



Stat Report 2015/33

A new Prime Minister but has anything changed?

A couple of weeks ago Australians found ourselves facing another leadership spill. This time it wasn't Rudd or Gillard but a battle between Abbott and Turnbull. And we all know the results.

And now with a new Prime Minister it's important to consider if anything has really changed.

Despite everything we've heard about the need to change leaders because the direction of the government was wrong, we haven't seen any change in direction at all. What we have seen is a change in the sales person leading the charge to dismantle our universal healthcare system. We have seen no change to the very damaging proposals included with the last two federal budgets.

And we have heard nothing to indicate there will be any change soon.

In fact, as part of the 'deal' to be leader, the new Prime Minister, agreed to maintain all of the initiatives that Tony Abbott introduced while he was Prime Minister. That means there are no changes to the attacks on health care, including massive cuts in health funding; no changes to the attacks on the poor and most vulnerable people in our country; no changes to the attacks on workers' rights; no changes to energy policy that sees a massive coal mine being approved and no changes to the disaster that is our policy towards people coming to Australia seeking our protection.

While the Prime Minister may have changed but nothing else has changed. This is a government, regardless of who leads it, that wants to dismantle our universal healthcare system, wants to slash workers' rights and cut weekend penalty rates.

The really big test of the new Prime Minister will be next year's budget. Until then there seems no reason to celebrate yet another change in Prime Minister.

Climate change will challenge our health system

Climate change is no longer something that is an existential threat that only climate scientists discuss. Climate change is real and it is already having an impact.

We're already witnessing increasing number of extreme weather events along with fire seasons starting earlier and lasting longer. And we're witnessing longer periods of extreme conditions like more days above 40 degrees.

These extreme weather events and conditions are having an increasingly profound impact on people's health. And it means that there will be a subsequent impact on our health services as more people are seeking medical attention due to weather extremes. And as we continue to fight for more staff and greater understanding of the importance of our disciplines to the entire health system, the increasing impacts on climate change will stretch our healthcare system even more.

and it's already at breaking point.

It's vital that as health professionals we make our voices heard about ensuring there is a strong, universal health care system. It's vital that as health professionals we continue to fight for a health care system that is able to cope with the ever increasing demands place on it. But if we really want to do something about it then we have to be part of the solution.

You know like we do that Australia must take drastic action to reduce its emissions if we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. And as health professionals we know that we can do so much more in our workplaces.

Because climate change is Union business, the Union is considering what measures and initiatives we can discuss with health services, as well as what the Union can do itself as an organisation.

Pathology scientists to go, union says

The Medical Scientists Association of Victoria says three senior scientists at a private pathology company's Latrobe Regional Hospital laboratory will be made redundant.

The union said the scientists had a combined 60 years of experience.

"You need to have that level of skill, knowledge and experience to deal with complex cases," MSAV executive officer Paul Elliott said.

"It takes 30 years to build up that level of knowledge. If you strip it out, it's going to take 30 years to build it back up again."

It would be the latest in a string of changes at Dorevitch Pathology's LRH lab, with some components of the service shifted to Melbourne.

In July, the State Government revealed it had launched a review of the services contract between Dorevitch and the hospital to ensure all parties were meeting the terms of the contract and the community was receiving the best pathology services available.

Dorevitch Pathology chief executive Neville Moller said there had been "ongoing redundancies" because the company was moving parts of its business to Melbourne.

However, he could not provide clarification about the latest changes purported by the union.

He said there were pathologists medically qualified to supervise staff and there would be no change to the quality of service at Latrobe.

The union once again hit out at LRH, calling on management and the board to step in, saying the hospital had allowed "sub-standard" arrangements in the pathology lab, which would result in delays for tests and diagnoses.

LRH chief executive Peter Craighead said pathology staffing was a matter for Dorevitch.

"LRH has contracted Dorevitch to provide pathology services to the hospital and expects those services to be delivered to the highest standard," Mr Craighead said.

"It is Dorevitch's responsibility to ensure it has adequate staff resources to fulfil the terms of the contract with LRH.

"It's disappointing Mr Elliott is again attacking our hospital as part of his industrial campaign."

This story was written by Stephanie Charalambous and first appeared in the Latrobe Valley Express on 15 October 2015: <http://www.latrobevalleyexpress.com.au/story/3423169/pathology-scientists-to-go-union-says/?cs=1462>

People's Climate March – Melbourne

The People's Climate March will be held across Australia on 27-29 November.

