biggest insurers expand their profits. [...] Health costs are also tracking above inflation, according to ABS data, at the same time as the value many consumers receive from the private health insurance diminishes, according to a report by the Australian Medical Association.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#).

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## Channel 7, Seven News, 27/02/2024, Peter Mitchell

Dentists are warning the rise of vaping is having visible consequences, with a surge in e-cigarette smokers suffering damage to their mouths similar to that of illicit drug users. A federal crackdown banning the importation of vapes later this week.

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## CANCER, HEARING AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

### She has lived in pain all her life, but thinks only of others

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 28/02/2024, Evangeline Polymeneas, Page 12

Annaliese Holland's life was almost cut short last year after her spine threatened to crush her vital organs. Having spent most of her 24 years battling auto-immune autonomic ganglionopathy (AAG), a terminal illness that attacks her nervous system and shuts down her organs, Annaliese was faced with a new challenge kyphosis and scoliosis, symptoms of her medication.

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### Knowledge is pooled to save top swimmers

Courier Mail, General News, 28/02/2024, Tahlia Leathart, Page 15

The University of Queensland and Swimming Australia have joined forces to run a pilot program, working on early detection and prevention of skin cancer in sun-exposed athletes. With 90 per cent of elite Australian swimmers based in Queensland, Swimming Australia exercise physician Dr Rachel Harris said it was vital to get the program off the ground to safeguard the health of the athletes.

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### Surgery best for diabetes

Herald Sun, General News, 28/02/2024, Page 13

US scientists say weight loss surgery is more effective than lifestyle management for long-term control of type 2 diabetes. University of Pittsburgh researchers looked at outcomes about 10 years down the line for 262 people with type 2 diabetes who had either gone under the knife or received medical lifestyle management across four different studies.

Also reported by: [Toowoomba Chronicle \(Toowoomba\)](#), [West Australian \(Perth\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#).

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### From dialysis to golf, new career

Burnie Advocate, General News, 28/02/2024, Helen Kempton, Page 6

Mitchell Marshall was just 21 when he became very unwell, very unexpectedly. He presented at the Mersey Community Hospital emergency department and medical professional found some of his vital observations were very abnormal. By 6pm that day, the young Devonport man was transferred to the Launceston General Hospital and 14 hours later he had started dialysis because his kidneys were failing. To say the fit and previously healthy sportman was shocked would be an understatement.

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### Kidney transplant changed Stephen's life

At 12-years-old, Stephen Smith was enjoying playing basketball at a regional and state level. But it was after a game when he knew something was wrong, when he found dark blood in his urine. A hospital visit found he had Nephritis - a condition in which the tissues in the kidney become inflamed and have problems filtering waste from the blood.

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## **Stroke of genius: brain-scanning helmet helping Jack fight back**

Newcastle Herald, General News, 28/02/2024, Damon Cronshaw, Page 4

When Newcastle's Jack Di Tommaso had a stroke three months ago, paramedics used a brain-scanning helmet to diagnose him quickly. The 27-year-old became part of a NSW government trial of Hunter patients that aims to improve their chances of recovery.

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## **La Trobe Uni's eye clinic helps out kids with vision problems**

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Sian Powell

After assisting as many as 1200 children with vision difficulties last year, students and staff at the La Trobe Eye Clinic will soon begin assessing and treating adults with low vision problems. A new building with more consulting rooms to house the rapidly expanding clinic is planned for 2026, and discipline lead and associate professor Connie Koklanis predicts increasing growth in the future.

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## **Macquarie University's Nano SunWatch guards against skin cancer**

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Sian Powell

Despite decades of "slip, slop, slap" messaging, Australia has the highest melanoma fatality rate in the world – a brutal consequence of long hot summers that surprised materials engineer Noushin Nasiri. Nasiri came to Australia from Iran to begin an Australian government-supported doctoral scholarship 11 years ago, and she originally planned to develop a lightweight alloy for vehicle manufacture.

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## **David Wightman hopeful for kidney transplant as Tasmania leads country with donations**

The Mercury, Other, 27/02/2024, Tia Ewen

David Wightman was given the gift of life when his mum donated her kidney 25 years ago. His body rejected the organ last year, however his hopes for a transplant look promising. Howrah's David Wightman was given the gift of life when his mum donated her kidney after he was diagnosed with kidney failure 25 years ago. "It was quite an emotional experience," he said.

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## **Take charge of your hearing health**

Shepparton News Online, Other, 27/02/2024, Kelly Carmody

As World Hearing Day approaches on March 3, Hearing Australia is urging Australians to register for a free 15-minute hearing check throughout March as part of its Hearing the Nation Tour. [...] Hearing Australia managing director Kim Terrell emphasised the simplicity and significance of undergoing a hearing check with more than 1000 free events scheduled nationwide.

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## **Australia faces a growing burden from arthritis**

ABC Online, Other, 27/02/2024

Nearly 1 in 7 Australians live with arthritis, a chronic condition that can have a significant impact on the quality of your life. New data released by Arthritis Australia and Monash University claims the number of cases will increase to 5.4 million people by 2040 and that's going to place a significant burden on the country's economy and health system.

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## How type 2 diabetes causes lower back pain

The New Daily, Other, 27/02/2024, John Elder

When you're first diagnosed with type 2 (T2) diabetes, you're given a list of awful things waiting down the track. T2 sugar spikes damage the large blood vessels of the heart, brain and legs. Indeed, cardiovascular disease is the main cause of death among people with diabetes. If you have diabetes, you can be up to four times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke than people who don't.

