



## Stat Report 2015/36

### Crisis in Pathology getting attention

Since launching our work to highlight the looming crisis in public pathology, we have really made an impact. And our work is getting attention within the Government and from the general community.

It's true to say that most people don't quite understand the vital work that scientists and technicians do in pathology labs. But most people understand the work you do is vital to the healthcare system and ensuring that Victorians enjoy world-class healthcare. And more people are being made aware of the fact that more than 80% of all patients in the public health system get their clinical diagnosis from a pathology test of one kind or another but funding cuts by successive State and Federal governments has resulted in more work and fewer scientists.

Unfortunately we know that some private pathology contractors are not interested in quality healthcare standards with evidence showing they're stripping hospital laboratories of testing and scientists. The loss of local pathology testing can put other key clinical services at risk like emergency departments, obstetrics and oncology.

Even the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) warns of a global shortage of medical scientists to undertake the growing number of tests. But because of your work to highlight the looming crisis we've had a massive response to our petition. We've been meeting with Members of Parliament to discuss our concerns about the looming crisis. We even organised to have the State Member for Melbourne, Ellen Sandell, visit the pathology labs at the Royal Melbourne Hospital to raise her awareness of the big issues facing public pathology.

We now have over 400 people calling on the government to put a moratorium on the contracting out of public pathology services. And in the next sitting period of the Victorian Parliament we will be seeking to have our petition officially tabled and recognised.

It's urgent we keep working to turn our State Government away from more contracting out of services like pathology. And now is a great time to be contacting your State Member of Parliament.

Download a handy guide to ringing your State Member of Parliament [here](#).



**WORKLOADS ON THE  
RISE?  
STRESS INCREASING?  
TAKE OUR SURVEY!**

**NO PAY? NO WAY!  
UNPAID WORK FREE ZONE**



**msav**  
medical scientists  
association of victoria



**ahp**  
association of  
hospital pharmacists



**vpa**  
victorian psychologists  
association inc

**Is your workload increasing...again? Is your stress and anxiety increasing? Do your managers expect you to do more work to fill the gaps?**

The Union wants to know what impact unpaid work is having on you. [Do our survey today.](#)

Based on the results of last year's survey, there is growing evidence that health services are relying on you to do unpaid work to keep many services afloat. And we suspect that this situation has become worse since we last did our "No Pay? No Way!" survey.

We know that the number of injuries arising from high workloads is increasing, but we need to know more to help. We want to be able to use our research to continue lobbying and advocating for proper workforce planning that takes into account the ever growing workloads and the increasing demand on health services.

And with enterprise bargaining negotiations about to begin for public sector employers, it is important that we continue to tackle this issue.

[Please take a few minutes to do our survey and help us continue to highlight the issues.](#)

## Negotiations at Melbourne Pathology

As members at Melbourne Pathology would know, your current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) expired on 30 June 2012. Right now we're in the process of negotiating a new agreement. Unfortunately these negotiations have stalled for a number of reasons, and it has been a while since we were at the negotiating table.

As discussed at the last members' meeting, the Union is conducting a survey to confirm if what is important to you has changed since the last negotiations. We need to hear your views about what claims should be made.

If there has been any shift in what is important to you, please let us know. **Click <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MelbPath> to take the survey.**

This survey is strictly confidential. No information which might identify you will be shown to anyone else.

## People's Climate March – Melbourne

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

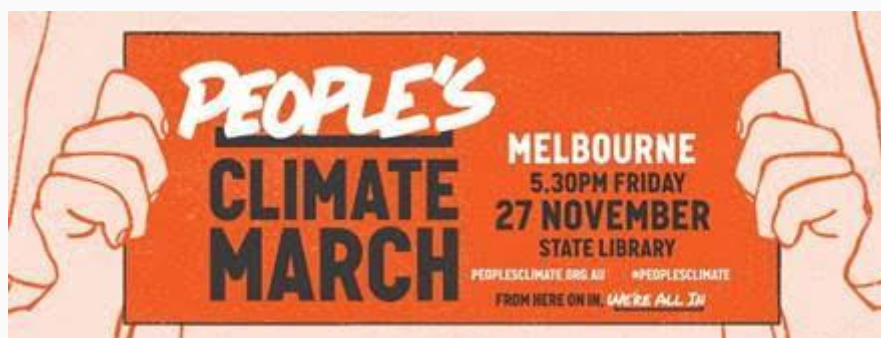
With Australia taking a weak plan for climate action and reduction targets that are far too low, it's urgent that we send a strong message that we want our Government to take a genuine plan to combat climate change to the Paris conference.

**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 the Union's contingent to help send a message to Australian and world leaders that we want and must take urgent action to avoid a global climate catastrophe. It's up to us in the health system that know better than most how climate change will have a serious negative impact on the health and lifestyles of all Australians.

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



## 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.

## Worth Reading: Should taxpayers subsidise extras for private health insurance holders?

"The government is conducting a review of private health insurance, purportedly aimed at ensuring consumers can access "affordable, quality and timely health services into the future".

When [announcing the review](#), Health Minister Sussan Ley said:

*There are certainly questions that need to be asked, such as perhaps the current ancillary model would be better directed to encourage Australians to save for their out-of-pocket primary care expenses? Perhaps specifically for their later years.*

Ancillary cover, otherwise known as “extras”, includes services such as dental, physiotherapy, optometry and natural therapies. Consumers can take it out as stand-alone cover, or as an addition to private hospital cover.

The consumer [survey](#), launched at the weekend, asks specifically whether Australians' tax dollars should go towards rebating premiums of those with only hospital or extras cover, or those with both.

There is little evidence that private health insurance rebates take pressure off the public health system. Instead, they contribute to inequity of health care across the country, ensuring better and timely care for those who can afford it.”

Read the entire article by Elizabeth Savage in The Conversation at:

<https://theconversation.com/should-taxpayers-subsidise-extras-for-private-health-insurance-holders-39504>

## 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.

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



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