



## Stat Report 2015/28

### Super clinics and health services

Super clinics are often touted as the answer to all of our suburban health care needs. But as they've become more prevalent there are some big questions starting to be raised about the quality of care they can provide and their methods of 'employing' health professionals, especially in disciplines like psychology and dietetics.

In what sounds like an awful experience for patients and professionals alike, the Union has had reports of psychologists working in super clinics being told they don't have clients and to not expect to see the same patient each session. This is clearly not the most appropriate way of ensuring people's healthcare is looked after or ensuring that there is continuity in the treatments people are receiving.

We've also seen contracts that attempt to prevent psychologists from taking clients with them, and efforts to prevent psychologists and dietitians undertaking their professional work for up to 18 months after leaving these clinics if they intend to continue to work in the region. In some cases we have heard of super clinics attempting to limit people undertaking their professional work within Victoria.

Members working at super clinics have also been reporting that they have no way of scheduling their own appointments that best suit themselves and their patients. Instead the super clinics are dictating appointments. It also turns out that members aren't even able to assist with building their clientele as the super clinics generally rule out the ability to advertise for clients.

And there remain very big questions over issues like referrals from and to specialists, the use of Medicare provider numbers by clinics and who is responsible for processing payments – is it the clinic or the clinician?

With so many issues being highlighted about the operations of super clinics and the continuity of care patients receive, the Union is urging Government's to exercise more caution establishing super clinics. The Government must develop and implement the necessary controls to ensure that these super clinics comply with standards and regulations and are not another way for unscrupulous operators to generate profits.

If you're working in super clinics and have more information we'd love to hear from you. Contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

### Primary Health Care boosts profits slashing jobs

The Medical Scientists Association of Victoria (MSAV) is appalled by the profit motives of Primary Health Care after it announced an increase in profits for the last financial year.

Primary Health Care Ltd is the parent company of Dorevitch Pathology which is currently having

its contracts with Latrobe Regional Health reviewed by the State Government. The review will be investigating whether Dorevitch Pathology is complying with contracts and in particular meeting critical pathology quality standards.

Dorevitch Pathology has a track record of sacking scientists and removing pathology testing from public hospitals in Victoria and sending testing to its central laboratory in Heidelberg. Primary Health Care announced that it would be seeking to expand its pathology business overseas. This is despite one of its wholly owned subsidiaries engaging in troubling practices of sacking scientists; refusing since July 2007 to properly pay its scientific workforce; refusing to negotiate with Unions and centralising work while gutting the capacity of pathology laboratories in public hospitals in Victoria.

It beggars belief that the CEO of Primary Health Care could say they're delivering high-quality healthcare when there's clear evidence to the contrary at every public hospital in Victoria that has contracted Dorevitch Pathology.

If Primary Health Care Ltd really cared about delivery high-quality healthcare, the CEO would be investigating the business practices of one its wholly owned subsidiaries, Dorevitch Pathology, that is jeopardising world-class health standards in Victoria. And if Primary Health Care Ltd really cared about delivery high-quality healthcare they would properly pay their scientific workforce instead of being the worst paying employer in private pathology.

Before Primary Health Care Ltd expands its pathology operations overseas, it should fix the mess it has allowed Dorevitch Pathology to create in Victoria, which jeopardises quality of healthcare as test turn-around times have increased preventing the timely commencement of treatments.

The MSAV is calling on Primary Health Care Ltd to do the right thing by Victorians and ensure its wholly owned subsidiary, Dorevitch Pathology, end its practice of sacking scientists and forcing quality standards downwards. To do otherwise is proof that Primary Health Care Ltd is only interested in profits and not patient care.

## Voting on the Melbourne IVF Agreement

Management at Melbourne IVF have finalised an offer and an agreement they are intending to put to staff to vote on. And we expect the vote on management's offer to begin soon.

However, the Union has considered the offer and the agreement and strongly believe it does not go far enough to addressing the concerns raised by members. And on balance it will not significantly improve the pay and/or conditions of members at Melbourne IVF.

**Because of this, the Union is strongly urging members at Melbourne IVF to vote NO to the offer from management.**

MIVF members will receive voting instructions on Wednesday 2 September. The ballot is open for less than a week so it is important that your NO vote is cast as soon as you can.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate in contacting the Union on 9623 9623.

## Social media and the workplace: Not always a great mix

Social media is a lot of fun. It's a great way of keeping up with what your friends and family are doing, wherever they are in the world. But there are some big downsides to social media, especially when they include the workplace.

The increasing use of mobile devices combined with social media means there is an ever-increasing blur in the distinction between work and private life. And let's not forget that employers are regularly monitoring and watching social media for what employees are saying.