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## Your blood could help save cancer patients' lives

The Senior, Other, 27/02/2024

People living with cancer are the biggest users of donated blood and plasma in Australia and two leading charities are calling on Aussies to roll up their sleeves to meet growing demand. [...] Australian Red Cross Lifeblood and the Cancer Council joined forces to encourage Australians to support people living with cancer by donating blood and plasma, ahead of World Cancer Day - which took place on February 4.

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## Mind your heart health without breaking the bank

The Senior, Other, 27/02/2024

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Australia, but in the midst of the cost of living crisis, budgeting to maintain health can seem like a luxury. As the nation marks heart health awareness month REDFEB during February, leading cardiovascular experts are spreading a simple message - it is possible to look after your heart health without breaking the bank.

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## Parkinson's pain: Survey seeks people facing agonising symptoms

The Senior, Other, 27/02/2024, Eileen Wood

Phil\* was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease eight years ago and says it's been a tough journey of learning what he can and can't do because of how the condition has affected him physically and mentally; but also because of chronic pain. The now 78-year-old regional Queenslander no longer drives or rides his bike and he says there are days when the weakness, trembling and pain makes it hard to make, or even hold, a cup of tea.

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## Radio National, Breakfast, 27/02/2024, Sally Sara

Interview with Professor Ilana Ackerman, Report Lead Author, Monash University's School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine. Nearly 1 in 7 Australians lives with arthritis which can have a significant impact on quality of life. New data released this morning by Arthritis Australia and Monash University shows the number of cases will increase to 5.4 million people in Australia by 2040, and that's expected to place a significant burden on the country's economy and health system. Ackerman says the increase is a factor of population growth and ageing.

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## PRIMARY CARE

### More super paying for treatments

Sydney Morning Herald, Money, 28/02/2024, John Collett, Page 1

More people have been tapping into super savings to pay for urgent medical treatments or to continue with treatments that they otherwise would not be able to afford, but there are conditions governing release of super. Applications are made to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and, if successful, the super fund is instructed to release the money.

Also reported by: [Age \(Melbourne\)](#).

## SA leads for organ donors

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 28/02/2024, Samantha Landy, Page 18

A nation-leading 73 per cent of eligible South Australians have pledged to become organ donors, with 32,399 people adding their names to the register in 2023. SA residents' ability to register via their driver's licence is a key contributing factor to the high proportion, with other states and territories not providing this option.

Also reported by: [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#).

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## Many of our GP clinics are on the edge of closure if a solution, like the HECS debt, isn't implemented soon

Hobart Mercury, General News, 28/02/2024, Andrew Fair, Page 18

The GPTT's proposal to pay student debt in return for service might be the only thing that saves our health system, Imagine a worst-case scenario at a GP surgery in any location in regional Tasmania a small town with one or two small GP clinics serving the local area. Three GPs decide that the sheer weight of numbers of patients, the stress and the non-existence of worklife balance is too much.

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## 'Be bold' with VAD access

Northern Territory News, General News, 28/02/2024, Fia Walsh, Page 5

Voluntary assisted dying advocates are calling for the Northern Territory to "be bold" again and extend euthanasia access to people suffering from dementia. Jack Ellis, 80, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2021, and is being supported by his partner Chris Tyzack. The Wagait Beach couple both signed advanced personal plans before Jack's diagnosis, requesting access to VAD if and when their health meets certain conditions.

Also reported by: [Northern Territory News \(Online\)](#).

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## Care mission

West Australian, Insider, 28/02/2024, Jay Hanna, Page 4

We have all seen the news footage of a sheepish-looking tourist giving a feeble wave while being wheeled on to the tarmac at Jandakot airport following a Royal Flying Doctor Service rescue mission in the Pilbara or Gascoyne. Perhaps you were even one of the 10,270 patients RFDS retrieved last year having suffered a snake bite in the bush, a fall at Karijini National Park or a medical episode while working offshore or on site.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Perth\)](#).

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## Care in the comfort of home

Bendigo Advertiser, General News, 28/02/2024, Jonathon Magrath, Page 1

For 15 years Natalie Richardson has lived with chronic obstruction pulmonary disease, a lung disease which makes it hard to breathe. It has meant many trips to the GP and hospital for the mum of four, but with help from Bendigo Health's chronic disease team and a new in-home virtual care program, Ms Richardson can manage her disease at home.

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

## Internal documents reveal Prince Charles Hospital damage control trumped informing grieving families

The Courier Mail, Other, 27/02/2024, Madura McCormack

Queensland Health's response to a series of deadly fungal infections at Prince Charles Hospital prioritised government briefs and media messaging over informing impacted families, internal documents have revealed. Queensland hospitals are now being inundated by children in the emergency department both due to the cost of living crisis and the lack of bulk-billed doctors.

## Fears petition for Mid West emergency rescue chopper has been rejected after minister's response

West Australian, Other, 27/02/2024, Jessica Moroney

A "deflated" advocate for a Mid West-based emergency helicopter fears the community petition calling for the service has been rejected by the State Government after it was finalised last week. A community-organised petition with more than 1000 signatures calling for a rescue helicopter in the Mid West was tabled in Parliament in August last year, after an inquiry into aeromedical services in WA found such a service could have significant benefits for the region.

[Read More](#)

## People living with disabilities in regional SA moving to Adelaide for services, infrastructure

ABC Online, Other, 27/02/2024, Annabel Francis

People living with disabilities in regional South Australia are considering moving away due to a lack of accessible infrastructure and community awareness around disabilities. Sixty-eight-year-old Janita Park has lived in Port Pirie her whole life. Prior to suffering a serious medical episode last year that left her partially paralysed and dependent on a walking stick, she had worked as a support worker for people with disabilities for a decade.

