



## Stat Report 2016/17

### St John of God sells pathology division to Australian Clinical Labs

St John of God (SJoG) has announced that it is selling its pathology division to Australian Clinical Labs. It appears that the deal between SJoG and Clinical Labs includes some level of agreement that around 200 jobs will be cut in the next 12 to 24 months. Roughly a third of the workforce face losing their jobs for what are, to say the least, very spurious reasons.

While Clinical Labs is insisting that SJoG staff will either continue in their existing roles or substantially similar roles, the foreshadowed job losses means that job security has been trashed through the sale.

But the sale of SJoG's pathology division to Australian Clinical Labs, or more accurately to Crescent Capital, a private equity firm, raises serious concerns about future standards in pathology in Victoria. And it comes as a massive blow to public pathology in Victoria's hospitals with SJoG being the largest not-for-profit pathology provider that operates a significant number of pathology laboratories in Victorian public health services, including Barwon Health.

There is little comfort in having a private equity firm buying up the pathology division of SJoG especially as concerns are raised about the company buying up pathology providers as an attempt to become more profitable.

As this private equity firm attempts to increase its market share, real concerns must be raised about the likelihood of a dwindling scientific workforce and declining quality standards such as turn-around-times, and ultimately patient care. This is especially the case as concerns are raised about a company that has no experience in the pathology industry, its systems or the industrial instruments that cover pathology.

The prospect that is also raised in this sale is that pathology, a critical clinical service in public health, has been reduced to a commodity that venture capital companies will buy and sell as a routine part of the business of making bigger profits.

### Election 2016: Mental health services at risk from Turnbull Liberal Government

So far important issues like mental health have been ignored in this year's federal election. While there has been a lot of heated discussion about mental health, there has been too little focus on delivering the services needed in our community. And this has come into stark relief as the CEO of Headspace stepped down over the changes to funding to the organisation that delivers mental health care to young Australians.

The recent furore around Medicare has sidelined discussion around other health matters like

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mental health. But it became apart this week that the Turnbull Government will be dismantling Headspace, the organisation that provides mental health services to young people aged 12-25. This week the CEO of Headspace announced he was standing down as a result of the Turnbull Government's decision to redirect funding for Headspace to the 31 existing Primary Health Networks.

Unfortunately this means that the national platform created for the mental care of young people will now be split up with potentially 31 variations of the platform. And worse still there is no requirement on the Primary Health Networks to continue to offer early intervention programs. The Primary Health Networks may decide that they don't want to invest the money in early intervention since the funding for such programs has not been ring-fenced. And with no guarantees that early intervention programs will continue it is all-too-likely that the Primary Health Networks will not fund such programs.

In effect the Turnbull Government has gutted a vital service for young people and their families seeking help with their mental health. It might be convenient to talk about mental health services, but it's far more important to ensure such services are properly funded, coordinated and integrated to deliver the best mental health services possible.

## Election 2016: Climate change and health should be key issues

Unfortunately too many of Australia's political parties don't have a clear commitment to tackling the risks of climate change on health and wellbeing.

The Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) has released a scorecard rating the policies of Australia's main political parties on climate change and health. The results show the Greens are the best performing party when it comes to protecting the community from the health impacts of climate change. The ALP trails the Greens with only two policies to tackle the issue while both the Liberal and National parties are doing nothing.

With climate change recognised as the biggest threat to global public health of this century, the failure of the Liberal and National parties to announce any policies to reduce these risks means a future Turnbull-led Liberal Government will profoundly fail its duty of care to protect its citizens from a serious threat.

Key policies to reduce the health impacts of climate change assessed by CAHA included stronger emissions reduction targets for Australia, a moratorium of new coal and gas mining, a fair and planned transition for affected fossil fuel industry workers and communities, stronger air pollution laws, and a national strategy that will address climate change and health.

Health groups, including our Union, want a National Climate Health and Well-being Strategy as key to protecting health and sustaining a resilient healthcare system. These factors however, do not appear to be amongst the priorities for the major Australian political parties.

[Check out the Climate and Health Alliance's scorecard](#)

## Election 2016: Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association launches election scorecard

From the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association:

"Australia's healthcare system consistently outperforms many OECD countries when comparing key health indicators and costs, but challenges such as an ageing population, increased rates of chronic and complex disease, increased consumer expectations and new medical technologies and treatments are increasing the cost and complexity of healthcare.