Like other areas of the law, industrial law has been slow to react with the increasing use of social media. However there have been a range of matters brought before the Fair Work Commission (FWC) relating to the use of social media by employees. FWC will consider if the conduct in question:

- Is likely to cause serious damage to the relationship between the employer and employee
- Damages the employer's interest
- Is incompatible with the employee's duty as an employee

Unfortunately workers have to be extremely careful in using social media when talking about their work and workplace. There is little doubt that a lot of social interaction exists in the workplace but here are some pitfalls to avoid:

1. Social media is not private interaction; unless you set the strictest privacy levels for your content to protect yourself from being monitored by your boss.
2. Make sure you don't follow or friend the boss and work colleagues. It seems harsh but the number of work colleagues that have access to your social media can be an important determinant in any FWC proceedings.
3. Don't mention your boss and the company you work for. FWC will consider whether there has been a direct reference to the company or anyone individual. This doesn't mean you can't discuss wages and conditions or genuine grievances but make sure you don't mention the boss or the company.
4. Don't discuss patients and definitely don't name them. This is particularly relevant for health sector workers as it can result in immediate termination of employment because of breaches of the privacy of a patient or patients.
5. The degree of offence of the comments posted to social media will be an issue considered by FWC
6. Only post material that you would be happy to post in a public forum or shout out at in the middle of the MCG

There is definitely one golden rule for social media use and that is don't drink or do drugs and use social media.

If you have any questions make sure you contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

## Footy Finals, a Public Holiday and our Agreement

Already a number of members have been contacting the Union about the upcoming public holiday for the AFL finals, and what our Agreement says about it.

Given that it is a gazetted public holiday, the existing public holiday provisions of our Agreement apply. If you're working in the private sector please contact the Union so that we can better inform you of the provisions that apply to you specifically.

## Andrews Government consulting VPA on mental health strategy

As many of you would know the Andrews Government made a lot of noise around reinvesting in mental health care and the delivery of appropriate services across the State. You would also be happy to know that the Government is consulting with the Victorian Psychologists Association Inc. In particular the Union was invited to participate in the first round of consultations and to find out firsthand what the Government is hoping to achieve and how it plans to develop Victoria's 10 year mental health strategy.

It is pleasing that the Government is seeking to establish a long-term strategy and vision for mental health services, and how they might be delivered into the future. The Government is also seeking to develop a strategy that can guide the continuous improvement and transformation in how Victorian's emotional and social wellbeing and recovery can be supported.

The Government is also looking at ensuring the 10 year mental health strategy complements and build on mental health community support services, transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the development of the next Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

While the Union is encouraged that the Government knows that our mental health workforce is highly skilled, we will continue to be advocating for the need for better workforce planning and management. The Union took the opportunity to highlight our ongoing concerns about workloads, staffing levels and the growing reliance on contracting out of services to manage tight budgets. It was also an opportunity to make sure the Government understood the need to further invest in the workforce to enable services to be properly delivered.

As the consultation continues, the Union will continue to keep informed of our involvement and its progress.

In the meantime if you have any questions please contact the Union on 9623 9625.



## Nominations for AHP Committee of Management and Annual General Meeting

The Association of Hospital Pharmacists' Annual General Meeting will be held on 24 September at 1.30 pm at Sunshine Hospital (PBL Room 6, WHCRE Building), 176 Furlong Road, St Albans.

### **Notice of Nominations for AHP Committee**

Notice is hereby given to all Members of the Association of Hospital Pharmacists that nominations for election to the AHP Committee are now open. To be eligible to nominate you must be a financial member of the AHP.

The positions that are open for election are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- 2 x Committee Members

Candidates must have two (2) financial members support the nomination.

To obtain a nomination form please email to the Returning Officer: [enquirv@ahpv.asn.au](mailto:enquirv@ahpv.asn.au)

Nominations must be received by the Returning Officer in writing no later than 5pm on 7 September 2015. Completed nominations can be sent to:

The Returning Officer  
Level 1, 62 Lygon St  
Carlton South, VIC, 3053

## MSAV & HSU#4 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given to all members of the MSAV and HSU#4 of the Annual General Meeting for the MSAV and HSU#4.

The Annual General Meeting will be conducted on 9 September at 6pm at the DownTowner on Lygon, 66 Lygon St, Carlton South.

## Save your Spot for VPA PD Seminar

### Turning Psychological Practice into Research

Time is running out for you to save your spot for the VPA's next Professional Development Seminar and its Annual General Meeting, which will be held on **16 September starting at 12pm at the Treacy Centre, Parkville.**

#### **Seminar Overview:**

Associate Professor John Farhall will be the keynote speaker for the next VPA professional development session on 16 September on the topic, *Turning Psychological Practice into Research*. As well as John's keynote address, this session will include project presentations by members from a range of practice areas. We will conclude with a problem-solving panel, for which others who have experienced the pleasure and pain of turning practice into research will join John.