[Read More](#)

## How VAD telehealth loophole harms patients with 'substantial delays': SHPA

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 27/02/2024, Megan Haggan

Hospital pharmacists have underlined their support for better access to VAD services, as the Territories grow closer to offering the service. Earlier this month independent MP Kate Chaney introduced a private member's bill to the House of Representatives, calling to overturn a ban on telehealth consultations for people wanting to access voluntary assisted dying services.

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## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Surge in mental stress claims linked to work

The Australian, General News, 28/02/2024, Ewin Hannan, Page 5

New data released by Safe Work Australia on Tuesday reveals mental health conditions accounted for 9 per cent of all serious workers' compensation claims and 7 per cent of all work-related injuries and illnesses, a 36.9 per cent increase in claims since 2017-18. One quarter of the serious mental stress claims in 2021-22 were attributed to work pressure, 27.5 per cent were due to work-related harassment or bullying, and 16.4 per cent were due to exposure to workplace or occupational violence.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

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### Mitchell: Don't suffer mental health battles in silence

The Australian, Sport, 28/02/2024, David Riccio, Page 24

Shaq Mitchell, the Rabbitohs' damaging front-rower and older brother of NRL superstar Latrell Mitchell, says his mental health illness was so severe he did not return to the field after halftime in a game against St George Illawarra last year. "I had it during a game and JD (head coach Jason Demetriou) and our head of welfare Ian Reeves came over to me and said, 'Are you OK?'"

[Read Plain Text](#) [Read More](#)

### Poor mental health in bi, non-binary Australians

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 28/02/2024, Natassia Chrysanthos, Page 5

Lgbtq wellbeing Australians with diverse sexualities and gender identities are two to four times more likely to experience a mental disorder, suicidal thoughts and self-harm than the broader population, according to the first set of national data that compares their wellbeing to that of heterosexual and cisgender people.

Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [Age \(Melbourne\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#).

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## Helping out the helpers

Adelaide Advertiser, General News, 28/02/2024, Page 9

A support program is aiming to prevent the onset of mental health conditions for first responders, who are twice as likely to develop anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Flinders University has partnered with South Australian emergency services in an attempt to increase the resilience of early-career emergency responders and work to reduce the impact of their exposure to traumatic events.

Also reported by: [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Cairns Post \(Cairns\)](#).

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## Work to start 'within weeks' on unit

Northern Daily Leader, General News, 28/02/2024, Page 7

The fence has gone up and construction on a new Mental Health Unit at Tamworth hospital will begin within weeks. A spokesperson for NSW Health Infrastructure told the Leader in November last year, the project was on track to be completed by 2025, despite a delay in getting started. The unit will be the end result of an extensive community campaign, over five years.

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## UniSA program aims to end suicide in rural communities

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Sian Powell

Many Australian farmers are troubled by issues outside their control such as bad weather, falling commodity prices, disease outbreaks and ebbing demand for produce. These can lead to difficult streams of thought that are hard to ignore – especially because many spend long stretches working in isolation.

[Read More](#)

## Footy star Drew Mitchell opens up about the devastating mental health problem that left him with an incurable condition - and how he's beating it with a very unorthodox treatment

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 27/02/2024, Josh Alston

Former Wallaby Drew Mitchell got to live his childhood dream playing the sport he loved, but the day his career ended he faced a new challenge: anxiety. Mitchell earned 71 caps for Australia, played 112 Super Rugby matches across three clubs and starred in a further 82 games for Toulon in France. Now he has opened up to Daily Mail Australia about the extreme lows that followed his retirement, and how medicinal cannabis has helped him reclaim his life.

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## You're not a burden: Seniors encouraged to open up about their problems

The Senior, Other, 27/02/2024, Therese Murray

Some older Australians are saying they "don't want to be a burden" when asked what stops them from sharing how they really feel with people close to them. So, a group of researchers who are looking into how people over the age of 60 talk about and understand mental wellbeing is already getting an insight into why depression and anxiety are still considered taboo topics among this age group.

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## Gathering helped Hans see senior role in new light

The Senior, Other, 27/02/2024, Rowan Cowley

A men's health group is helping blokes who are doing it tough get back on the road to wellness by taking a detour off the beaten track. Statistics show that as a group, men do it toughest when it comes to mental health challenges. One in eight men will experience depression in their lifetimes and according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, about 75 percent of people who committed suicide in the country last year were men.

[Read More](#)

## **Suicide in older Aussies likely underestimated – expert**

Your Life Choices, Other, 27/02/2024, Andrew Gigacz

When the topic of suicide is raised, my first thought is usually of younger people. The tragedy of young ones taking their own lives somehow seems particularly acute. I think about the decades of potential happiness they may have had if they had lived. Or perhaps my thoughts turn to youth because we seem to rarely hear of suicide in among older people. But Australians over 50 are by no means immune to this scourge. And perhaps it's time for my generation to be more open about this.

[Read More](#)

## **ABC News, ABC Evening News, 27/02/2024, Joe O'Brien**

Perinatal anxiety and depression rates have significantly increased with a new study finding a record number of mums are suffering during and after pregnancy. Experts say the rise is partly due to more conversation about mental health and treating the condition as early as possible is important.

