



Stat Report 2014/42

Dear << Test First Name >>,

2014 State Election Report - *Put the Liberals Last*

The direct connection between state governments and health issues is inescapable. The connection therefore between state governments and our jobs, especially for those members working in the public health sector, is equally direct and important.

This State Election is vitally important to us in the context of our jobs and professions. This edition of the STAT Report is dedicated to a discussion on the relevant issues for us in tomorrow's election.

As a Union we are actively concerned with and interested in the broad range of public health sector issues, from job security, pay and conditions of our members who work in the sector, OH&S, through to professional issues and service delivery/health care outcomes across the broad range of services members are employed in.

Given that 2014 has been an election year, we have been particularly active in pursuing issues at a political level by asking the major political parties for answers to questions about issues affecting our members.

We were successful in having the Minister for Health, David Davis, the ALP Shadow Minister Gavin Jennings and Colleen Hartland, the Greens Health spokesperson attend our inaugural annual conference to address members and field questions about health. Undertakings were given at the conference, including by the Minister, that our concerns would be listened to and acted upon.

We have publicly pursued a number of significant issues that the Union knows are critically important to members. We have also raised these directly with the Minister and sought answers and responses. These issues are:

- ***Job security – experienced clinical positions being lost through budget cuts***
- ***Constantly increasing workloads***
- ***Levels of unpaid work continually growing***
- ***Budget cuts impacting on service delivery, especially mental health services***
- ***Privatisation & outsourcing of public sector services***
- ***Having private contractors comply with contract specifications***
- ***Pathology Laboratories closing in rural hospitals***

The union has at the same time promoted a number of initiatives that we believe are central to resolving many of these issues.

The *Better Path Plan*, is a detailed plan to reverse the decline of public sector pathology services through staff cuts and contracting out and which asks the major political parties and election candidates to pledge to recognise the importance of the contribution of Medical Scientists in delivering world class health outcomes; return privatised pathology services to the public sector; to not enter into any new contracts to private pathology providers; and to monitor and enforce existing contract provisions.

The Union has asked how the Napthine Government's proposal to ensure world-class health, can be maintained in Victoria's public hospitals when it has failed to address the dwindling medical scientific workforce or invested in workforce planning.

The Union has asked the State Government to invest in the public health sector workforce in all aspects, but especially to rebuild workforces in size enough to meet service demands and provide relief for absent staff.

Of course a part of workforce investment includes ending downsizing for financial reasons, but must also include putting a halt to the trend of 'dumbing-down' of workforces resulting from experienced and skilled clinicians flooding out of the public sector across all of our disciplines.

We have pursued the issue of the impact of funding cuts in mental health services. We're seeing mental health services being cut around Victoria at a time when more people in the community are seeking these services, and at a time when up to 70% of people with a mental illness do not currently seek help. We know the sooner we can provide people with support the better.

The changes made by the Napthine Government, which results in further redundancies in qualified psychologists, means people's long-standing relationships will be severed and seriously impact on people's ability to recover. The Union believes there is obviously no case for cutting mental health services in an environment when the need for mental health services has grown

significantly.

We have also written to the Minister, the Department of Health and NATA about having appropriately qualified and trained scientists perform scientifically complex and difficult tests. The Union is alarmed over the risks to patient welfare when training and competency assessment standards are allowed to decline to this point. The Minister has been made aware and asked to intervene.

In summary, the Union is adamant that public sector jobs must be restored to the point where our work is appropriately respected, our workloads are fair and reasonable, where we are no longer expected to perform unpaid work to keep services functioning properly **and** the state government, as your employer, has an absolute responsibility to ensure all of these needs are met.

State Government Responses

Sadly, I have to report that the Minister has failed to respond to almost every issue we have brought to his attention, or at best, arranged responses from Department of Health staff that are meaningless.

On this score we believe that Napthine Government has failed health workers. It is clear from the public health funding cuts that the Napthine Government will continue to ignore the legitimate interests of our members employed by him, and our job numbers will continue to decline.

The number of jobs that are being cut on the grounds of “budget imperatives” has been steadily growing since the state government announced budget cuts, with all of the evidence showing this will increase dramatically after the election.

In relation to pathology services alone, the Union has assessed the position of the major parties and scored each for what they offer respectively. Again the Napthine Government scores badly, primarily because it has offered nothing to correct the current decline. Here’s the Union’s score card on this:

BETTER PATH PLAN REPORT CARD

Pathology is a vital scientific service that doctors and specialists rely on to make diagnoses; to prescribe treatments and for cross-matching blood for life-saving transfusions.

HOW THE PARTIES SCORED

AUSTRALIAN GREENS **B+**

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY **B+**

LIBERAL PARTY **F**



Find out more by visiting
msav.org.au

Authorised by P.Elliott, Executive Officer, 1/82 Lygon St, Carlton South 3053

Who do you choose?

The Union has been an active supporter of the Victorian Trades Hall Council's **We Are Union** political campaign, which is a campaign to highlight the damage being done to public sector services, health, ambulances, education, fire safety etc. by the Napthine state government.

Victorian Unions have rallied together through this campaign to talk to the community about how we want their support at the ballot box to send a very loud message that public sector services must be the next state government's highest priority. This message offers the best hope to our members working in health to make jobs secure and fair.

The **We Are Union** campaign message is simple: "**Put the Liberals Last**" when you cast your vote, and it is a message that your Union happily recommends to all members for this election.

In short, the Union does not recommend that you vote in any particular way, other than to support progressive candidates that will respect the value and need for public health services, and there is of course one obvious and clear way to do that. **Put the Liberals Last**

Join the campaign - No Pay? No Way!

Show your support for the campaign by downloading & using one of our graphics for your email signature.



Your Union is on Facebook

Keep up to date with what's happening by liking us on Facebook

[Medical Scientists Association of Victoria](#) | [Victorian Psychologists Association Inc](#) | [Association of Hospital Pharmacists](#)

Benefits for Union Members

As a union member, you can take advantage of the collective buying power of more than 1.9 million members to get discounts on a great range of products and services.

ACTU Member Connect makes sure the products and services are from companies you can rely on to deliver high-quality products with reliable customer service.

There is more information about a range of other benefits union members can access at

<http://www.memberconnect.com.au/> or you can call ACTU Member Connect on 1300 362 223.



Share STAT Report

Is there a copy of STAT Report on your Union noticeboard or in your staff room?

If not print out a copy and leave it on the noticeboard or in the staff room for your colleagues.

[follow on Twitter](#) | [friend on Facebook](#)

Authorised by Paul Elliott, Executive Officer, Level 1, 62 Lygon St, Carlton South. Medical Scientists Association (03) 9623 9623 Association of Hospital Pharmacists (03) 9623 9624 Victorian Psychologists Association Inc (03) 9623 9625 Fax (03) 9663 8109 Email enquiry@msav.org.au A.B.N. 30 345 343 541 (MSAV), 72 520 393 213 (AHP), 87 851 818 075 (VPA Inc).

[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)