The challenge is to manage the delivery of care as effectively and efficiently as possible. while

governments ensure the necessary resources are made available to deliver this care. Much of the recent focus for health policy discourse in Australia has been on economics, funding and the importance of building sustainability into the Australian healthcare system.

The economics of healthcare and a healthy population contributing to the economy underpinned the establishment of Medicare more than 30 years ago, and it is timely that Australians and the health sector refocus efforts on ensuring our healthcare system retains the capacity to support accessible universal healthcare into the future.”

[Check out the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association's scorecard](#)

## Profiling your work and educating the public

For many people health care is defined by doctors and nurses because they are the professionals most visible to people who access health care. But as people inside the health industry, we know that it takes many people in many professions to deliver world-class health care.

It's important that more people have a better understanding of the many different professionals it takes to deliver world-class health care. That's why the Union is creating member profiles so we can better educate people about the many different professionals working in health care.

If you're interested in participating in this project please contact Alex on 9623 9623 or at [alexs@msav.org.au](mailto:alexs@msav.org.au)

## We Are Union: Help on Election Day

It's not too late to support the We Are Union campaign. And a week until election day, there are lots of ways you can help protect Medicare and Australia's universal healthcare system.

On July 2, every vote is going to make a difference – it's going to come down to the wire. We need you with us. [Can you join us at a polling booth on Election Day?](#)

Turnbull has come after Medicare, refused to reinstate health funding, introduced up-front-fees for pathology tests and increasing the cost of visiting your GP, won't fund Gonski and has done nothing to support Australian jobs. All while trying to sell his company tax cuts and protecting the big banks from a royal commission.

The We Are Union campaign is staffing 60 polling booths in Victoria's most marginal seats and we need you to join us. [Sign up for your shift here.](#)

Many voters won't decide their vote until they get to the polling booth. Let's make sure they Put The Liberals Last!

[Sign up and help at a polling booth on Election Day.](#)

## Support the Healthy Futures campaign



The Union strongly believes that climate change is union business. We know that climate change threatens our health by increasing the risks of heatwaves, bushfires, droughts and storms, displacing people and straining our health systems.

And right now HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas.

**Join us in asking HESTA and FSS to divest from fossil fuels at [www.healthvfutures.net.au/divest](http://www.healthvfutures.net.au/divest).**

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## Psychologists: If you need help at work you need the VPA Inc.

If you are a psychologist and not in the VPA, you are taking unnecessary risks with your reputation and career. [Download an application form and join today.](#)

### **Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements**

In addition to the above, VPA routinely assists members over issues such as harassment and bullying, under classification, organisational re-structuring, incorrect calculation of leave entitlements and health and safety. In addition, it negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

## Worth Reading: Major parties are behind the times – and strangely silent – on social policy

“As we enter the business end of the election campaign, with pre-polling underway, there is a profound lack of any social welfare policies on offer from either major party. The Greens have now put up proposals, mainly to raise the levels of some of the basic welfare payments in line with wide recommendations, including from the [Business Council of Australia](#).”

The bipartisan silence suggests that neither Labor nor the Coalition are keen to engage in this area, despite their frequent promises of fairness and trust. Their focus on working families or agile entrepreneurs fails to tackle the needs of those who are not contributing paid work hours.

There are signs of seriously disengaged voters, both here and overseas. For example, voters in the US and EU are rejecting major centrist parties because they are concerned about possible market failures. Even the [International Monetary Fund](#) is suggesting the need to tackle increasing inequalities.”

Read the entire article by Eva Cox in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/major-parties-are-behind-the-times-and-strangely-silent-on-social-policy-60314>

## Worth Reading: Can We Talk? Headspace CEO leaves in frustration as Turnbull government dismantles vital mental health initiative

“THE Turnbull government is quietly dismantling the youth mental health initiative Headspace, according to its chief executive, who is leaving the organisation in frustration.

Chris Tanti, who was the foundation’s CEO when Headspace was created in 2006, says the federal government’s “bizarre” decision to stop funding Headspace directly and hand control to 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) over two years will effectively mean its demise.”