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# CHIEF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY OFFICE

## **Row over teaching, nursing training**

The Australian, General News, 28/02/2024, Natasha Bitá, Page 7

The biggest state government has poured cold water on expectations that it pay for trainee teachers and nurses to work up to 800 hours in public schools and hospitals. NSW Deputy Premier and Education Minister Prue Car said the federal government was responsible for funding university "prac" placements, and her government had already funded pay rises for public school teachers.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#)

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## **Major intake of new nurses and midwives**

Gold Coast Bulletin, General News, 28/02/2024, Sam Stolz, Page 12

Close to 200 graduate nurses and midwives are ready to scrub in on the Northern Rivers, including the new Tweed Hospital. However, a leading nurses advocate says it won't put a dent in the severe staffing shortage across the region. Last week, Northern NSW Local Health District announced more than 190 new graduates would be deployed through the region, with 80 signed up for employment at the new \$723.3m Tweed Valley Hospital at Cudgen, near Kingscliff.

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## **Developing and evaluating a clinical supervision training program for mental health nurses**

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, Other, 27/02/2024, Nicholas Procter, Joshua McDonough and Kate Rhodes

The continued support for nurses through education and training is fundamental to the success and growth of the profession. This is particularly relevant within mental health nursing, where staff often face complex and emotionally challenging circumstances.

[Read More](#)

## **Uni review has called for an end to unpaid placements**

A report reviewing universities has recommended "sweeping changes" to support students who undertake unpaid placements better financially. The Universities Accord Review, released on Sunday, has called for the federal government to pay for placements in areas of skill shortages, such as nursing.

[Read More](#)

## Casual nurses at WA hospital dismissed due to 'admin error'

Nursing Review, Other, 27/02/2024, Arshmah Jamal

Casual nurses at a Western Australian hospital saw their employment terminated abruptly, a move the union has called an attempt to recover from budget overruns, but the hospital claims it was a simple administrative error. The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation WA (ANMFWA) said dozens of nurses at Busselton Hospital, south-west of Perth, were shocked to find their contracts had not been renewed in recent weeks.

[Read More](#)

## UK nurses move to regional southern NSW

Nursing Review, Other, 27/02/2024, Arshmah Jamal

Twelve nurses from the United Kingdom will be helping the communities across the Southern NSW Local Health District (SNSWLHD) at Moruya Hospital, Batemans Bay Hospital and South East Regional Hospital. The new nurses were recruited as part of the Rural Health Workforce Incentive Scheme (RHWIS), which offered incentive packages of up to \$20,000 to attract health workers to regional NSW.

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## HEALTH WORKFORCE

### Retaining talent a challenge

Launceston Examiner, General News, 28/02/2024, Honni Pitt, Page 19

It's an exciting time for the future of Allied Health in Tasmania as the University of Tasmania's expansion program begins. With projected job growth nationally of 14 per cent for Physiotherapists, 21 per cent for Speech Pathologists and 17 per cent for Occupational Therapists over the next two years, it is vitally important that Tasmania offers an education pathway to help fill these roles.

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### Transforming anatomy from a first-year headache to a favourite subject

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Sian Powell

Looking on as human body parts are dissected or handled can be confronting for some allied health students. Yet a thorough understanding of anatomical structure is essential for students pursuing careers in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, the exercise and sports sciences, sonography, radiography and many other health-related fields.

[Read More](#)

### Staffing concerns across northern NSW hospitals before opening of \$723m Tweed Valley Hospital

The Courier Mail, Other, 27/02/2024, Sam Stolz

Close to 200 graduate nurses and midwives are ready to scrub into Northern Rivers hospitals, including the new Tweed Hospital – but it's not putting a dent in a severe staffing shortage across the region. Last week, Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) announced more than 190 new graduates would be deployed through the region, with 80 signed up for employment at the new \$723.3 million Tweed Valley Hospital at Cudgen, near Kingscliff CBD.

[Read More](#)



## Much loved plastic surgeon Tim Proudman who helped the lives of thousands dies in Adelaide after two-year battle with deadly disease

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 27/02/2024, David Southwell

A much-loved plastic surgeon renowned for his humanitarian work has succumbed to cancer at the age of 62 after a brave two-year fight after defying his dire diagnosis by running marathons including one in the Antarctic. Adelaide plastic and reconstructive surgeon Tim Proudman, who has been described by colleagues and friends as being a man with 'a rare combination of extreme talent, incredible courage, humility and kindness', died on Thursday.

[Read More](#)

## Paying medical students to work as clinical assistants could fix specialist shortages, experts say

Australian Doctor, Other, 27/02/2024

The clinical assistants model rolled out in Victoria during COVID-19 would work in general practice, academics say. Paying final year medical students to work as clinical assistants — a model successfully trialled during COVID-19 — could be the key to easing workforce shortage across multiple specialties, including primary care, experts say.

[Read More](#)

## UTI service to start in SA

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 27/02/2024

For South Australian pharmacists about to start participating, there are lessons to be learned from UTI services around the country, writes PDL Beginning on 1 March 2024, South Australian pharmacists can provide antibiotic treatment without a prescription from a prescriber for uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs) to patients who meet certain criteria.

[Read More](#)

## 'They will care if they lose their seat'

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 27/02/2024

"This is how we are going to apply the pressure," CAPS spokespeople tell the AJP Podcast, explaining why the group has moved away from political rallies and towards influencing elections. CAPS representatives will attend the Dunkley (Victoria) by-election this weekend (2 March) to lobby against a Labor vote in protest against 60-day dispensing – and

[Read More](#)

## CAPS plots jellybean assault

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 27/02/2024

GlucoJel jellybeans are set to be deployed by pharmacists as a sweeter for voters in this weekend's Dunkley by-election to preference Labor last. A pallet-load of the Pharmacy-Only GlucoJel jellybeans labelled with a message urging voters not to support Labor is set to be distributed at polling stations in the Victorian seat this Saturday.