#### **About Associate Professor John Farhall**

Dr John Farhall holds a joint appointment as Associate Professor at the School of Psychology and Public Health at La Trobe University and Consultant Clinical Psychologist at North Western Mental Health. His role aims to build bridges between the public mental health services and university research and training. His primary interests are in innovations in mental health care, psychopathology, therapy for psychotic disorders and evidence-based practice. His research is centred on understanding psychotic disorders, including evaluating and disseminating evidence-based psychological treatments for people who have psychotic disorders and understanding the disorder processes those treatments seek to address. His research experience includes multicentre large scale randomized controlled trials, qualitative studies, postgraduate and Honours student projects, unfunded projects in mental health services and local routine evaluations.

#### **Seminar Program:**

12.00 - 12.30 Registration and Lunch

12.30 - 1.00 VPA Annual General Meeting

1.00 - 2.00 Keynote Address: Associate Professor John Farhall 'Turning Psychological Practice into Research'

2.00 - 3.00 Members' Projects: Session One

3.00 - 3.20 Afternoon Tea and Networking

3.20 - 4.00 Members' Projects: Session Two

4.00 - 4.30 Problem-solving panel (Associate Professor John Farhall + others)

Contact the Union on 9623 9625 or at [enquiry@vicpsych.org.au](mailto:enquiry@vicpsych.org.au) to register for this PD, to submit your project to present at the PD or if you have any questions.

## Worth Reading: Buying Hockey's Myths Would Plunge Economy Lower Than The Treasurer's Own Standing

“Treasurer Hockey’s [speech](#) foreshadowing income tax cuts is hardly worthy of serious consideration. It’s laden with selective anecdotes, unsupported assertions and, most notably, no indication of how income tax cuts would be funded.

Would they be funded by further, deeper cuts to health care, education and infrastructure? Would they be funded by an even greater blowout in the fiscal deficit? Is he trying to force the cash-strapped state governments to push for an increase in the GST? Or, [to quote Alex Malley](#), CEO of Certified Practising Accountants Australia, is he simply “caught in a cycle of restating the problems rather than rethinking the solutions”?

Unfortunately his speech has commanded more attention than it deserves, with generous coverage from most media. [Dan Conifer](#), true to the ABC fashion of uncritically re-stating the government’s framing of public policy, goes so far as to say that Hockey “has made the case for income tax cuts”.

Hockey hasn’t “made the case”. All he’s done is to re-assert a few myths, presumably relying on the Goebbels principle – “If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it”.

Read the entire article by Ian McAuley in New Matilda:

<https://newmatilda.com/2015/08/25/buying-hockeys-myths-would-plunge-economy-lower-treasurers-own-standing>

## Worth Reading: Health Check: five reasons to put the kettle on and have a cup of tea

“Growing up, tea drinking was reserved for my grandmother’s visits. Making it followed a strict and fascinating ritual. Take scalding hot water. Warm the tea pot. Add one spoon of tea leaves for each person and one for the pot. Cover with a tea cosy. Turn the pot three times to the left, three to the right, then three to the left. Leave to brew. Warm the cups; milk in first, pour through a tea strainer.

My grandmother could taste any attempt you made to shortcut the process. Once Grandma approved the tea, pressure eased and conversation flowed.

In Australia 38% of the general population and 67% of those aged over 70 are tea drinkers. Our median intake is two cups a day, about 400mls.

By world standards we rank 55 for tea consumption, compared to the United States at 69, New Zealand 45 and the United Kingdom, number five. Turkey takes out the number one spot, consuming more than ten times the per capita intake of Australians.”

Read the entire article by Clare Collins, Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at University of Newcastle, in The Conversation: <https://theconversation.com/health-check-five-reasons-to-put-the-kettle-on-and-have-a-cup-of-tea-42419>

## Worth Reading: Is ‘headspace’ really improving young people’s mental health?

“Mental health problems are common in young people and often have their first onset during this period of life. But many affected youth either don’t seek or delay seeking professional help.

To help overcome this low rate of help-seeking, the Australian government set up a National Youth Mental Health Foundation, called [headspace](#), in 2006. Its aim was to increase early

intervention for mental health problems among people between 12 and 25 years old, by setting up youth-friendly enhanced primary health services.

The services were designed to provide not only mental health care, but help for alcohol and drug problems, as well as physical health and vocational assistance.”

Read the entire article by Anthony Jorm, Professorial Fellow and NHMRC Senior Principal Research Fellow at University of Melbourne, in The Conversation at:  
<https://theconversation.com/is-headspace-really-improving-young-peoples-mental-health-46398>

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Australian Unions Member Benefits 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 Australian Unions Member Benefits on 1300 362 223.

## New Australian Unions Member Benefits app

Over the last month Australian Unions launched some new and exclusive Member Benefits - did you see our recent email telling you about this? If not, check your inbox! Search for "Lifestyle Rewards" for your login code.

Our program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards - for JB Hi-Fi, Rebel Sport, Dick Smith, iTunes and My Fun (which includes major theme parks, zoos and aquariums).
- A discounted accommodation booking site.
- A new secure member only website and smart phone app.

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