Read the entire article by Claire Harvey via The Advertiser:

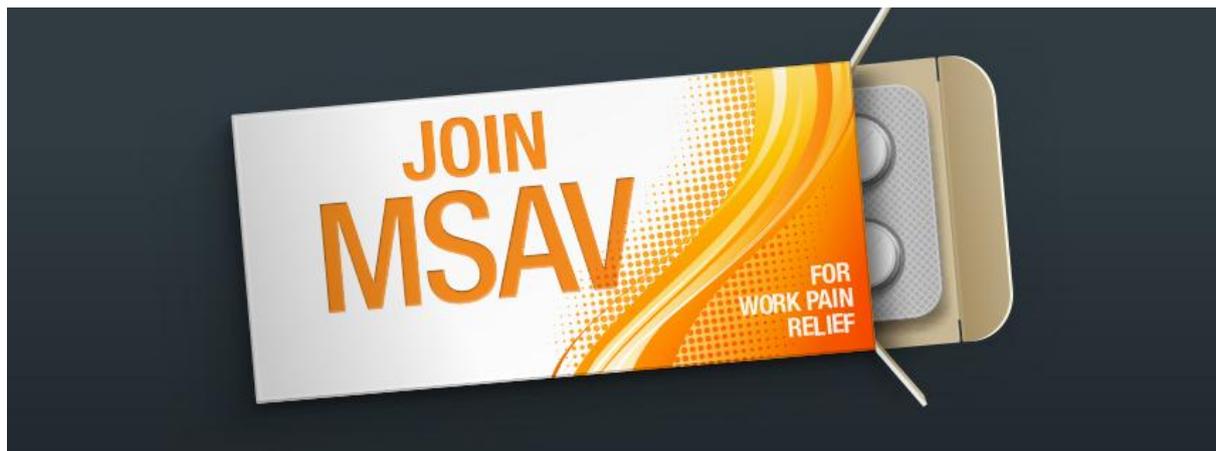
<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/national/can-we-talk-headspace-ceo-leaves-in-frustration-as-turnbull-government-dismantles-vital-mental-health-initiative/news-story/099ac8788f2ec2dc14949e73c1f6afcd>

## Join the Union

**Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Are you doing longer hours at work? Join the Union for work pain relief!**

To protect our professions and stand up for our rights at work we must strengthen our collective

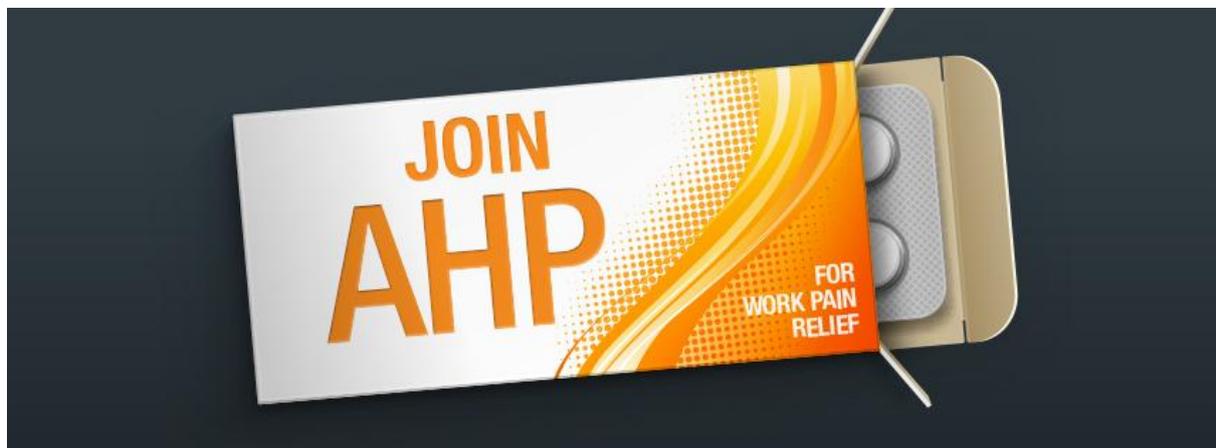
voice and strengthen our bargaining position by increasing our membership. And you can help right now by sharing one of the images below through Facebook.



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## 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](#)

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## Get the most out of the Union's website

The Union's 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.

## 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 including 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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