[Read More](#)

## Qld ownership bill report

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 27/02/2024

Last week, the inquiry into the Pharmacy Ownership Bill 2023 was transferred to the Cost of Living and Economics Committee, and if it passes, a new Queensland Pharmacy Business Ownership Council will be formed in the coming weeks to regulate the Bill. The Pharmacy Business Ownership Bill 2023 seeks to repeal the 2001 Act and replace it with a modern and effective framework for the regulation of the ownership of chemists.

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## 'We stood up to the Guild' – Labor

Australian Journal of Pharmacy, Other, 27/02/2024

The government will not bow to the power of lobbyists, as it seeks to ease cost-of-living pressures, Labor's Senator Hellen Polley says. Addressing the Senate on Monday (26 February), Polley said the government was committed to reducing the cost of medicines for patients.

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## MEDICARE BENEFITS AND DIGITAL HEALTH

### 'Such a huge expense': Bulk-billing GPs disappear in the Illawarra

Illawarra Mercury, Other, 27/02/2024, Kate McIlwain

New data showing how GPs stack up in each electorate has revealed that the bulk-billing rate in both Cunningham and Whitlam has plummeted. In a survey of more than 6000 GP clinics in Australia, online healthcare directory Cleanbill has looked at the out-of-pocket costs, how hard it is to see a doctor and the bulk billing rate of clinics in each federal electorate.

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## BENEFITS INTEGRITY

### NDIS commissioner resigns days before report due into scandal exposed by Four Corners

ABC Online, Other, 27/02/2024, Anne Connolly

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner Tracey Mackey will step down from her position just days before an independent report is due into a scandal exposed by Four Corners in which children with autism were unlawfully restrained at an NDIS-funded program. ABC Investigations spent three months investigating neglect and abuse within the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme).

[Read More](#)

### Hemant Chadha inquest: Adelaide father told by paramedics to 'man up' before dying at home from pneumonia

Daily Mail Australia, Other, 28/02/2024, Ashley Nickel

An unwell man whose sudden death was deemed avoidable was turned away from several Adelaide hospitals and told to 'stop causing drama' in his final days, an inquest has heard. Father-of-two Hemant Chadha, 38, died from acute-on-chronic pneumonia at home in the early hours of April 23, 2020 after making several hospital trips.

[Read More](#)

### Channel 7, Seven News, 27/02/2024, Max Fatcher and Sharyn Ghidella

The families of two patients who died after harrowing experiences at Queensland hospitals have shared their stories at a community forum. It comes as pressure mounts on the Marles Government to fix the health care system.

Report continues on: [Channel 7 \(Brisbane\)](#).

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### Channel 9, Today, 27/02/2024, Karl Stefanovic and Sarah Abo

A Qld father who died of cancer didn't receive important paperwork about his condition because it was sent to the wrong address. His daughter claims he could have been treated at Robina Hospital in 2022

if correct procedures had been followed. The hospital now admits in a patient safety review that the tumour could have been diagnosed at a curative period if he had been advised of the result.

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

### **Calls to ban life insurers from discriminating with DNA**

Canberra Times, Other, 27/02/2024, Kat Wong

Australians with a family history of cancer or illness are avoiding life-saving genetic tests, prompting calls to ban life insurers from discriminating based on DNA. Genetic screening can help prevent, diagnose and treat some serious conditions, but a recent report from the University of Monash found Australians are worried about the impact this information can have on life insurance prices.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#)

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### **Tasmania votes: AMA deliver wishlist, Libs want NW to be energy hub, Greens talk fines**

The Mercury, Other, 27/02/2024, Rob Inglis, David Killick and Simon McGuire

If re-elected, Premier Jeremy Rockliff has vowed to declare the first Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) in the North-West within 100 days of returning to office. [...] The AMA on Monday launched its top five priorities for the election, with Tasmanian president, Dr John Saul, saying the state's medical workforce needed greater support in both the public and acute sectors in order to improve the broader health system.

[Read More](#)

### **New Standard for pain**

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 27/02/2024

An updated Australian Practice standard in pain management for pharmacy services has been released by the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA). It details current best practice for the provision of pain management services, including analgesic stewardship services.

[Read More](#)

### **ABC Radio Hobart, Breakfast, 27/02/2024, Ryk Goddard**

The Australian Medical Association has put forward the priority areas it wants to see commitments on from political parties in the lead-up to the election. The Tas branch of the AMA says it wants to see the major parties focus on fixing five key areas within the state's health care system. Branch President Doctor John Saul says whichever party forms government in the 23 March poll needs to make a concerted effort to improve health care.

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### **Radio National, Breakfast, 27/02/2024, Sally Sara**

New data from the Organ and Tissue Authority shows levels of organ donation have increased close to pre-pandemic levels. Almost 1400 Australians had an organ transplant in 2023, up 14% from the year before.

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## SPORT

### **Racing NSW gets its first female chair**

Racing Minister David Harris has announced Saranne Cooke as the first female chair of Racing NSW. Cooke has been the deputy chair to Russell Balding for the past three years and has sat on the board since 2015. She has been acting in the role as chair since November, when the Minns government abandoned controversial legislation to extend Racing NSW board members terms beyond 12 years, meaning Balding had to stand down.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph \(Sydney\)](#).