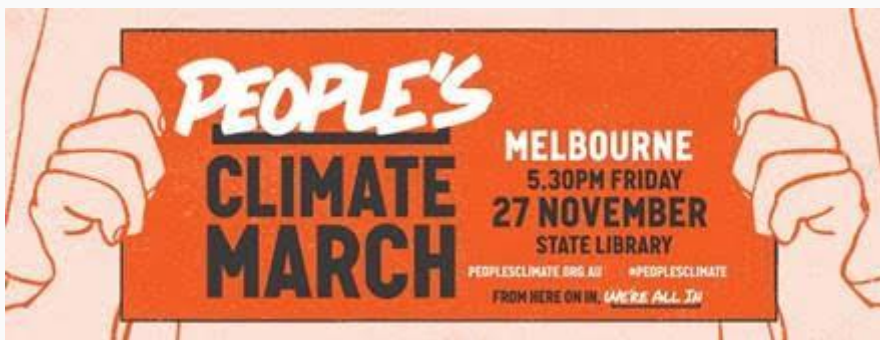
Over that weekend, People's Climate Marches will take place in hundreds of major cities around the world with the goal of creating a massive mobilisation to call for real action on climate change. And it comes at a crucial time when the world's leaders and diplomats are in Paris to negotiate the kind of cuts and assistance required to make deep cuts in our emissions.

The Melbourne march will be at 5.30pm on Friday 27 November.

A coalition of unions, environmental and other organisations is being built to facilitate the march.

Make sure you join our contingent to help send a message to Australian and the world's leaders that we want and must take urgent action to avoid a global climate catastrophe.

Get more information at: <http://www.peoplesclimate.org.au/>



Pathology petition tabled in November

Victorians are starting to get the picture – medical scientists are an essential part of the healthcare system. And it's thanks to the pathology petition we've had running for the last couple of months, which has generated a lot of interest among Members of Parliament and in the broader community.

But right now we need to step up our efforts to get even more signatures on our petition because in early November we will be presenting our petition to Parliament.

This is our last chance to get as many signatures as we can so the Government has to hear our collective voice to end the contracting out of pathology services; and ensure local public hospitals have fully functioning pathology laboratories staffed with a sufficient number of properly qualified staff.

**Make our voice heard! [Download the petition and get your colleagues to sign it.](#)
Get your completed petitions to us by 30 October.**

If you've already signed the petition you can keep making a difference by getting your colleagues and co-workers to sign the petition too.



Worth Reading: The challenge for unions

“Reading the horrific stories of abuse and exploitation of migrant workers at 7-Eleven and elsewhere, exposed in recent weeks by Fairfax, it is tempting to ask where were the unions in all this? It’s a legitimate question, as traditionally it has been the role of unions to unofficially police workplace abuses and help to enforce the law. But in this case, while unions have huffed and puffed from the sidelines, their significance in recent stories has mostly been in their absence.”

Read the entire article by Mark Phillips in The Overland at: <https://overland.org.au/2015/10/the-challenge-for-unions/>

Worth Reading: Tackling economic abuse of women must be part of our domestic violence response

“Australia is making long-overdue [moves](#) aimed at stopping domestic violence. These responses focus almost exclusively on physical injury and death.

Consequently, we are not recognising the existence and impact of less obvious forms of abuse that damage women’s well-being. One particularly widespread and insidious example is economic abuse.”

Read the entire article by Kristin Natalier in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/tackling-economic-abuse-of-women-must-be-part-of-our-domestic-violence-response-48376>

Worth Reading: The TPP's one-way ratchet

“The announcement of an agreed text for the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, or TPP, brings to an end years of negotiation by thousands of officials and corporate lobbyists. Although the ratification of the deal still requires the consent of national legislatures, including the US Congress and Australian parliament, it now appears likely to be a done deal. So, what are the benefits and costs of the TPP?

The short answer, as it has been throughout the process, is that we don’t know. The negotiations were conducted in secret and the final text remains secret. What we have are two kinds of leaks: deliberate leaks from government officials, seeking to put the most favourable spin on the deal, and the unauthorised leaks of negotiating drafts, obtained and published by WikiLeaks.”

Read the entire article by John Quiggin in Inside Story at: <http://insidestory.org.au/the-tpps-one-way-ratchet>

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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.

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.

All this is free to all members of affiliated unions. If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now](#).



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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.

Get the most out of the Union's website

You might have noticed that the Union has a new website. The new website has a number of special features for members. These features like the Members section and the Forums, require you to have a log-in and password.

But to ensure that your privacy is protected we have created the website in such a way that you will need a separate log-in and password for the Members section and the Forums section. It might seem to be inconvenient but it does better protect you and your private information. It also means that we can be more certain about the source of a hack if such an event is ever to arise.

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