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## Lewis backs greater NRL crackdown amid CTE battle

Canberra Times, Sport, 28/02/2024, Melanie Dinjaski and Kat Wong, Page 38

Rugby league great Wally Lewis has backed the NRL to crack down further on high contact if it means protecting player safety. After hanging up the boots as one of the best the game has ever seen, "The King" was diagnosed with probable chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) which is a form of dementia, and now he's using his experience to speak up about the issue affecting many sporting codes.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#), [ABC Online \(Online\)](#).

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## Let's go all-out rather than 'cut-price Games'

Courier Mail, Edition Changes - Metro, 28/02/2024, Hayden Johnson, Page 14

A 50,000-seat stadium should be built at Victoria Park, Suncorp Stadium upgraded and the Gabba transformed into a Madison Square Garden-style arena as part of a "golden triangle" events precinct for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, a city power couple has declared. Frustrated with talk of a "cut-price Olympics", former South Bank chairman Steve Wilson and his company director wife Jane have called for Brisbane not to squib the opportunity to build transformative Games infrastructure.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#).

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## Marvel Matildas a total sell-out

Herald Sun, General News, 28/02/2024, Peter Rolfe, Page 4

The Matildas will march on Melbourne on Wednesday with a sold-out Marvel Stadium crowd hoping to cheer them to the Paris Olympics. The crowd piling into the Docklands stadium is set to challenge the Victorian Matildas attendance record of 50,629 set at a FIFA Women's World Cup send-off match at the venue last July.

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## AFL coaches Alastair Clarkson and Chris Fagan to meet with Human Rights Commission over Hawthorn racism scandal

7news.com.au, Other, 27/02/2024, Cameron Noakes

Alastair Clarkson and Chris Fagan are about to come face to face with their accusers, including a former superstar. There has been a major development in the long-running and explosive racism scandal that came out of the Hawthorn Football Club in 2022.

Also reported by: [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#).

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## Premier defends bureaucrat's \$160k Commonwealth Games payout

9News, Other, 27/02/2024

The Victorian Premier has defended a payment given to former Commonwealth Games boss Jeroen Weimar, despite the event being cancelled. After just ten months in the position, Weimar is believed to have received a \$160,000 payout for his role as Commonwealth Games chief. The Victorian bid for the 2026 Commonwealth Games was accepted by the federation in August 2022, but was subsequently cancelled in July 2023 by the state government.

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Rugby league great Wally Lewis is spearheading a campaign to raise awareness in schools about the dangers of contact sports. Lewis himself is now grappling with the effects of a long and successful career, marked with repeated head knocks.

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## HEALTH ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH

### Treatment hope for kidney cancer

The Australian, Edition Changes - All-round Metro, 28/02/2024, Sofia Dmitrieva, Page 3

A precisely targeted and highpowered form of radiotherapy has shown unprecedented results in providing long-term cancer control for patients with inoperable kidney tumours, a new trial has revealed. Phase two of the first multicentre clinical trial tested stereotactic body radiation (SABR) as a non-invasive treatment for kidney cancer and involved 70 patients with high-risk tumours not suited for surgery who received a precisely targeted form of radiotherapy that allowed patients to receive much higher doses than conventional radiotherapy.

Also reported by: [The Australian \(Online\)](#).

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### Big ideas that are shaping nation for the better

The Australian, General News, 28/02/2024, Tim Dodd, Page 7

A fire-retardant paint to save homes from bushfires and an easy-to-use blood sugar indicator that will change the lives of people with diabetes are among the transformative university projects honoured in the inaugural Shaping Australia awards. The seven Shaping Australia winners, who were presented with their awards by federal Education Minister Jason Clare in Canberra on Tuesday night, were chosen from 18 finalists who have contributed to the nation in one of three areas of university endeavour: research, teaching or engagement with the community.

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### Broccoli weapon to fight strokes

Herald Sun, General News, 28/02/2024, Sarah Booth, Page 3

Broccoli could be used to treat strokes after scientists discovered a chemical in the green vegetable helps to prevent and treat blood clots. Clots kill thousands of Australians each year, whose main hope apart from surgery is a drug called tPa that works on just one in five acute ischaemic strokes. But world-first Australian research has revealed that an insect-resisting chemical found in broccoli can triple the effectiveness of tPa and prevent strokes in the first place.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Adelaide Advertiser \(Adelaide\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#).

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### Now operation zero deaths

Herald Sun, General News, 28/02/2024, Robyn Riley, Page 9

The unique scientific collaboration that led to the development of Covid vaccines could be a blueprint for researchers to achieve zero deaths from breast cancer. That's the belief of the National Breast Cancer Foundation, which will reveal on Wednesday that funding this "collective focus" of researchers across the country will be key to its future investments.

Also reported by: [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Geelong Advertiser \(Geelong\)](#), [Townsville Bulletin \(Townsville\)](#), [The Mercury \(Online\)](#).

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### Asthma death spike alarm

Adelaide Advertiser, Edition Changes, 28/02/2024, Brad Crouch, Page 3

South Australia's sharp spike in asthma deaths is linked to factors including relaxation of Covid protocols, but now University of South Australia experts believe they have a promising new treatment for the lung disease. Nationally asthma deaths rose 30 per cent in 2022 to 467 while SA had the nation's biggest jump at 88 per cent, with 49 deaths.

Also reported by: [Courier Mail \(Brisbane\)](#), [Hobart Mercury \(Hobart\)](#), [Gold Coast Bulletin \(Gold Coast\)](#), [Adelaide Now \(Online\)](#), [Herald Sun \(Melbourne\)](#).

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## WA burns study a global first

West Australian, Edition Changes, 28/02/2024, Page 5

A laser knife that examines in real time the smoke from burnt flesh is being studied in Perth and could change surgery for burn victims across the globe. Just eight I-Knives, or Intelligent Knives, that can detect the condition of cells based on the smoke from the burn, have been developed, with most studies of the knives examining cancer.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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## \$50 million injection of hope to fund breakthrough dementia treatments

ABC Online, Other, 27/02/2024, Madeleine Grummet

The Federal Government is prioritising rapid acceleration of research into dementia's cause - and hopefully cure - and has just funded a national bio-medical technology incubator \$50 million to develop commercial innovations to address dementia and cognitive decline.

[Read More](#)

## 6PR, Perth Live, 27/02/2024, Oliver Peterson

WA medical researchers are set to receive a major funding boost from the WA Government. Around \$110m will be channelled into a research infrastructure support program and it will cover the operation costs of research institutes, universities and hospitals.

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## FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

### NT police racism probe

Northern Territory News, General News, 28/02/2024, Jason Walls and Jordan Mccarthy, Page 1

Former NT Police constable Zach Rolfe has dismissed a comment he made about charging a drunk man with fighting in public, "to justify the use of force" after pushing him over, as "an administrative issue". Mr Rolfe took the stand in the Alice Springs Local Court on Tuesday for the second day of evidence at an inquest into the death of Kumanjaya Walker at Yuendumu in 2019.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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### Inquest told of misdiagnosed marijuana-induced condition

Daily Liberal, General News, 28/02/2024, Allison Hore, Page 2

A misdiagnosis of a marijuana-induced condition could have prevented an Indigenous man getting the treatment he needed to save his life, an inquest has heard. 36-year-old Kamilaroi Dunghutti man Ricky Hampson Jr - known to family and friends as Dougie - died on August 16, 2021, less than a day after being discharged from Dubbo hospital.

Also reported by: [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Guardian \(Online\)](#).

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## Leading the charge on Indigenous suicide prevention

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Sian Powell

Measures to reduce the alarmingly high rate of suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are central to the work of a specialist centre at the University of Western Australia, led by Professor Pat Dudgeon. These strategies include advising on after-care following a suicide attempt, ensuring coronial recommendations are implemented, and strengthening Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing in general and particularly in the criminal justice system.

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## La Trobe Uni transforms midwifery care for First Nations women

The Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Sian Powell

A Victorian healthcare program has significantly improved the health of pregnant Indigenous women and their babies by providing continuity of midwifery care from the early stages of pregnancy through to labour, birth and the first weeks of a baby's life. Indigenous women in general have double the national average rates of preterm births, double the rate of low birthweight babies, and three times or more the rate of maternal mortality.

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## Rockingham General Hospital welcomes public health system's first Aboriginal health practitioners

West Australian, Other, 28/02/2024, Kasey Gratton

In a first for WA's public health system, Rockingham General Hospital has welcomed two Aboriginal health practitioners to its team who are helping advocate for patients to get the health care they need. Emily Garlett and Danielle Jones started work at the hospital's emergency department in November, where they provide some clinical primary medical health care, as well as support patients and staff.

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## Aboriginal death in custody inquest to look at parole

Kalgoorlie Miner, Other, 26/02/2024, William Ton

An inquest into the death of an Aboriginal woman found unconscious in prison by her sister will examine Victoria's parole law and prison healthcare. Heather Calcaret died at Sunshine Hospital in 2021 after her sister Suzanne found her in a critical condition at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre Prison. The Yamatji, Noongar, Wongi and Pitjantjatjara woman had been administered an opioid medicine a day prior to being found unresponsive.

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## ABC News, News Breakfast, 27/02/2024, Michael Rowland and Bridget Brennan

Interview with Joshua Creamer, Barrister of Waanyi and Kalkadoon descent, regarding a dedicated group of friends gearing up for a trek to the Mount Everest base camp to raise awareness for mental health and suicide prevention amongst First Nations people. Creamer says they wanted to make it meaningful, make a difference and raise awareness about Aboriginal suicide and suicide in the community generally.

*Interview continues on: [ABC News \(Sydney\)](#).*

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## OFFICE OF HEALTH PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

### Students exposed to toxic mould

Herald Sun, General News, 28/02/2024, Suzan Delibasic and Susie O'Brien, Page 2

Primary students at a state school in the Mornington Peninsula have been exposed to toxic mould with parents expressing concerns about their children's health and disruptions to learning. Parents of

students at Bainarring Primary School say kids have had respiratory illnesses including asthma and a series of other health issues amid the serious mould problem.

Also reported by: [Daily Telegraph Australia \(Online\)](#)

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## SafeWork NSW referred to ICAC over killer stone policy

Sydney Morning Herald, General News, 28/02/2024, Michael McGowan, Page 8

Workplace safety regulator SafeWork NSW has been referred to the state's anti-corruption watchdog over the "significantly flawed" decision to spend \$1.34 million on a real-time silica monitoring system despite knowing there were concerns about whether it worked. Yesterday, the NSW Auditor General released a scathing report into SafeWork NSW, finding that despite international knowledge about the "heightened health risk" of deadly engineered stone products since at least 2010, the regulator did not begin proper compliance until 2018.

Also reported by: [Sydney Morning Herald \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [The Australian \(Online\)](#), [West Australian \(Online\)](#), [The Mandarin \(Online\)](#), [Canberra Times \(Online\)](#), [Daily Mail Australia \(Online\)](#)

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## Illawarra kids could be in for a big flu season in 2024

Illawarra Mercury, General News, 28/02/2024, Kate McIlwain, Page 3

A Wollongong microbiologist has warned that we could be in for a big flu season in 2024 if last year's pattern of high infection rates and low vaccinations continues. Associate Professor Caitlin Keighley, who spends her days analysing infection data at a pathology lab in Wollongong, said she was worried the region was facing a perfect storm for the upcoming flu season which generally runs from May to October.

Also reported by: [Illawarra Mercury \(Online\)](#)

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## Deadly H5N1 avian influenza strain detected on mainland Antarctica for the first time

ABC Online, Other, 27/02/2024

The arrival of a devastating strain of avian influenza, which has killed millions of animals globally, to the Antarctic mainland makes Australia the last continent free of the virus. The highly-contagious strain of bird flu, known as H5N1, was confirmed over the weekend in two brown skua, which are large seabirds that prey on fish, small mammals and other birds like penguin chicks.

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## Health department launches a rapid internal review of National Immunisation Program

BioPharmaDispatch, Other, 28/02/2024

The Department of Health and Aged Care has launched an internal review of the National Immunisation Program with COVID-19 vaccines potentially within reach.

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## Channel 7, Seven News, 27/02/2024, Max Futcher and Sharyn Ghidella

Queensland schools are grappling with mould outbreaks, contaminating sporting equipment, desks and chairs. The fungus is growing so rapidly, that cleaning specialists say they're run off their feet. Some teachers have reported having to move classrooms to allow mould infestation to be treated, and while healthy students are unlikely to get sick from exposure, those with asthma or allergies are at risk.

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## ABC Radio Brisbane, Mornings, 27/02/2024, Steve Austin

Interview with Dr Maria Boulton, President, Qld AMA, on the Federal Government last year announcing the shingles vaccine would be free to people aged 65 years and older. Boulton says they have found



that they getting more and more stock of the vaccine. She adds they are asking patients to be patient and if there's no stock at their GP, it's coming soon.

Interview continues on: [ABC Radio Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#), [ABC Radio Brisbane \(Brisbane\)](#).

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## THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION

### **Influencers called up to boost anti-vaping message to Aussie teens**

Adelaide Now, Other, 27/02/2024, Clare Armstrong

Popular Australian influencers have been recruited to create social media content about the harms of nicotine vapes in an effort to curb soaring rates of addiction among teens. Popular Australian influencers have been recruited to create social media content about the harms of nicotine vapes in an effort to curb soaring rates of addiction among teens. [...] Since January 1 Australian Border Force and Therapeutic Goods Administration officials have seized 360,000 vapes worth almost \$11 million.

Also reported by: [West Australian \(Online\)](#).

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### **What are nicotine pouches? Are they safe to use, and why has the government banned them?**

ABC Online, Other, 27/02/2024, Danielle Mahe

Health authorities are increasingly concerned about the illegal sale of a new nicotine product luring in young people and gaining traction across Australia. Nicotine pouches are small sachets, the size of a piece of chewing gum, that are tucked under the lip allowing the nicotine — and sweeteners or flavourings — to be absorbed into the bloodstream. [...] Earlier this month, NSW Health in conjunction with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) conducted 60 raids across Sydney and seized \$1.1 million worth of vapes and tobacco products from retailers , including 284 nicotine pouches.

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### **'Welcome news': TGA green-lights first endometriosis treatment in a decade**

Australian Doctor, Other, 27/02/2024, Rachel Fieldhouse

Associate Professor Magdalena Simonis says it is an 'important addition' to options such as laparoscopy. The TGA has green-lit a new endometriosis medication for the first time in 13 years, expanding the indication of a combination pill used to treat uterine fibroid symptoms.

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### **Clinic launches 'rapid access' cannabis scheme with one-hour turnaround**

Australian Doctor, Other, 27/02/2024, Rachel Carter

The Cann i Help clinic will offer patients back-to-back appointments with a nurse and GP to speed up access. A medicinal cannabis clinic has launched a 'rapid access' program that promises to provide cannabis prescriptions to patients within 60 minutes. [...] In December, the TGA overhauled its advertising guidance on medicinal cannabis, stating that clinics could no longer use the term 'plant-based medicine' to describe the products because it was widely considered as a synonym for cannabis, an S4 medicine.

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### **Known herb alert**

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 27/02/2024

The TGA stated that medicines and herbal supplements containing the herb Withania somnifera, known as Withania and Ashwagandha, may cause adverse events such as sudden and potentially severe gastrointestinal symptoms and, in very rare cases, may be associated with liver injury.

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## Vape retail reforms coming

Pharmacy Daily, Other, 26/02/2024

From the Fields Pharmaceutical (FTFP) is unveiling an information drive targeting community pharmacy, ahead of the 01 Mar commencement of new retail regulations for the sale and distribution of medically prescribed vaping products in pharmacies. As the Australian standard therapeutic vape manufacturer, FTFP COO Wayne Jones (pictured), said TGA's estimate of 450,000 adult vapers and ex-smokers transitioning to buy therapeutic vape products under prescription requires heightened awareness among all pharmacies.

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## OFFICE FOR DRUG CONTROL

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## FOOD STANDARDS

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## AICIS

### Asbestos found in compost

Courier Mail, General News, 28/02/2024, Madura McCormack , Page 13

A stockpile of asbestos-laced compost has been discovered in Queensland, with environmental authorities racing to identify if the contaminated material has spread. A small amount of asbestos was detected in a compost stockpile at the Ipswich site of major compost manufacturer and recycler NuGrow, the Department of Environment and Science revealed on Tuesday.

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